

BIOGRAPHY AS HISTORY REDUCED TO PERSONALITIES

MARGOT ASQUITH'S INDISCREET BOOK

The Woman Noted for Saying and Doing Imprudent Things Has Justified Her Reputation in Her Autobiography

The first thing to be said of Mrs. Asquith's story of her life is that she has not published her diary of which Henry James wrote after being allowed to read it. "I take off my hat to you as to the very Balzac of diarists. It is a masterpiece of force and color, of a remarkable instinct for getting close to your people and things and for squeezing, in the case of the resolute characters, especially the last drop of truth and sense out of them."

Mrs. Asquith, wife of the man who was for nine years British prime minister, says that not more than fifty pages of her book are taken from her diary. She found the diary too full of cabinet secrets to be published. If the diary justifies the verdict of Henry James, it ought to see the light at some time in the future when its revelation can do no harm.

The second thing to be said of the autobiography is that it is essentially a feminine production. This was to be expected from a woman who is a woman raised to the nth power, not in any bad sense, but in the sense that she never seems to have forgotten her sex, nor to have been ignorant of the susceptibilities of men to its blandishments. When she was a girl, living in Scotland, there was hardly a young man who visited the house who did not propose to her before she had said her declaration was not without provocation. She exercised her wiles upon every man whom she met, if she thought it worth while. She sat next to the famous old Duke of York at a dinner once and the next day he wrote to his hostess, "How dare you ask me to meet a siren?" So, as a matter of course, the book is filled with accounts of her conquests. Even London was moved to write poetry to her.

But there was more to her than her sexual charm. That was not enough to hold her the friendship of the most distinguished men in England for a long period of years. She is intellectually brilliant, and she holds her own with the keenest wit. If she had devoted herself to literature, as was suggested to her in her youth, she would have achieved fame, that is, if she could have disciplined herself to consecutive and orderly work. But the manner and method of her autobiography indicate that she would have had to put herself through a severe course of training before she could have accomplished this result. The book is fragmentary and disconnected, but it is a masterpiece of English verse which is lightened up by an appreciation of the incongruous. Among the authors mentioned are: William E. Aytoun, Hillaire Belloc and Lord Byron, Phoebe Cary and Lord Chesterfield, Austin Dobson and John Dryden, Herbert and Alexander Pope, Oliver Herford and Edwin Arlington Robinson.

THE BOOK OF HUMOROUS VERSE. Comp. by George H. Doran Co. New York, N. Y.

Humorous Anthology

Carolyn Wells has added "The Book of Humorous Verse" to her series of anthologies. Her definition of humor is but an incident of or slight moment that only those with a fine sense for it would be able to find it. On the other hand she has included a lot of whimsical verse the humor of which appeals to a limited few. But on the whole the book contains a good deal of English verse which is lightened up by an appreciation of the incongruous. Among the authors mentioned are: William E. Aytoun, Hillaire Belloc and Lord Byron, Phoebe Cary and Lord Chesterfield, Austin Dobson and John Dryden, Herbert and Alexander Pope, Oliver Herford and Edwin Arlington Robinson.

THE BOOK OF HUMOROUS VERSE. Comp. by George H. Doran Co. New York, N. Y.

LIFE AND LETTERS OF JOSEPH H. CHOATE

Edward S. Martin Has Made an Interesting Book Out of His Material

Edward S. Martin, brilliant essayist and commentator on contemporary life, has assembled in "The Life of Joseph H. Choate" another one of the materials from which a definitive biography may ultimately be written. Mr. Martin's book is made up largely from the letters of Mr. Choate and from newspaper clippings preserved in a scrap book, and it gives an excellent picture of the man and of his many activities, not only as a lawyer, but as a public-spirited citizen of New York interested in all good works.

The book contains the story of some of the most famous of the cases with which Mr. Choate was connected, including the Chesola libel suit, the Perry John Porter case, the Laidlaw suit against Russel Sage, and the argument on the constitutionality of the income tax law. And extracts from many of Mr. Choate's famous occasional addresses are given. Notable among them are his address at Harvard University when Governor Butler asked for his membership with William M. Everts, with speech to the Society of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick in New York, in which he recommended that all large cities in America go back to Ireland.

Lawyers will be particularly interested in the description of the modest offices in which the leading attorney of temporary fame, Mr. Choate, first began to practice. Mr. Choate's first fee was \$2. He was a member of the bar of the railroad company because two carloads of potatoes had been ruined by frost. When he was taken into partnership with William M. Everts, with a guarantee of 15 per cent of the profits, Mr. Everts told him that his share would be not less than \$3000 a year. At this rate the earnings of Mr. Everts and his partners, constituting one of the most prosperous legal firms in the city, were only about \$20,000 a year. As Mr. Choate was able in later years to support the dignity of his ambassadorial office in London, it is evident that he lived to profit by much larger fees than his distinguished early partner ever

The book confirms the general impression about Mr. Choate that he exemplified in his own person the old maxim, suavior in modo, fortior in re. He was never an attorney or a public speaker who could make his points with greater suavity, and few who could cling more tenaciously to real points at issue. But as a biography it leaves much to be desired. Mr. Martin admits as much in his introduction. Indeed, the book forces one not able to finish the autobiography which he began in 1914. What he wrote of that autobiography is given in the introduction. The manner and method is such as to promise much for what the man did not have time or strength to write in the remaining years of his life. THE LIFE OF JOSEPH H. CHOATE. Edited by Edward S. Martin. Including his own work of his boyhood and youth. The Bookman, New York; Charles Scribner's Sons, N. Y.

CLIMBS AND FALLS OF A STEEPLEJACK

Vanities, Dreams and Avoicals Mark Jim Huneke's Reminiscences

Under the general title, "Steeplejack," James Gibbons Huneke, of Philadelphia, Paris and the world, as well as the seven arts, gives a chronicle, sometimes annals and sometimes impressions, of his long career as a journalist, critic and interpreter. Many of the chapters appeared in the Philadelphia Press a couple of years ago, at the time when Mr. Huneke graced it with his penning criticisms of musical affairs here, making the great sacrifice of coming over from New York to cover the most important events of this city.

The writer of this autobiography has known many men and been much to some of them and something to many of them. Nowadays with the ranks of criticism swollen by the Menckens, Nathans, Van Vechten, and other modernists who are for anything but Puritanism, it is a new or strange or unusual, and especially if it counters or contravenes what they call conventional morality (by which they mean Puritanism), to be frequently lost sight of that Mr. Huneke, together with the late Percival Pollard, and even more, possibly, than that coloratura star, was the great pioneer in introducing to the American public a large number of creative artists whose prestige and influence are today accepted as part of the possession of contemporary culture. Mr. Huneke, too, has been generally damned either as immoral or as a man of no great and fine intellectual capacity of his elevated, and in a sense exalted, post of a steeplejack. His questions and adventures into the world of art make a fascinating, because sympathetic and valid, esthetic and emotional autobiography.

This book is very individual in its viewpoints and its style. Often it is couched in the atavistic and occasionally syncopated—diction that marks other Huneke books. There are florid passages and notes which are elaborate decorations in the score—verbal arias of traditional opera type—and there are many very beautiful sections in which the themes have real substance and are developed in a spirit that is fitting and authentic. The Celtic temperament of the man shines out—its magic of words, its wistful melancholy, its wit, and yet there is a counterbalancing through what may properly be called the American temperament, which knows what o'clock it is, and is common-sense almost to the point of practicality. It's all very engaging, this book, with its intriguing blend of emotionalism and enthusiasm, acuity and ardency, insight and vision.

STEEPLEJACK. By James Gibbons Huneke. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

REDESDALE READ "SCENTED GARDEN"

He Tells in His Memoirs of This and Many Important Political Experiences

The memoirs of the late Lord Redesdale, which attracted wide attention when they were first published in England, will be found by American readers to deserve their popularity, now that the book is available for them here.

Lord Redesdale was attached to the British foreign office for forty years, and served in China, Japan and Russia. He had a wide acquaintance with public men at home and in the countries where he was on duty. The late King Edward was an intimate friend. He lived neighbor to the Carlyles in Cheyne Walk, the Kennedys and Sir Richard Burton. He was a kinsman of the Mitford who wrote the famous history of Greece. And he was a man of letters, a musician and a sportsman. Above most men, he has the experience and acquaintance which make the material for illuminating memoirs, and he had the literary ability to use this material in such a way as to make it interesting. His chapter on Beaconsfield gives as good a picture of the man as is contained in the six-volume life which has just been completed. His estimate of King Edward is probably much nearer to that which history will ultimately fix upon than the estimate by Sir Sydney Lee in the Dictionary of National Biography. Believers in Article X of the League of Nations covenant will find in his story of the diplomatic preliminaries to the seizure of Schleswig-Holstein from Denmark by Prussia more ammunition for their guns than can be found in the same space anywhere else.

He is one of the few men who had the privilege of reading Sir Richard Burton's "Scented Garden" in the manuscript which Lady Burton prudently burned in order to prevent its publication, and Burton urged him to read the first chapters of his translation of the "Arabian Nights" while he was at work on that monumental task. The story of all these things appears in the book.

MEMOIRS OF LORD REDESDALE. G. C. V. G. K. C. B. With two photographic plates. London: George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 312.

JACOBS FOR BOOKS

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A Rival of Sherlock Holmes The Sleuth of St. James's Square

By Melville Davidson Post This is an

Let us now talk of Mary Roberts Rinehart and her novels of American life—of romances that encompass this day and generation in a broad sweep of dramatic presentation. On every hand in this kaleidoscopic age is the material for a thousand and one wonderful stories. The men and women to people them rub elbows with us everywhere. The joys and tragedies, brave struggles and passionate devotions—enough plots to make a hundred tales—touch our lives for a moment and are gone. How often have you said: "I would give a lot to know what her whole story is." Or: "That man is one of the most extraordinary people I have ever met. I wonder what his history is?" If life in this great country with its multitude and solitude is a subject you like to find reflected in the books you read then you have two great pleasures in store for you in A POOR WISE MAN and DANGEROUS DAYS by Mary Roberts Rinehart. These two vigorous novels reflect the high-lights and the shadows of American life as it throbs about us. Of the former one critic says: "There is no denying the vigor, the dramatic intensity and the fine romantic sweep in this novel." Again: "One can only say it is a book for everyone who takes pleasure in the reading of representative American novels." "The book is intensely American and the types of homes and of people which it presents are such as may be found in any American city." Of DANGEROUS DAYS: "One of the truly notable novels of American life—charmingly written, moving, poignant, a brilliant study of married life." Mary Roberts Rinehart has found in the life of today a rich store of dramatic material and to her in a special sense belongs the distinction of having held up before us a broad and flashing mirror in which one beholds vividly re-enacted the loves and hates and braveries of our time. The dependable enjoyment to be found in her romances, the fact that in each of these stirring American stories one enjoys a fine constructive skill and a human warmth and understanding which make her scenes and her characters live in the memory—these qualities have justified the fine tribute paid by the New York Sun to Mrs. Rinehart after reading DANGEROUS DAYS: "She is the foremost woman novelist of America."

GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY, Publishers, 244 Madison Ave., New York

William Lyon Phelps writes of LEONARD MERRICK "I have read with keen interest every one of his novels that you have published thus far. They are all works of distinction, of high literary art. The best thing about them is that every one of them is a good story well told. They are so well-wrought, the plot basis is so admirable, that apart from one's constant interest in the story, it is a pleasure to see such workmanship. I quite understand why Barrie calls him the novelist's novelist. Some of his short stories resemble O. Henry in the element of surprise and concision. Just Ready

The House of Lynch Uniform with: Conrad in Quest of His Youth The Actor-Manager Cynthia The Position of Peggy Harper The Man Who Understood Women The Worldlings When Love Flies Out of the Window While Paris Laughed Each, \$1.90 E. P. Dutton & Co., 681 5th Av., N. Y.

Two Historical Masterpieces Belgium By Brand Whitlock The final, definitive history of Belgium's martyrdom by the only man in position to write it. Two vols. \$7.50 net

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BLASCO IBANEZ' latest novel is THE ENEMIES OF WOMEN Is there anything stronger than the appeal a woman has for a man? Blasco Ibanez finds the self-sufficiency of the male routed all along the line. In his Alicia he has concentrated all the resistless fascination of the female of the species as she was found in the old Europe of the pre-war days. But how the lure of sex may in great crises become a regenerator of character is shown in this new volume, which does for the war's ideals what "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse" did for war as a conflict of material forces. BLASCO IBANEZ' translated works include The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, The Shadow of the Cathedral, Mara Nostrum, Blood and Sand, Woman Triumphant Each, \$2.15. By the same author, Mexico in Revolution. \$2.00 Obtainable through any bookstore or direct from E. P. DUTTON & CO. 681 Fifth Avenue, New York

AN ENGLISH WIFE IN BERLIN By EVELYN PRINCESS BLUCHER The Boston Transcript says: "It is so far the most revealing and absorbing personal record. These pages are filled with personal touches that flash with a vivid and realistic impression of the experience." Another critic says: "To begin is to be lured on and on in growing excitement and sympathy. . . one sees the war from an angle entirely new." "In solid contribution to the history of the war, the book is scarcely less important than it is interesting." "It is certainly one of the most fascinating books of the year." Price, \$6.00 This book should be on sale in your bookstore; if not, order from E. P. DUTTON & CO., 681 FIFTH AVE., N. Y.

The LITERARY DIGEST is telling its million readers that The Book of Susan By LEE WILSON DODD "is much above the average novel, and the author's insight into feminine psychology quite remarkable. Moreover, it has the great quality of interest, and those who read it will welcome the author's name upon another title-page."—From an extended review in The Literary Digest, Nov. 6 \$2.00 at any bookstore, or direct from E. P. DUTTON & CO. 681 Fifth Avenue, New York

THE BOOK OF PHILADELPHIA By Robert Shackleton Never was there a study of the city at once so anecdotal, whimsical, humorous, informing, analytical. The soul of the city is laid open as you read. This is a fascinating volume by the author of THE BOOK OF BOSTON THE BOOK OF NEW YORK THE BOOK OF CHICAGO Drawings by Pullinger and Boyer, and many photographs. Frontispiece in color. Boxed. Price, \$3.50 net. At All Bookstores THE PENN PUBLISHING COMPANY, 925 FILBERT ST. PHILADELPHIA

TODAY'S MYSTERY STORY By PHILIP FRANCIS NOWLAN Yesterday's Mystery Solution THESE were the fourteen points of consecutive reasoning by which Harvey Hunt pointed out the murderers of Mounted Patrolman Krebs in the case of "Scorched Wires." First. Krebs' body found at opposite end of the city from beat—probably taken there in automobile. Second. Horse found beyond his beat, returning to it—Encounter took place beyond beat. Auto naturally could have passed on way south before it ran into road and met horse. Third. Double wire binding Krebs' feet had insulation scorched at one end and copper slightly melted. Indicate lightning or fuming sulphur. Fourth. Soap on this wire—From hands of a soap-breaker, who used it to stop up cracks. Fifth. Skillful bandaging—Somebody with medical knowledge—A woman, probably a nurse. Sixth. Torn blanket as bandage—A woman, probably a nurse. Seventh. Hands bound with insulated wire showing exposure to weather at one end, and soaked with grease in spots—Wire to rear lamp on automobile. Not likely to be thought of except by one familiar with the car and its equipment, in short its regular driver. Eighth. Wound in chest was bandaged—Krebs didn't die at once. Some attempt made to save him. Ninth. Head bandaged to conceal eyes—Harvey Hunt covered with him, and circumstances were such that this would not be suspicious unless the man could talk. Only place in which injured man is expected to be found is in ambulances. Tenth. Particles of grey wool on front of uniform—body covered with blanket. Blankets are carried in ambulances. Eleventh. Why would a safe-breaker take a woman with him?—Possibly because she supplied the information regarding the "cribs" to be "cracked." Twelfth. Where would she get such information?—Assuming that she was a nurse, she might get it from a patient. Thirteenth. There was no robbery reported—Hence none had yet been discovered. The stolen car was not reported as furnished in the case of a patient still in the hospital, whose house was closed up while he or she was there. Fourteenth. This house should be looked for somewhere north of the murdered patrolman's beat. Acting on Harvey Hunt's advice, Detective Krebs made the rounds of the hospitals and found a man who lives north of his brother's beat. Investigation proved that his house had been abandoned. He had spoken to the nurse of values in his safe over which he was awarded. Mounted Patrolman Krebs had seen the ambulance pass toward the north. The actions of the driver and the nurse made him suspicious, and he followed. "He distanced him. Later he encountered them coming back and stopped them. The chauffeur shot him. Fearful discovery through him, and unable to agree on what disposal to make of him, they trussed him up as described. Later, when they found he had died, they wound, they drove to the other end of the city and left the body in a lot. The ambulance was supposed to be in the repair shop. The chauffeur had 'sensibly' represented it as being out of order. XII Can you solve this mystery of— The Invisible Thief "It's quite plain that the securities were taken some time before I came there. I don't think it's 8 o'clock," said Robert Faulk. "I grant you that anybody who knew they were tucked under those other

GRIM AND GROTESQUE Tod Robbins' Stories Are in the Style of Edgar Allan Poe When you read the first sentence of "Silent, White and Beautiful" you think you are going to like the book immensely. It is: "Tomorrow at this hour I shall be dead." But the freighted promise of the phrase is hardly borne out by a careful reading of the subsequent pages. There you will find grotesquerie, horror, vividness of "chronological coloring, neat plotting, but no charm of style." Considering the preface, by Robert H. Davis, this is more than a disappointment, since Mr. Davis, himself a remarkable journalist, thinks that Mr. Robbins has developed an entirely new method of treatment. "Can it be that Mr. Davis is unaware of a man named Poe, and can it be that he has never read "The Tell-Tale Heart" or "The Black Cat"? Plainly, Mr. Robbins has read them, though his fingering of them is hardly so delicate as Poe's. It is a Green Bottle? has Stereonian dialect and is an admirable example of the journalist turned author, and he has the authentic grip on the short-story form. Of the three narratives in the book, "Silent, White and Beautiful" stands out as most graphic in story and most concise in treatment. "Who Wants a Green Bottle?" has Stereonian dialect and imaginative power. "For Art's Sake" is the best of the lot, since in it the writer unfolds his lasting affection for the supremely morbid. It is written with less "swank" too. Mr. Robbins may be recommended to the excitement hunters, but as a craftsman he is hardly what his preface claims for him. SILENT, WHITE AND BEAUTIFUL, AND OTHER STORIES. By Tod Robbins. New York: Doubleday, Garden City.

All The New BOOKS Soon as Issued Campion & Company 1313 Walnut Street Herbert Beerbohm Tree Some Memories of Him and His Life Collected by MAX BEERBOHM The London Spectator writes:—"I thoroughly advise anybody who is interested in the theatre to read this book, for it is impossible here to do justice to the variety of amusement which it will afford the reader. There is the succulence of Lady Tree's contributions; there is Mr. Shaw's stringency, with his admirable general comments on the art of the theatre; there is Mr. Max Beerbohm's delightful, affectionate irony, and there are the witty contributions by Sir Herbert Tree's daughters. In fact, the level of wit and writing in Mr. Max Beerbohm's collection is almost suspiciously high." Price, \$7.00. If not on sale in your bookstore, order direct from E. P. DUTTON & CO. 681 Fifth Avenue, New York

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