

The Rise of Merrick

Authorship Proved a Refuge When He Failed to Win Place on the Stage

Hugh Walpole

New Tales by Chekhov

Religious Life of Russia Portrayed By Great Master of the Short Story



Bulgaria's Position Roosevelt Close Up

Author Would Excuse Her War Affiliation Intimate Study of Colonel By an Old Friend

By George Clinton Lodge, George H. Doran Company, New York

THEODORE ROOSEVELT: The Man as I Knew Him. By Ferdinand C. Igler. The D. Appleton Company, New York

Although Mr. Lodge is a Greek by birth, he shows a remarkable amount of sympathy for Bulgaria's territorial claims in the Balkan Peninsula.

In this volume the veteran clergyman has told the story of that friendship in all its phases which are of legitimate concern to the public, and has portrayed with exquisite sympathy and charm Theodore Roosevelt as he knew him for many years and in many ways.

Leonard Merrick, who was born in London, was intended for the bar. That is to say, his father looked forward to his becoming a barrister, though what Merrick himself wanted to do was to write and act. In fact, he always did write, even in the nursery. Before the boy could go to Heidelberg, where he was to complete his education, his father had suffered sudden financial reverses. The bar was out of the question now. Instead of starting life as a wealthy man's son, Merrick was facing the need for earning a bare subsistence. At the age of eighteen, he had exchanged luxury for a job at the South African diamond mines. He stood all day superintending the labors of Zulus and Kafirs in a temperature of 100 degrees in the shade, and slept in a tin hut at the foot of the tailings heap.

His next past was in the local court house. After his berth with the mining company, it was a welcome change to him to sit down. He sat, taking natives' affidavits, and issuing summons for assault, in the judge's office—until the judge committed suicide. Then Merrick found the associations depressing, and went to Kimberley.

All the time, he was still longing for the bar, and he had been writing verses and articles on the government stationery. The first thing of his to be printed was an article that he submitted to a Kimberley paper. He had not asked for payment, and had signed only his initials. The article appeared in the next issue, and in the answers to correspondents was signed "L. L. Merrick." Your contribution is capital. "You should like to hear from you again."

That was Merrick's first happy day on the diamond fields. He was yearning for a rough life, and he got back to England, and he continued to come to promise checks. Unfortunately for his hope, the paper collapsed soon afterward.

He got a solicitor's office in Kimberley for nearly two years, and came near to dying of camp fever before he succeeded in returning to London. And in London, at the age of twenty-one, he had another setback. He had adopted the surname of "Merrick." It is now his own by legal process. He was formerly "Leonard Miller." His acquaintances, and the engagements obtainable by a young man without income or means were few and far between. He had to get a job. He wrote the first short stories that he had attempted since he was a child. Some of them were long afterward republished in the "Paradise Auction."

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Frederick the Great

Despot's Weaknesses Shown in New Book

By Norwood Young, Published by Horne, 61 E. 6th St., New York

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Frederick, considering himself inferior as well as creator, attended personally to the affairs of the Berlin Academy of Science. He did not, however, patronize any of the Germans, although known to him as Voltaire's secretary, was ignored, as were such men as Kant, Goethe, Herder, Wieland and Winckelmann. Haydn and Gluck remained at Vienna. Bach, after a short visit to Potsdam, returned to Leipzig.

Psychical Phenomena

Interesting Data Brought to Light in New Book

By Margaret Carrington, Dodd, Mead & Co., New York

There has been a general tendency in some quarters to welcome psychical research as a road of escape from the rigid conclusions of scientific materialism. Many whose religious dogmatism has been shattered by the advance of physical science are inclined to rejoice at the discovery of a new field where materialism apparently does not have the last word.

Mr. Carrington laid stress upon the scientific aspect of spiritualism in his earlier book, "Psychical Phenomena and the War." In his present work, which is somewhat wider in its scope, he covers the whole field of modern psychical research. He discusses supernatural manifestations of every kind, hypnotism, telepathy, apparitions, table-turning. He takes up the case of the famous Italian medium, Eusapia Paladino, and defends her against the charge of being an impostor. He admits that she practiced fraud on certain occasions in order not to disappoint the spectators of her seances, but insists that in her receptive mood she was a very powerful natural medium.

Admitting that there is often a connection between abnormal psychology and psychical phenomena, the author denies that the latter are direct outgrowth of the former. Discussing the traditional "bathing problem" of the origin of evil, he finds in spiritualism a powerful reinforcement for the belief in free will. Mr. Carrington's long experience in the field of psychical research, his book to be read with interest and respect even by those who may not agree with the author's conclusions. The value of the work is appreciably heightened by a remarkable series of interesting charts and pictures illustrating various psychical experiments.

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Patriotic Bombast
Author Blinded by His Own Enthusiasm

AMERICA'S TO-MORROW. By Hugh Smith. The Triton Publishing Company, New York

An extraordinary amount of pretentiousness is crowded into this book. The author sets out by developing a complicated theory that amalgamating of various racial strains is essential to a nation's physical and moral strength. In the course of this dissertation he displays a great deal of erudition to very little purpose; and his conclusion leaves the question rather more confused than it was when he started to write his own opinion.

Mr. Smith declaims about the supreme virtue and goodness and glory of America until his book suggests a prolonged series of Fourth of July speeches. Americans are no more averse to self-glorification than any other human beings; but even the temptation of patriotism suffers when it is blown into a loud and long song. Mr. Smith naively assumes that Canada and Mexico desire nothing so much as to come under the beneficent rule of the Stars and Stripes. Very much in the style of a schoolboy's essay on Abraham Lincoln he enumerates the manifold blessings of American democracy: religious tolerance, popular government, the opportunity afforded to every penniless bootlicker to become a millionaire, etc. He also meanders with pride the large number of books that are published every year; but in the light of his own pretensions it seems doubtful whether this circumstance should be considered a blessing or a curse.

The book ends appropriately enough, with a perfectly serious attempt on the part of the author to show how every prophecy in the Book of Daniel has been literally fulfilled in history. He strengthens his case for a marriage of interpretations of history by bravely recounting some remarkable dreams in his own, which have been miraculously verified by subsequent events. W. H. C.

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The fact that practically every state in the Union was represented among the orders of Mrs. W. K. Clifford's psychic novel, "Miss Fingal," during the past week is interesting evidence of the nation-wide interest in psychic literature. The Scribners have put "Miss Fingal" back on the presses for a sixth edition this week.

appeared in England—but, as was said recently in "The Nation," "Few novelists have had to wait so long for tangible evidence of success. His is an interesting case of an author who may have all the best critics on his side, and yet remain almost unknown, outside the eager interest of a select circle." Though his books have been read in translations in almost every other European language, the public of England have viewed them coldly. In an interview in "The Bystander" some time ago, Merrick said, "Of a hundred and twenty-odd letters that I have received during the last year or so from strangers who had read my books, only five have come from readers in my own country."

As an instance of the peculiar fascination that his books exert upon some people, there is the case of a very distinguished American lawyer—whose correspondence with Merrick is still extant, on one side, at least. He had bought one of Merrick's books during a trip to Europe and after his return to the United States advertised in the London newspapers for copies of others that were out of print. His interest in the personality of the author, whom he had never seen, was so vivid that he wrote to him, offering in pure friendship, the loan of a large sum for him to devote to wide advertisement of his next novel, or to any purpose that he pleased. The offer was most gratefully declined.

One of Merrick's most treasured letters was a far from flattering one, for a criticism of his portrayal of American life after the publication of "Lynch's Daughter," which has an American heroine. His critic, signing himself simply "Mary," assumed that he was an American author, and proceeded to portray in vivid and simple language the real home life of a really wholesome and representative American family. "I worship my husband and children—we are all commonplace—but we represent America; is how she suits it all up. 'I kept the letter,'" says Merrick, "because I love it, because it's a real human document, because the character that it reveals is so splendid!"

No one could talk to Merrick now of his books without realizing the interest and unfeigned gratitude transpiring from the man. The American nation's welcome of his work, he speaks, glowing, of the generosity of Mr. Howells, who was the first to call for an American author, and the "New York Times" had been not a whit less fervent of the services rendered him by critics whose names he has not learnt, but who had unhesitatingly and cheerfully cheered his heart. The European translations of his books have never satisfied him. Primarily he has addressed himself to the Anglo-Saxon. He has been writing his books in all English language for English-speaking men and women; and he has found his audience at last.

Frederick the Great was the real founder of Prussia, and the man who, because of the ideals which he gave his country and the influence he exerted on politics, is eligible to join that cosmopolitan crew "most to blame for the war."

Frederick, considering himself inferior as well as creator, attended personally to the affairs of the Berlin Academy of Science. He did not, however, patronize any of the Germans, although known to him as Voltaire's secretary, was ignored, as were such men as Kant, Goethe, Herder, Wieland and Winckelmann. Haydn and Gluck remained at Vienna. Bach, after a short visit to Potsdam, returned to Leipzig.

Admiring French culture, Frederick nevertheless attempted to gather around him from eminent contemporary Frenchmen only Voltaire, Mably, Diderot and d'Alembert. Maupertuis, Berlin academy, and the president of the academy, were not to be spoken of in his language but Latin should be spoken; that an expedition should be sent to Patagonia to dissect the brains of living men; that the study of babies should be segregated in order to discover what language they would learn to speak, and that power to foretell the future should be acquired by swallowing a live snake.

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