

Books and the People Who Make Them

George H. Doran and the "Bookman"

IT is understood to be the intention of George H. Doran to transform the *Bookman* into a periodical on the order of the English reviews and a literary review of the highest type.

The *Bookman* has been famous for its list of best sellers. Mr. Doran is reported to have decided to dispense with this feature and also with the "educational" section, which contained questions designed to test the reader's comprehension of the magazine's contents.

These are not the most auspicious times for magazine enterprises. It is something of a tribute to Mr. Doran's reputation that while other publishers have been open-mouthed at his audacity in taking on a magazine at this time none has doubted his ability to do it and make a success of it. His fellows all believe that he has a plan and that he will put it over.

It is only nine or ten years since George H. Doran set up as a publisher. He started in one room. Now he has headquarters in a Madison avenue skyscraper. And everybody in his offices gets to work at 8:30 A. M. His authors' list is one of the longest and best in America. His output of new books possibly exceeds that of any other single American publisher. It is a strong list, too, particularly in English authors. He publishes Arnold Bennett, Conan Doyle, J. D. Beresford and a lot of others including newcomers like Hugh Walpole and Frank Swinnerton. One of his American prizes is Irvin Cobb. In the last year he has published dozens of volumes about the war which have been semi-official in character, having the informal—and sometimes the formal—in-dorsement of the British Government.

LEWIS E. THEISS, author of *A Champion of the Foothills* and other stories for boys, and who is at work on a first novel, used to be on the staff of THE SUN, but now lives and writes and farms on the shore of the Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania. Much of his writing has been done in collaboration with his wife, Mary Bartol Theiss, and the collaboration extends from the operation of a swift typewriter to the wielding of a hoe and long country tramps in search of fun and story material. Not so long ago Mr. and Mrs. Theiss journeyed to the source of the west branch of the Susquehanna, a hillside orchard, 2,300 feet in the air in Cambria county. Thence they hiked down stream 150 miles. They wore khaki and carried their supplies, including a notebook, in capacious pockets.

Writing in the *Nation*, C. Alphonso Smith, O. Henry's biographer, declares his belief that he has found out whence William Sydney Porter's pen name came. Sydney Porter was a drug clerk in Greensboro, N. C., and later in Austin, Tex. He was filling prescriptions from the *United States Dispensatory* when he first signed the name O. Henry to a short story. And the *United States Dispensatory* bristled with "O. Henry," an abbreviation of the name of Etienne-Ossian Henry, a distinguished French chemist. Mr. Smith thinks that Porter's "unerring feeling for odd and arresting names as well as faces" did the rest.

Now we are told that exposing the pages of books to the sunlight occasionally will prevent them from becoming yellow. But what is needed is something to prevent some writers from yellowing.

It seems that our account of Michael Williams's *The Book of the High Romance* calls for a correction in regard to his early life. He was not "born in poverty," as stated, but in fairly comfortable circumstances. A reader of *Books and the Book World* writes to say:

"I did not know Michael Williams in those early days, though living on the same quaint old Halifax street, but I have a vivid recollection of the Williams house, across the street from the residence of the British general in command of the Halifax station, and should not have the slightest objection to moving my family there to-morrow if occasion required.

"To compare the financial standards of thirty-five years ago with those of to-day is of course absurd. But I recall a very estimable man, of good social posi-

tion, who for a number of years held the post of chief clerk at the American Consulate-General and whose income, as I chanced to know, was a good deal less than that of Captain Williams.

"That Michael was not born in poverty may, I think, be fairly inferred from the fact that his father, in addition to bringing up his family in comfort and sending Michael away to boarding school, was enabled to save enough to make a cash investment in shipping to the amount of at least \$5,000.

"Captain Williams's sudden death and the theft of his property, as narrated in *The High Romance*, changed the position of the family entirely; but that is another story."

Dr. Francis C. Rowley, president of the Massachusetts S. P. C. A., and others have formed in Boston a Jack London club, an outgrowth of London's dog story, *Michael, the Brother of Jerry*. No dues, no officers. Members pledge themselves to a single thing—to get up and leave whenever a trained animal act is staged before them. Mrs. London says that her husband got the facts for *Michael* from actors who gave him first hand observations. These convinced him that no matter how smoothly an animal act goes, fear is behind it and a past, completely hidden possibly, of cruelty.

The Rev. Newell Dwight Hillis is having made fifty lantern slides illustrating his lecture on German atrocities, which may be obtained for a reasonable charge through the Fleming H. Revell Company. Dr. Hillis's book, *German Atrocities*, is in its fourth edition.

Jackson Gregory, whose *The Joyous Trouble Maker* has just been published by Dodd, Mead & Co., and who has written other outdoor fiction, is a Californian who spent his youth on a ranch twenty miles from the railroad hunting, riding horseback and reading Irving, Rider Haggard, Dickens, Jules Verne and the *Arabian Nights*. Later he was a newspaper reporter in San Francisco, New York, Montreal and Tampa and way stations. He punched cattle in Nevada, tramped in the Adirondacks and camped in the Sierra Nevadas before settling down in California to write.

Capt. George Clarke Musgrave tells in *Under Four Flags for France* of the wonderfully intelligent Belgian dogs used in the war. A lot of them were lined up for inspection. Suddenly all started barking their loudest and straining at the leash. They seemed to know that up the road was the enemy that had driven them from home. When the order was given to move off in sections from the right every team dashed forward at top speed, dragging the soldier drivers along in a mad race for the canal bridge that led to the front. At the crossing wheels were locked, guns overturned and supplies spilled. The tangle was straightened out, but the animals could not be kept at a walk and the gunners had to double time until they came into contact with the German advance guard.

In *American Women and the World War* Ida Clyde Clarke also tells of the dog's part in the war. The animals go swiftly through places men cannot traverse carrying orders. One dog had its jaw broken on such an errand, but carried his message through.

Early in the summer the Macmillan Company will publish *Our National Forests*, by Robert H. D. Boerker. We have 155,000,000 acres of them, more than France has, more than Germany. Information regarding these woodlands has hitherto been scattered through scores of Government publications. The book will have many pictures and will describe the work of the Government foresters.

Through War To Peace is the expressive title of a book by Prof. A. G. Keller of Yale, who believes that the only way to get peace is to discredit utterly Germany's ideal of the militant state and who believes further that the militant state can only be discredited by a military victory over it.

One of the drawings in Muirhead Bone's *The Western Front* was of the falling Virgin on the Albert church tower. In this figure the Virgin stood holding the Child in uplifted arms. Artillery fire displaced the statue so that it hung sideways

and even below the horizontal; the Virgin appeared to be plunging downward with the Child outthrust before her. Finally a legend arose that when the figure fell the war would end. It was snapped off by a German shell a couple of weeks ago.

George H. Doran is publishing *How To Swim* by Annette Kellermann, who is said to swim almost as well as a George Meredith heroine—yes, the lovely Aminta; also the ladies who "swam toward him" across the lawn, &c.

We have received inquiries concerning *Man Is a Spirit*, by J. Arthur Hill. It is being published by the George H. Doran Company and is a critical consideration of telepathy, spirit communication, automatic writing and psychical research generally.

Notices in English Fiction, by Robert Naylor Whiteford, touches on so many writers that we can't name them all here. Malory, Bacon, Swift, Richardson, Fielding, Sterne, Johnson, Walpole (Horace, not Hugh), Goldsmith, Maria Edgeworth, Jane Austen, Scott and Dickens are a few of the outstanding ones.

Best seller fans, attention! Squads right! March! Comrade, halt! The new novel by Ethel M. Dell, author of *The Hundredth Chance*, is ready; title, *Greatheart*. As skirmishers, march!

When you are prepared to read it consider the order given: At ease!

The absence of books on mushrooms, designed to keep us from poisoning ourselves, is keenly felt. We have not come upon a good book on mushrooms—a really poetic treatment of the subject—since Gertrude Stein wrote so engagingly about them under the title *Tender Buttons*.

The George H. Doran Company has ready Mary Roberts Rinehart's war novel of Belgium, *The Amazing Interlude*, which, our readers will recollect, Ellis Parker Butler called "the best war fiction yet made in America."

B. W. Huebsch is publishing *Horizons*, by Francis Hackett, one of the editors of the *New Republic*, a selection of his writings for that periodical and for the *Chicago Evening Post* in recent years.

Inasmuch as there is a possibility that Arthur Henderson may yet be Prime Minister of Great Britain the small book published by B. W. Huebsch called *The Aims of Labor* has measurable importance. It contains the programme of the British Labor party as Henderson sees it.

There was a time when Poultny Bigelow and Wilhelm II. were almost bosom friends. That was from 1870 to 1896, when the Kaiser sent a cablegram to Oom Paul and Bigelow wrote a *History of the German Struggle for Liberty*. Then all was off. Now Bigelow sees in the Kaiser only the reincarnation of a pretty well forgotten Potsdamer. He has written a book about the likeness and G. P. Putnam's Sons are publishing it. The book is called *Genesee, King of the Vandals and First Prussian Kaiser*.

Thorstein Veblen, who is on leave of absence from the University of Missouri to work for the Food Administration, is to have B. W. Huebsch as his publisher hereafter. Mr. Huebsch has taken over Veblen's published books and will put them out at a uniform price, including *The Nature of Peace*, which was attacked as pro-German.

For years spring has brought a flood of nature books. Every year we were

freshly instructed upon *How to Know the Garter Snakes* or the lounge lizards or the parkie asp. This year, no. Not a nature book is sight (that we recall now) except the *Field Book of Insects*, by Frank E. Lutz of the American Museum of Natural History.

Selma Lagerlof's *The Holy City* is based on fact. There was an actual Dalecarlian pilgrimage from Sweden to a colony which was maintained in Jerusalem by a Mrs. Spafford of Chicago—Mrs. Gordon of *The Holy City*. Before the war American tourists usually visited this colony. Miss Lagerlof was commissioned to go to Jerusalem and investigate disquieting stories that came back to Sweden regarding the conduct of the Swedish colonists. "Jerusalem kills" was the burden of her report, and by that she meant not heat, pestilence nor privation, but the spirit of religious fanaticism and intolerance manifested by the various sects toward each other. The Americans and the Swedes in the Gordon colony had been too tolerant to suit those about them.

The Dress You Wear and How to Make It is the title of a book by Mary-Jane Rhee, an instructor in dressmaking, which G. P. Putnam's Sons are publishing. We shall hesitate to hand it to one of our gentler reporters and we have no wife.

Willis J. Abbot's book on *Aircraft and Submarines*, just put out by G. P. Putnam's Sons, contains fascinating stuff about the combat tactics of air fighters on both sides.

Capt. Alan Bott, author of *Cavalry of the Clouds*, is now in Palestine.

A fifth and a sixth volume are to be added to the series of translations of Chekhov being made by Constance Garnett and put out by the Macmillan Company; they are respectively *The Wife and Other Stories* and *The Witch and Other Stories*. Of these *The Wife* contains nine tales dealing with the educated class of Russians, and *The Witch* offers sixteen stories of peasant life.

The thirty-fifth edition of *The Second Jungle Book* and the twenty-eighth edition of *Captains Courageous* are on sale. These Kipling books are published by the Century Company.

War Bread, by Alonzo E. Taylor, is not a book of recipes, but a study of the wheat situation.

Camouflage at the front is not confined to painting and landscape gardening. Says Preston Gibson in *Battering the Boche*: "As the Germans and French have a perfect system of listening in on a telephone by means of an instrument which is stuck in the ground and which enables you to hear conversations going along on the other side of the trenches, all villages near the lines have been renamed. The street names are comic. Here in this village, a mile from the firing line, we have the street of New York, the street of Chicago, the street of Paris; it is also necessary that curious numbers and foolish codes be employed. Thus when sending for small ammunition a message will sound something like this: 'Send to New York street five baskets of grapes,' which would mean five wagon loads of small ammunition.

"The detail of the war is almost greater than the war itself."

The Flying Poilu, by Marcel Nadaud, is not the story of an angel nor of a saint either, but of Chignole, Parisian street urchin, who becomes an aviator of the maddest and most glorious accomplishments.

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