

SAYS VALUES CLARIFY AS YOU LEAVE AMERICA

Author Wintering in Florence Writes of Some of the Tasks of Modern Authorship. Scrambling American Public Won't Halt to Let Writers Formulate Its Self-Analysis. The New Woman in Latin Europe—Paris Cafes Made "Respectable" for Americans.

OWEN JOHNSON, who has been spending the winter in Florence writing his new novel, "The Salamanders," writes amusingly to a New York friend of a new honor recently thrust upon him there. Mrs. Johnson, who sang in opera before her marriage, has been continuing her studies in Florence, and a local musical paper contained this paragraph, which her husband quotes with delight:

"Owen Johnson (sic), who is studying with a famous director, has the voice, the beauty and the temperament which seem divinely bestowed for the purpose of embellishing the operatic stage." &c.

"And some have greatness thrust upon them," he admits. Mr. Johnson's letter contains some comments on conditions that influence writing in and out of America so interesting that permission has been obtained to quote in part from it:

"As you get away from America," he says, "you find values clarifying. You do not hear a few strident cries from upper windows, you hear only the united voice of a multitude, curiously high pitched, but so keen with faith, so full of the romance of the future. It is the lack of this note of hope that impresses me here in Italy, a country enslaved to its past, passively accepting of the day, so lacking the essential note of hope. And the more this feeling surrounds me the more I turn to America. If I must confess it, I am afraid my eyes are set to the West, and that I feel more keenly the romance of what is coming than the romance of what is gone."

"Of course the very scramble upward of America makes us always a public in haste, probably the most difficult public in the world for the author to halt for the purpose of self-analysis. I am the firmest believer in the quality of genius that lies in the American mind. It has preeminently the qualities of boldness, absorption, responsiveness, unusual conditions or opportunities, and some day, not far away, I believe we will produce a great literature. The trouble today is there is too great a gulf between the author and the public. The author is forever aware of this clinging to fairy tales of a harassed and driven nation. We are now in the expansionary period of our literature, and whoever writes to interpret the complexities of modern America realizes that his task is not simple, to vitalize what he perceives, but twofold, to present what he sees in a way that an uncomprehending public can be made to see. He seldom gets entirely free of this necessity. He is forced to argue, to explain, to convince when a truth appears too bold. Sometimes he even seems to be reasoning with himself. This explanatory quality of our literature naturally constantly obscures the personality of the author in his work. We lack the continental dispassionate view, the uncompromising, more, the uncalculating enthusiasm of creation."

"The trouble is that today the public sees only black and white. Good is good, bad is bad. I look with suspicion on those who would blur either. Whereas the author, who is the social historian, is constantly rejudging his views of morality, perceiving the ill effects of blinded virtue and curiously acknowledging the beneficent reactions that result from vicious conditions, seeking beyond artificial standards something less liable to inconsistencies, finding his ultimate answer in the moral operations of nature, in the grim laws of cause and effect. He is often passionately to the pursuit of motives, whereas the public, like a jeopardized political machine, will not go behind the returns."

Mr. Johnson admits frankly that he has adopted a method to combat this skepticism on the part of the reading public:

"I largely model my characters," he says, "after recognizable types, and this with malice aforethought, so that the newspapers, which acquire their realism through the concrete individual where it will not proceed philosophically to abstract generalizations. I create out of the imagination a character such as John G. Slade in 'The Story of the Second,' lay down the bold proposition that amid the financial depression of today there can be two periods—a carefree, careless, brutal, lawless setting of power and money, and a constructive period, when the same man, his power acquired, can turn with equal enthusiasm to projects of national good, and the thesis would be rejected as impossible and indefensible. But give to the character certain points of resemblance to three or four great promoters in the public eye, and the reader, adjusting the character of fiction to the characters in the day's news with which he is familiar, proceeds without irritation."

"Do not mean to say that my characters are close transcripts from living persons. This is very rarely true. Usually three to six personalities of the same general condition will be drawn upon and the character evolved, just as the artist builds his landscape from several sketches. Of course to the professional this is the recognized method, such as those of George Sand and Alfred de Musset. Even lately in the old police records which Stoddard Dewey has been investigating have been found the records of that most highly colored character Vautrin, who it now seems was copied from the annals of a bandit in a mode."

"This utilization of recognizable personalities not only gives a note of conviction to the portrait, a quality of sincerity which the portrait might fall of, but I venture to believe is a logical and permissible method of convincing a public which has not yet, though the day is near, paused to take stock of its idols, its illusions, its injustices, its ideals, its inconsistencies, and above all of its own ego."

Mr. Johnson finds a new development in the outlook of women strikingly manifest both in Italy and in France. "Among the keenest impressions I have received here," he says, "is the growing strength of the feminist movement. Of course nine-tenths of the things women are striving for here have been acquired fifty years ago by the Anglo-Saxon. In the past women in Italy, and to a great extent in France, have been regarded simply as an economic aid to the advancement of the masculine idea of family. I believe that the stronger development of the continental female life has been simply along an economic instinct, to keep the party to be delivered in favorable ignorance, to avoid the annoying possibility of a conflict of wills. At present there is an all pervading revolt among women against the part they are designated to play in the commerce of marriage, and the first and logical form it takes is in the larger mental education that is being given the modern young girl in Italy. The influence of America is enormous and the greatest curiosity exists here as to our forms of society. Today many of the young girls are permitted to go into shops, make visits, take drives—with a certain, an incredible freedom. When you meet them they are anxious to talk on serious questions, and when in a teasing mood you sound their opinions on matrimony, you find them with determined opinions defiantly resolved to do a little choosing of their own and quite ready to admit sentimental inclinations."

"In a flying trip to Paris I experienced yet another reflex action of American influences, and this a very amusing one. The restaurants and dance halls, even to Maximo's, the Abbey de Thelème, the Bal Tabarin, have become almost respectable. Formerly they existed for the beneficent purpose of shocking the deacon on voyage and solidifying his sense of American virtue, now they are conducted to afford to women of the world a discreet view of that class which sets the fashion of their toilets and thus the revenge themselves on respectable embourgeoisement. Everything is now done to court the patronage of the femmes du monde. The dancing has lost much of its old license and is now, since the introduction of turkey trot, tango and grizzly bears into fashionable ballrooms, only rather perfunctory than otherwise. Formerly when the American woman on a lark performed was not intended with the risk of personal humiliation, she was a watchful head waiter polices each resort and stands guard with an affectionate and maternal eye wherever a party from the beau monde is running up a bill over the hundred franc mark. The same thing has happened in Paris that happened at Coney Island. Every one is entering to the respectable element because it is the patronage which pays. In a larger way, this is a beautiful and a genuine note of frank gaiety. The following conversation which I overheard after the theatre, between two ladies wickedly beautiful, is illuminating:

"What—Maxim's at this hour—deadly dull!"

NEWS OF AUTHORS AND WHAT THEY ARE DOING

Sir Harry H. Johnston, whose new book dealing with International Diplomacy, "Common Sense in Foreign Policy," has just been published by the Duttons, began life with the intention of becoming a geographer. He studied painting at the Royal Academy in London, in France, and made his first journey to Africa in search of scenery. The new interests aroused there impelled him to join a party exploring Portuguese East Africa and the Congo River. Since then his chief interest has been with questions relating to geography and the division of the world among the races.

Among the real persons who may be recognized in the pages of Acton Davies' novel "Romance," announced by the McCauley Company, are William Winter, the dramatic critic, Fathia Heron, the actress, Augustin Dore, the writer, Charles A. Dana, Horace Grosvenor, Rose Cochran, Lydia Thompson, Pauline Markham, Daniel Frohman as a young boy, Louise Bonnard, the star of "The Black Crook," and P. T. Barnum.

Natalie Summer Lathrop, whose new mystery story, "The Lost Dispatch," has just been issued by the Duttons, is a newspaper woman employed by the Washington Herald. Her preceding detective story, "The Trestle Case," has had an unusual success.

Bertha Runkle's "The Helmet of Navarre" is remembered as a first novel which made an exceptionally youthful and famous cover. For her new book, "The Scarlet Rider," which the Century Company will publish May 24, Miss Runkle has chosen another historical setting—the Isle of Wight toward the end of the American Revolution.

Louise Kennedy Mack, author of the new novel, "The Wings of Pride," is an accomplished musician. When she was yet very young an old German music professor was anxious to prepare her for the concert stage, but she declined a concert career.

Sir Gilbert Parker, whose new novel, "The Judgment House," made its first appearance a few weeks ago, and Lord Rosbery have lately been engaged in paying the other country. Sir Gilbert Parker declared that the audience at the Philosophical Institution at Edinburgh had never listened to a "more brilliant or eloquent address" than the one just read by Lord Rosbery. "The Judgment House," the last phase, as "one of the most beautiful and moving and penetrating of books" of all literature, biography being the most respectful the most respectful.

Sir Sidney Lee, editor of the "Harper Shakespeare," recently stated that he thought a more appropriate day than April 23 might be selected on which to celebrate Shakespeare's memory. He thinks "the birthday of a great author is a date of smaller moment than the day on which his greatest work is placed in the hands of the readers." So he suggests November 8, the date, when, in 1623, the publication of the first folio of Shakespeare's works took place, the date of Shakespeare's achievement.

Dr. William Byron Forbush, author of "The Coming Generation," has accepted an invitation from the University of Minnesota to give twelve lectures between the first and fifteenth of June in the Chautauques of that State, to be conducted under the auspices of the university.

Edith Bernard Delano, author of "The Land of Content," who is an ardent baseball fan, says that her fondness for the game once got her into trouble. A few years ago, when Justice Hughes was Governor of New York, Mrs. Delano made a character play, in a discussion of the national game, "Well, Hughes's the man for me!" After the story was published a dear old lady said reproachfully to the author: "I do hope, my dear, that all this writing and suffering business of yours is not going to lead you into an un ladylike attitude toward those in authority. I think you could have expressed your admiration for Gov. Hughes more politely than by saying, 'Hughes's the man for me!'"

Nevin O. Winter, whose "The Russian Empire of Today and Yesterday" is announced by Messrs. L. C. Page & Co., has spent much time in Russia in preparation for this book and returned to this country only late in 1912. He also visited Poland, including the German and Russian provinces as well as the Russian portion of the country, and is now at work on a book on "Poland of Today and Yesterday." Mr. Winter's previous works are "Mexico and Her People of Today," "Brazil and Her People of Today," "Guatemala and Her People of Today," and "Chile and Her People of Today."

A. L. Chatterton and Company, publishers of juveniles, announce an addition to their "Boy Scouts of America" series, "The Boy Scouts of America," by Ralph Victor, Col. William F. Cody (Buffalo Bill) has written with a dedication for the book and the "Boy Scouts of America."

Among the new books announced by G. W. Dillingham Company are the following: "Little Grey Girl," the story of a Quaker girl's childhood, by Mary Openly, by Arthur Hornblow, Broadway Jones, novelized from George M. Cohan's play, by Edward Marshall, "Gettysburg, Then and Now," with 125 illustrations of monuments now erected on the battlefield, by J. M. Vandevliet, and "The Count of Luxembourg," novelized from the play by Harold Simpson and illustrated with photographs of scenes of the play.

The Macmillan Company announces the publication this week of the following new books: "Myself and I," a volume of poems, by Fannie Stearns Davis; "Wilhelm," the story of a wife, by S. C. Northrup; "The Problem of Christianities," by Josiah Royce, a collection in two volumes of the lectures which he delivered this spring at Oxford University and last fall at the Lowell Institute of Boston, and a number of new titles in the "Macmillan's Standard Library" and "Macmillan's Modern Fiction Library."

"Problems of Power: A Study of International Politics, from Sadowa to Kirkib," by William Morton Fullon, some time correspondent of the London Times, is announced by Charles Scribner's Sons. It includes even those events of international politics, especially European, that have been the subject of the last few weeks, and it bears directly upon the situation that has arisen in the war of the Balkan States against Turkey.

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AT TWENTY-SEVEN AUTHOR OF LITERARY SENSATION

T. EVERETT HARRI Wrote at Seven—Began Public Career with Arctic Stories. Is a Recluse and Mystic and Believes That Love Is the Supreme Human Experience. Love Only Means of Attainment of Soul's Immortalization Teaching of Arctic Tale.

T. EVERETT HARRI, whose novel, "The Eternal Maiden," has made a record of four editions within one week after publication, returned recently from a long trip to England and France and was greeted by many unexpected eulogies from famous people who had been attracted to the story while it was appearing serially in one of the more exclusive literary magazines.

In "The Eternal Maiden" Mr. Harri does for the far Arctic regions practically what Pierre Loti in his "Madame Chrysanthem" and John Luther Long in his "Madame Butterfly" did for Japan. The heroine of Mr. Harri's story is a beautiful Arctic maiden, the daughter of a white explorer who perished in the north—a creature of charm and shrinking timidity and with all the primal qualities of the race fresh in her heart. Mr. Harri begins his story with the Arctic legend of the creation of the world, of the sun and the moon—a short prelude of rare poetry. According to the legend, the Great Spirit, after creation, "placed upon earth a man, in his arms the strength to kill, in his heart the primal urge of love . . . and a maiden, her face beautiful with the young virginity of the world, in her bosom implanted a yearning, not unmixed with fear, for love."

For centuries, so the legend goes, the maiden fled before the youth, finally reaching the end of the earth, the maiden leaped into space and became the sun, the youth swooned after her and became the moon. And eternally the celestial pursuit continues. With this motif Mr. Harri works out the earth story of the eternal man and the eternal woman. The "little pale golden girl" gives her love to a white man, who deceives and deserts her; she steadfastly refuses her native Greenland lover until it is too late. In the character of the hero Mr. Harri draws an admirable figure of human devotion and heroism, even as in the golden maiden an exquisite creature whose heart is one with the hearts of all world maidens. The story as it sweeps to its tragic close is symbolic of much human love and is universal in the lesson it teaches and its appeal. Many have begun to ask where Mr. Harri got his material for this extraordinary tale.

"I consider love the supreme note for literature, as I consider it the supreme experience of life," says the author. "It is a subject to be written of in a spirit of religious veneration. Alas! in most of our popular fiction to-day it is the subject of force and levity. You have asked me why we have no great love stories in America. It is because of this—our popular novelists, deluded by false theories on part of editors and publishers, write farce romances; they are about shallow, silly

girls; addle pated fashionplate men; the emotions depicted are purely surface physical emotions—the sort one does not ordinarily discuss. But this is served in candy fiction, herbivorous and it fakes the real thing. Great human love and the great human devotion and exaltation of spirit which love brings have little place in our modern fiction. We have novelists of ability—perhaps emotionally they do not feel, for one must feel to write of such things. I do not know. But because they want to write best sellers, because a magazine editor wants a million circulation, they pour out opera bouffe romances. And, forsooth, because editors and publishers persistently say this is what the public wants, because they declare the real thing is above the public's head. That, in my opinion, to put it bluntly, is a lie. The great mass of people are hungering for real literature—for real love—for the 'real thing.' The appeal of romance is eternal. Were some one to put the passion which Shakespeare gave his lovers into novels to-day we'd see how soon the public would desert Mr. Chambers!"

Representing Hampton's, Mr. Harri went north to meet Peary upon his arrival at Sydney, Nova Scotia. They met not only Peary but Capt. Bob Bartlett, George Borup and other members of the expedition, from whom he gathered much material about the Arctic. For two months he worked on his assignment, and finally, against the competition of most magazines, secured the contract for Peary's story. Mr. Harri enlisted the assistance of Elsa Barker, the poetess, who took editorial charge of the preparation of Mr. Peary's story. A year later, after Dr. Cook had disappeared and when he was sought all over the world, Benjamin Hampton gave his young assistant a new assignment. "You got Peary's story," he said. "Go and find Cook." That sounded difficult. Mr. Harri began to work. How he managed to get on the missing explorer's trail and get in touch with him is a story yet to be told. No conferences took place between Hampton and Harri until one day the young editor walked into Hampton's office. "I've got Cook," he said quietly. "I need \$400. I'm going to London." In London, the first person to meet the first claimant to polar honors since the day he vanished, Mr. Harri met Cook, secured a series of articles from him and returned to America. By reason of his editorial association Mr. Harri had opportunity to study both explorers as few people. Asked concerning his opinion regarding them he said: "I was not so much interested in the north pole as in the two dramatic figures who claimed to have reached the north pole. The finding of the pole is not so important to me—perhaps because I view things from the point of view of the novelist—as the drama of human bravery and fortitude and suffering enacted through three centuries in the human struggle toward the pole. Any man who would essay to reach the pole is a brave man. The Arctic is not a region where calculating fakery could hide long. The splendid fact is that men were brave enough to essay the pole. As for my personal knowledge of the controversy gleaned from an intimate association with, and a study of, the two men, and my impression—some day these will be written

HARPERS BOOKS

The Judgment House

By Sir Gilbert Parker. Here is room for a few voices in the chorus of praise: "An intense story, in which the characters seem living persons rather than creatures of the author's imagination." Pittsburgh Post. "A novel of international excellence and importance." Portland Oregonian. "Stands out like a lighthouse amid a flood of mediocre novels." Detroit Free Press. "A masterful and majestic tale, which holds a reader gripped with the course of the story from the first page to the last." Columbus Journal. "The Judgment House" easily ranks as one of the best of his brilliant novels, and as one of the greatest that has appeared in many months." San Jose Mercury.

The Turning of Griggsby

By Irving Bacheller. Full of the same genial satire and humor as "Keeping Up With Lizzie" and "Charge It," and the most delightful love story Mr. Bacheller has written. Griggsby's death, was still living up to the Websterian tradition. "This scarlet blossom on the silver tongue went hand in hand." Then a young girl became editor of the town newspaper. In its columns she held up to publicity and ridicule the vices of certain prominent citizens and those of their imitators. The laugh was against them, and the town had to reform.

Desert Gold

By Zane Grey. "Ssh—steady—keep quiet, and follow me"—so, treading softly with a new guide, we vanish into the night—into adventure along the Arizona-Mexico border in search of desert gold—and we find life free and unafraid. The American filibusters, the guerrillas and the loyal Yaqui are alive in this alluring purple sage country, and so is Mercedes, a beautiful Mexican girl. Critics tell us that romance is coming back again. It has come back—in this new tale of Zane Grey's.

Isobel

By James Oliver Curwood. This romance of the region between Hudson Bay and Great Silver Lake is full of the same mystery and heroic adventure that characterized the author's "Flower of the North." The hero, a Sergeant of the famous Royal Northwest Mounted Police, whose boast is that a criminal never escapes them, captures the fugitive husband of the only white woman he has seen for months. Then, urged by his chivalry, he lets him escape—to reap later an unexpected reward.

Our Own Weather

By Edwin C. Martin. A simple account of how the weather as we experience it day by day comes about; of its peculiar forms and constant movements from one part of the country to another. Here are the scientific explanations of cyclones, hot waves, fogs, floods, droughts, etc. There is no more general topic than the weather, and no subject which can be more delightfully discussed. While the work has, of course, a scientific basis, it is meant primarily for the lay reader.

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