



# BOOKS

REVIEWS OF RECENT PUBLICATIONS WITH NEWS AND VIEWS OF AUTHORS



## Soundings In the Sea of Ink

A Relative of Uncle Remus.

HERE'S more than one way to tell the story of creation. We are grateful for Mr. Wells, but even he needs a little help in matters of detail. Some of his prehistoric pages leave out things we want to know about.

If you seek an antidote for such vagueness, read "How and Why Stories" (Holt), by J. C. Branner, president emeritus of Leland Stanford University. They are written out of his recollections of the talk of negro slaves before the war. And where science guesses they tell. What a lesson in clearness and brevity is this outline of the Creator's task, even after the creatures were made.

"He had to show 'em all jes' what to do an' jes' how to do it. He ha' to larn de smoke to go up, an' he ha' to larn de water to run down hill, an' he ha' to show de birds how to fly an' de fish how to swim, an' to git 'em all statched to keepin' house. An' on top o' all dat a whole lot o' 'em got to makin' trouble, for de cats was a-chasin' de mice, an' de dogs was a-chasin' de cats, an' de two ducks done eat up de two June bugs, an' de robins was a-pullin' all de red worms outen de groun', so he had to make two mo' June bugs an' two mo' red worms. Dey was a while dar when things was a-gittin' puffedly scandalous, an' it look jes' like de whole meetin' was gwine to break up in a big rumpus, for de mo' he created de harder it was to keep 'em from fightin' an' quarrelin' an' eatin' each other up."

And they're still at it, the scandalous creatures! This little book of a hundred pages is full of things to meditate upon. Since Joel Chandler Harris laid down his pen no such record of the African's earlier reactions to the white man's "civilization" has been published.

These tales may be read aloud to children, just as "Gulliver's Travels" may be. Children are not troubled by the manliness of the negro's God, any more than they are shocked by Dean Swift's repudiation of the divinity in man. Some grownup readers will find irreverence in the Lord's familiar talk with Satan and in other things. But these are no more irreverent than Job.

There are two prime virtues in the negro's religious attitude: a sense of the reality of the invisible and the courage to accept and follow out his whole programme. There is no better teacher of the absurdity of a too literal interpretation of Oriental symbolism. And yet there is profound truth under the surface of this childlike view.

### The Philosophy of History.

ONE of the childish games in which men indulge is marking life up into sections like a real estate map and writing Art or Philosophy or Practical Affairs neatly between the lines. Sometimes this may serve as a convenience. But as the world grows wiser such labels will be less and less regarded. For there is no such clearly marked division in the essential nature of things.

In his book on "History" (Harcourt, Brace & Co.), Benedetto Croce points out the foolishness of calling a man a "philosopher" if that means that he devotes himself wholly to "Philosophy." Every student of "history" or "science" or any aspect of life, if he thinks about what he is doing, is a philosopher. That is, the philosophy is inherent in the intelligent study of the so-called "facts."

"That's all very well in theory," somebody says, every time the clock ticks, "but it won't work." Then something is the matter with practice or theory, for one is only the orderly statement of the other.

Our own psychologist, William James, was a great philosopher, but he did not become so by going off in a corner and trying to reason out the universe. He did his best to make the roaring lions of experience lie down with the spotted lambs of "pure reason." He studied men as they are and recognized no partitions between the different aspects of their experience.

pointed Minister to Czecho-Slovakia both writes history and takes part in those public acts that furnish the material for the historian of a later period. And who shall say which part of his mind is the historian and which the statesman?

His latest book is "Tudor Ideals" (Harcourt, Brace & Co.). And it is much easier reading than Croce. For whether the fault be in translation or in the original, the Italian's ideas are not easy to get at. It's as hard as digging the meat out of a butternut. The meat is good, too, but if Signor Croce would mix a little more art with his philosophy and history he would better illustrate his excellent theses on the unity of all good things.

Eldest brings Henry VIII. and Elizabeth into line with to-day's development. He shows how, even in



Lewis Einstein.

their selfishness and arbitrary exercise of power, they had to reckon with their people and to seek to identify themselves with the idea of the nation's welfare. And he shows how England escaped an explosion like that in France by a gradual rebuilding of her social and political structure.

"The old edifice was erected anew and its constructive material renovated till it acquired a strength and a resiliency which existed in no other country in Europe. While in England the individual was freed by gradual process from the relics of feudal restraint, the more rigid structure existing in France required the guillotine to accomplish the same result. Freedom of the individual helped to lay the foundations for the economic prosperity on which the greatness of England was later to be built."

The period following the Renaissance had much in common with our own. We may save ourselves from a complete cataclysm if we unite flexibility with firmness.

## Europe Suffers From Rule of "Old Gang," Says Gibbs in Book to Be Issued Nov. 10

MORE THAT MUST BE TOLD. By Sir Philip Gibbs. Harper & Brothers.

SIR PHILIP might go on now without changing titles on his future books except for the Roman numeral—"II. More," "III. More," and so on. The "Must Be Told" part is characteristic of all his writing. It brings a good pack of information, for he is always the alert reporter. But the urgent tone of prophet and apostle is more and more evident. Sir Philip charges full tilt at all the persons in high places: "the old gang," as he calls them, accusing Premiers and Generals of blocking the peaceful readjustment of the world.

He has a good deal to say of Ireland, admitting freely that England has a long list of historic cruelties there to her credit. But he finds Ireland herself responsible for at least a part of her present troubles. The bitterest words in the book are spoken of Sir Hamar Greenwood and Sir Ward Carson. Here is a characteristic passage:

"Do I look like a criminal?" asked Sir Edward Carson once, in bland surprise at being called one. As G. K. Chesterton said in answer to this question: "There is only one answer possible: You do. . . . A powerful face, but without beauty in it or any touch of kindness or spiritual fire or human warmth, a haunted face, I thought it. . . . He stands pilloried for all time as a raker up of old hatreds, old fanaticisms, old vendettas, old tyrannies—the Man with the Muck Rake, prodding up the lower passions of ignorant and brutal men."

Some of it is only repetition of charges made by others, like this reference to the British commander: "Haig in France, obstinate against the idea of a unified command, which would place him under the authority of a French generalissimo, conscious that Lloyd George had little faith in his generalship after the enormous slaughter of the Somme battles and the still more frightful losses in Flanders, had his attention diverted from the state of his front to the political danger behind him. With Petain in command of the French armies he was arranging plans which would keep Foch out of supreme command—a system of mutual defence, which broke down utterly when the Germans attacked in March of 1918 and nearly won the war."

The most newsy pages are those telling of the author's observations in Germany, the rapid economic resumption and the gathering of industrial power into a few hands. "Every student of German life is now talking of Stinnes as the great industrial autocrat of Germany, and outside Germany he is regarded as a dark, sinister figure, a kind of evil genius, like a German Lenin, though his philosophy is the antithesis of Bolshevism. He is undoubtedly the most powerful personality in Germany to-day, the owner of sixty newspapers, serving the interests of the *Deutsches Volkspartei* and preaching his own gospel, which is the industrial supremacy of Germany by intensive production, based upon cheap labor and revolutionary methods of manufacture, obtaining the highest degree of efficiency, power, combination and distribution. Creating a gigantic trust

for the pooling of immense resources of raw material, capital and labor, his method is to build vertically from coal, iron and steel to all branches of manufacture in which these raw materials are used, and to capture the world's markets by a quality and cheapness which will put German goods beyond competition. As a young man he inherited enormous estates, mines, iron works and royalties valued at seven million pounds sterling. There was no branch of his own industries in which he did not have technical and personal knowledge. Not the humblest laborer in his employ could stand up and tell him about conditions of life which he had not learned by sweat of body and toil of mind. He had worked as a nit box coal power,



Sir Philip Gibbs.

mine foreman. He had been a stoker, engineer, ship's officer and sea captain. He was a slave driver to his own workmen and imported Polish labor to keep wages low. His philosophy of life would have been heartily endorsed by a Manchester mill owner of the early nineteenth century, using women and children as slaves of the machines. The Stinnes trust consisted last year of six great companies employing 250,000 men and having a capital of twelve million marks."

He found the stores of Germany well stocked with cheap goods—cheap in price, but not necessarily in other respects. "I was particularly struck," he declares, "by the book department, remembering the shoddy appearance of English publications and their abominable cost—a bad novel on bad paper for seven and six pence, a 'cheap' reprint for two shillings, a volume of history and philosophy for fifteen shillings, horribly produced in flimsy bindings. These German books were printed on splendid paper, well illustrated, well bound, most tastefully produced. A new novel was fifteen marks or one and three pence, the classics of the world were to be had for eight and a half marks." The conditions in France were less promising. Sir Philip found there a restless spirit, lack of confidence in

their political leaders, a great disappointment with the results of the war and the attitude of America. But dissatisfaction with Americans is not confined to Europe. Gibbs told of an interview with Herbert Hoover, in which the man who had so much experience with international food supply told how hard it was to make the farmers of the middle West understand how Europe affects our prosperity. They are interested in the low price of hogs, but they do not see that when Europeans are not prospering they cannot afford to eat American pork.

Sir Philip quotes the late Senator Knox on our relations to his own country: "Senator Knox was one of those who spoke to me about the misunderstanding of the American attitude to England, the mistaken idea that there was an underlying hostility likely to lead one day to war."

"The mere idea of it is impossible and ridiculous," he said, and he mentioned the wave of indignation and incredulity which had passed through America like an electric shock when such words as "drifting toward war" were used (or reported as having been used, which is quite a different thing) by one of our representatives. He admitted that there were historical prejudices, fostered in the school book, which created a bad impression on the minds of American children, hard to eradicate. But that impression of England's bad action in the past was counterbalanced by other influences of literature and tradition, and in any case the universities were helping to form a fairer point of view about the War of Independence and other periods. He once astonished a fellow Senator during a visit to Windsor Castle by laying a bunch of flowers reverently before a statue of George III.

"What on earth are you doing that for?" asked his friend. "I am paying a tribute to the Father of the American Republic," said Senator Knox. "If that fellow hadn't been such an old blockhead he might still have been under British rule."

This is a fellow author's comment on H. G. Wells: "In his country house, in Essex, described in all delightful detail in the first chapters of 'Mr. Britling' (even the German tutor was drawn to life) and in his rooms in London I have seen H. G. Wells among his friends and watched the man who beyond any doubt is one of the leaders of modern thought, one of the most active, untiring, ardent, courageous 'reformers' of this society. "It was surprising to me that I felt no sense of being in the company of greatness, nor of being inspired by the light of genius. He made little jests, shrewd little comments, amusing and interesting to hear, and he was very watchful of his company, as I saw by the quick, penetrating, sideways looks which registered them, and all their small tricks of manner in his photographic mind. . . . He has, perhaps, more than any living writer in the English language, stirred up the common mind to think beyond the little boundaries of suburban experience."

## The Ferber Chicago

By EDNA FERBER.

WHEN it comes to novel writing I think background steps prominently into the foreground. It can make or mar a book. The background of "The Girls" is Chicago, because I know Chicago. I know it from Ashland avenue on the west to Lake Michigan on the east; from Evanston to the Gary Indiana boundary line; from the Art Institute to the Stock Yards. I love Chicago and hate it as one loves and hates any person or thing whose failings and achievements, vices and virtues, beauties and imperfections are familiar through close daily association. I hate Wabash avenue and love Michigan Boulevard. I think Mrs. Woods' double chocolate ice cream sodas and apple pie are the best in the world and the statue of the Republic in Jackson Park the worst statue in the world



Edna Ferber.

(and I've seen the monstrosities in the Sieges Allee in Berlin, too).

Considering that "The Girls" is a story of three generations of women in one family I suppose the natural choice of locale might have been some storied city like New York, or Charleston, or Boston, or New Orleans. Any of those cities might have suggested age, stability and the continuity of family life. But the thing that appealed to me was this: Three generations actually cover Chicago's entire history, from the days when the city was a mud swamp Indian fort to the present huge, sprawling, ugly-beautiful city of almost 3,000,000 inhabitants. From 1836, when the story opens, to 1920, when it ends, is Chicago's whole lifetime. Seeing Chicago, that appears almost incredible. It takes one's breath away. A Chicago novel of three generations, then, means a Chicago from infancy to the present day. Those four or five years have been so kaleidoscopic as to make the onlooker dizzy. The change has been not only architectural and civic. Manners, modes of thought, mores have all moved swiftly with the years. The three women of the story—Aunt Charlotte, Lottie and Charlie—are typical each of her day and age. The lives of the three of them span the life of

Chicago. That doesn't mean that they are not to be found in any other American city. There are Aunt Charlottes and Lotties and Charlies in any city. As proof of that a letter came to me last week. The writer, a stranger to me, said in her letter: "I want to tell you that I know practically every one of the characters in your book. I have traced them back to the originals from which they were taken."

She had the advantage of me there. I never knew a single one of them.

## Her City Is Too Big For a Little World

THE GIRLS. By Edna Ferber. Doubleday, Page & Co.

EDNA FERBER has joined the ranks of propagandists. Every page of "The Girls" reeks with Chicagoism. Her characters are Chicagoans first and human beings afterward. They are not allowed to forget that they live in the shadows of Hull House, the stockyards and Edgar Lee Masters. We even discover that Chicago has first families. However, this localism is unconscious and justified by the vividness Miss Ferber has achieved. After all, cosmopolitan Chicago is an epitome of America, and hence the playground of human instinct and cosmic forces. It seems unfortunate at times that the cosmos is so small. A thriving red blooded city like Chicago should be the centre of a larger unit.

Edna Ferber sums up her book by saying: "This story is about great-aunt Charlotte Thrift, spinster, aged seventy-four; her niece and namesake, Lottie Payson, spinster, aged thirty-two, and Lottie's niece and namesake, Charlie Kenys, aged eighteen and a half."

These three women meet essentially the same problem. They all wish freedom and love. Aunt Charlotte's lover, Jesse Dick, was beneath her in social position, and was slain in the civil war. Lottie Payson slaved as her mother's housekeeper. Charlie belonged to a newer generation. She won the fight for a career of her own. And Charlotte's one act of rebellion was significant. She publicly kissed her lover, Jesse Dick, as he was marching away. According to the standards of that community, Charlotte Thrift had done an outrageous thing. War in that day was a grimmer thing, less bloody and wholesale business than it is to-day. An army whose marching song is "Where Do We Go from Here?" attaches small significance to the passing kiss of a hysterical flapper, whether the object of the kiss be buck private or general. But an army that finds vocal expression in the "Battle Cry of Freedom" and "John Brown's Body" is likely to take its bussing seriously. The publicly kissed soldier on his way to battle was the publicly proclaimed property of the kisser. Because of this impulsive act Charlotte Thrift was condemned to be an old maid.

Lottie Payson in her junior year at college became interested in Rutherford Hayes Adler. He was a fellow student. Mrs. Payson would not allow him to become a suitor because of his race. The fateful interview in which she tells him so is one of the best in the book.

Charlie becomes interested in a Jesse Dick, who was the grand-nephew of Charlotte Thrift's sweetheart. He soon won fame as a poet. Charlie was able to defy the family. There was a slight rift in the lute when he was not enthusiastic about the war. However, he went, as did the other men. Their farewell at a dance was typical of modern conditions.

They rose and wound their way among the little green tables to the dancing platform. Charlie raised her eyes to his as they danced. "Will you marry me to-morrow, Jesse? Before you go?" "No."

"Why not?" "That's all right for truck drivers and for sloppy emotionalists. But it's a poor plan. You're only suggesting it because of the music and my nearness and the fact that I'm leaving day after to-morrow. I'm no different than I was three months ago. I hate war as much as I ever did. If you think three months of camp training—"

"Will you marry me to-morrow, Jesse?" "No."

"I'm afraid, Jesse." "So am I. But not as scared as that." His cheek rested against hers. Her fingers clucked tight a fold of the bunched cloth of his rough uniform. She could not bring herself to name the fear she felt. All the way home she pressed close to the rough sleeve—the good tangible rough cloth of the sleeve—and the muscle-hard arm within it. JOSEPH GOULD

Louise Imogen Guiney, poet, essayist, recluse, said: "The main business of the scholar is to live gracefully, without mental passion, and to get off alone into a corner for an affectionate view of creation." Alice Brown, who was her friend from childhood, has written a sketch of Miss Guiney's life which is being brought out by the Macmillan Company.

## See London and New York With Thomas Burke and Brander Matthews

THE OUTER CIRCLE: RAMBLES IN REMOTE LONDON. By Thomas Burke. George H. Doran Company.

VIGNETTES OF MANHATTAN: OUTLINES IN LOCAL COLOR. By Brander Matthews. Charles Scribner's Sons.

THE proper study of mankind, according to the consensus of Mr. Pope and Mr. Venus, is—"human wariouss," in the leaping phrase of that cunning artificer of the physical details through which the spirit moves and makes its own impression in a world which is much the same from the eighteenth century to the twentieth, in spite of many inventions and recurrent confusion of the spirit. Mr. Thomas Burke has a handy knack of continuing the insight of Mr. Pope with the craft of Mr. Venus. Deeply preoccupied for a time with Limehouse and its exotic personages' lurid colorings, he has quitted those squallors after exhibiting his great gifts as a showman of the bizarre, and refilled his readers' cup with a milder brew, but one, after all, not less drawing.

It was all by way of the motor bus. One evening in armistice week he thought to escape from the noise of revelling London and clambered atop one of them without knowing its destination. When they were finally shot off at the garage he discovered that he was at Sherrick Green, N. W., a neighborhood whose name he had never heard before. He burned with shame that he should be so lost in London. "And I wondered," says he, "how far my ignorance was shared by other men who were not Sherrick Greeners. I remembered many place

names, casually dismissed by those who did not live there as 'dormitories of London'—Fortis Green, Bowes Park, Strand Green, Whetstone, Harringay, Rushey Green, Ponder's End, Cyprus; and then and there I decided that those little towns must be celebrated."

At his club he found a number of friends who had never heard of this newly discovered suburb. He upbraided them; and then: "Elsewhere I found equal ignorance of those suburbs to which trams, buses and trains go by hundreds all the day. It was clear that the only people who knew them were bus drivers and the people who lived there. A few had heard of Ladywell, Harlesden, Brockley Tips, Parson's Green; but none had seen them save one man who lived at Brockley and who exceeded myself in disgust and indignation at their insular ignorance. And when I asked him if he had ever been to Cyprus he said he couldn't afford those Mediterranean trips. When I told him that hundreds of people crossed the Thames every night to their homes in Cyprus he was facetiously incredulous. . . . London is no longer a city, it is an assembly of camps, whose members ask nothing of their neighbors. Strand Green knows nothing of the ways and thoughts of Elegant Eltham and cares less. East Sheen is deaf to the wailings of Clissold Park. Crime in one camp may draw the languid attention of camps far removed, but nothing short of this can awaken interest."

So off he went on his motor bus. It is no use to tell over the list of those fragments of London's periphery which he visited; to share the chuckling enjoyment he found one must go with him, in the book. There are high spots, of course. Such

is the record of his encounter at Harringay with the cockney pedler, who carried shoe laces, studs, scarfpins, trouser buttons, ribbons, brooches, bracelets and Cavalier poetry—this last for his own indulgence. The pedler songs, some of his own composition, some out of his dowsy anthology of "Cavalier Lyrics," corrected Mr. Burke's misquotations from Sedley and spouted Campton and Randolph and Donne. At intervals he made a sale, and finally sat at meat together. "Good old seventeenth century!" said Autolycus; "Ole John Donne—lovely things—glad you brought me to 'Arringay. I love going to new places. Yeroc, I love goin' about, going into shops, too; any shops." Says Mr. Burke: "Truly a fellow of my own shape."

Mr. Burke is strong for the changing neighborhoods. At Walthamstow he found "a number of old private houses turned into shops; they have stood the change very well. Instead of bewailing their loss of gentility they seem to enter cheerily into the new estate. They make the best of things." But there is one pervasive and dominant feature of the transmogrified world which rouses his righteous wrath; and he tells us why. This offensive thing is the "cinema," in our vernacular, the "movie." He perceives: "I loathe the cinema. I loathe it because I loathe anything that pretends to be what it is not. Most inventions and enterprises show, in twenty years, a forward movement; but after twenty years the cinema is still in the streets of the penny gaff, produced by office boys for the impudence of its promoters who are obliged to speak of it as a new art, and of their adepts and abettors as artists. It is quite right that the office boy,

and his grown up equals, who like their entertainment hot and strong, should be supplied with what they like. But when the penny gaff claims for itself dignity and consideration as a new art form—just because it can pay its workers enormous salaries—then one is justified in asking it to get off its perch. It is time that somebody said what most people are thinking about this shoddy business of cameras and claptrap and the ill informed people who direct it. Consider its 'artists'! . . . When one remembers the Russian Ballet and the exquisite *L'Enfant Prodigue*, one is appalled at the work of the simpering people who are boosted as 'artists' . . . But my main objection is its effect on the child. It is robbing the child of today of the exercise of that most precious faculty—imagination. The children . . . are shown everything as it is; not for one moment are they allowed to think or give rein to fancy. . . . Words awake imagination; pictures kill it. . . . To-day the child's imagination is stultified at every turn. He is shown everything in its crude and unsatisfying reality. There is no opportunity. He is given the bare substance and robbed of the delicious, enduring shadow. . . . It should be kept well away from the schoolroom; otherwise in twenty years will come an end of Imagination and of Fancy; there will be no more Lantern Bearers."

As a wandering philosopher Mr. Burke has made a magnificent beginning. He is for humans, and for life—not for a purse of gold. Two volumes of short stories first published by Prof. Brander Matthews a generation ago are now reissued in a single book, "Vignettes of Manhattan" and "Outlines in Local Color" are clearly sketched outlines of men and

women in New York during the last decade of Victoria's century. The illustrations by Mr. Smedley are exactly in key, and recall a much "slower" life than ours, as Mr. Brownell remarks in his Introduction. He further reminds us that since it was slower, "it was correspondingly fuller. People had time to devote to living." Hundreds of the "disappearing remnant" still unsmothered in this remarkable city will recall these sketches with a flash of the old pleasure. And their workmanship is precise and accurate to the last degree. Professor Matthews exemplifies his formula.

The original manuscript of "Eben Holden," with all the author's corrections and interlineations, was recently presented by Irving Bacheller, the author, to his alma mater, St. Lawrence University. Mr. Bacheller, who was graduated from St. Lawrence in 1882, is a trustee of the university. The manuscript is written upon sheets not always uniform in size or texture in a hand sometimes microscopic but always legible, and the insertions and revisions show how the story grew. The sheets have been bound in leather, making a volume about four times the size of the printed book, and will be preserved in the library of St. Lawrence University. Mr. Bacheller is best known to the present day reading public as the author of a book on Lincoln, "The Man of the Ages."