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THE STORY OF PHILOSOPHY

by WILL DURANT

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liath, in "Helen's Babies," where everything was "all *blug, blug, blug.*" He comments upon his wicked folk without mawkish sentimentalism, but with a pleasing twinkle. His literary references often require for their complete enjoyment a better acquaintance with Scottish literature, and especially with Sir Walter Scott, than I am fortunate enough to enjoy. For that reason I feel safe in recommending him to such lovers of Sir Walter as my senior associate, Mr. Lawrence Abbott. But he is of my generation in his admiration for Gilbert and Sullivan, and for such plays as "The Importance of Being Earnest."

Mr. Roughead's books of essays are of considerable size, and always well presented in type. Their peculiar quality, which I find so very charming, is a little hard to describe in a few words; least of all, in any of the catch-phrases of the writer of book reviews. The best method to describe it, which I can command, is to say that each of his books is contrived to make a reader, after a few moments' examination, say to himself:

"This is the kind of book to read on a long winter's evening around the fire. I wish to be quiet and uninterrupted while I read it. If I do not have that good fortune I will read it anywhere and under any circumstances. It is a good book to read aloud, to one or two persons of the right sort. There is something, as I can see, mellow and mature about it. It needs a comfortable armchair, a pipe, and the pleasant, mysterious shadows of my library for its complete enjoyment. This has been said, I am well aware, of many books; it is peculiarly true of this one. And it is a rare quality among the books which are being published to-day."

This may seem to imply that Mr. Roughead's books are especially for elderly and leisurely persons. While such as they will surely enjoy him, I must point out that the quality needed in his readers is merely the ability to enjoy a good old tale well told. Very young men have been found in quiet corners of the Widener Library, at Harvard, reading Mr. Roughead; he is a favorite with one of the wittiest writers of dramatic criticism in New York; and he is read and admired by persons of widely diverse tastes—women novelists, actors, librarians, lawyers, business men.

For the present volume, I prefer to leave it to its readers to discover its merits. "The Fatal Countess" is that Countess of Somerset, earlier the Countess of Essex, who was the central figure in one of the most extraordinary mysteries in history: the poisoning of Sir

Thomas Overbury. Personages in the drama were so exalted in station, and the circumstances so strange, that it might almost be called the premier murder, if not of the world, at least of Great Britain. Other essays in this book include an odd and amusing story of a Victorian breach-of-promise suit; a portrait of an eccentric character of old Edinburgh called "Indian Peter;" one literary and one ecclesiastical item; and two fine murders—an eighteenth-century poisoning case, called "Laurel Water," and a puzzling adventure on an island near the harbor of Dublin.

E. P.

History

SOLDIERS OF THE PLAINS. By P. E. Byrne. Minton, Balch & Co., New York. \$2.50.

This is a plea for recognition of the Indian of frontier days as a courageous fighter, an efficient soldier, and a victim of the treaty-breaking white man with a rapacious desire for the Indian's lands. Like most pleas, it is overdone. The sweeping statements so confidently made relate to matters which are an endless subject of controversy. Treaty-breaking was quite as common a practice among the reds as the whites; perhaps most of the intertribal wars were based on real or imputed violations of agreements made over the solemn pipe of peace. Many wars were for hunting grounds; and it is doubtful if any one of the savage tribes could show an ethical right to its land. What it had it got by conquest. The Sioux, for whom the author appears as special advocate, were an imperialist people who dispossessed many tribes of their territories, and the war in which they were finally vanquished by the whites was due in large measure to the appropriation by the Sioux of all the Crow lands east of the Big Horn River. That the Indian was a fighter none will dispute; but in his savage state he was in no sense a soldier. He wanted tremendous odds, either of numbers or position; he was not amenable to discipline; he was, generally, a poor marksman; he lacked persistence, and he soon tired of a particular job of fighting. The Custer battle, an account which forms so large a part of this book, furnishes an excellent illustration. Custer was overwhelmed by sheer weight of numbers and armament. This advantage should have enabled the Indians to annihilate Reno on the same day or the one following, and Terry on the third day. Instead, they did not press their attack on Reno, and, though outnumbering Terry by at least seven to one, they fled on his approach. The book is over-laudatory of the Indian, and it is unjustly censorious of Custer. Nevertheless it is not a book lightly to be dismissed. It is one of those controversial works with which one may wholly disagree and yet read and remember with interest and a certain appreciation.

Fiction

THE TESTAMENT OF DOMINIC BURLEIGH. By Godfrey Elton. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston. \$2.

A subtle and powerful piece of character depiction. It begins so deliberately and develops its purpose so slowly that it may not at once receive the reward of praise it deserves. Dominic Burleigh is a facile, agreeable fellow who pleases people, and thus is overestimated as writer and colleague. He comes to think he really is a genius. Then comes the war. He finds out that he is a coward, yet he enlists in the Territorials, sure that they won't go to the

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front. But they do; and he is too timid to resign! He is in command of a small section of trench, is cut off at each side, knows that to retreat is to die, sticks it out *through fear*—and gets great glory, medals, and promotion. But later in the war his soul is searched by the strange life he leads in No Man's Land, where deserters of all armies hide like beasts in deserted dugouts. When he gets back to England, he has lost all his self-assurance. He finds that a high-minded simple girl still loves him, and he becomes a straight man of honest purpose and modest nature. There is genuine imagination here; we believe Mr. Elton has a future in literature.

SUSAN SHANE. By Roger Burlingame. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. \$2.

Susan Shane is the female type of the great American go-getter. The story of her life is the slow progress of a woman against great odds. A miserable childhood spent on an impoverished farm, nursing her ailing mother, indigent father, and squalling, dirty brother and sister, fills her with a passion for money, which, contrary to belief, seems to Susan the antidote for all evil. At eleven the egg money fails to satisfy her, and she is planning to have a shop and sell the same ice-cream on daintier plates for five cents more than any one else in town. Bernard Moore, one of the wealthy summer residents of Glenvil, recognizes in the child, then peddling her own home-made pastries, the inherent qualities of success, and lends her the money to start a shop.

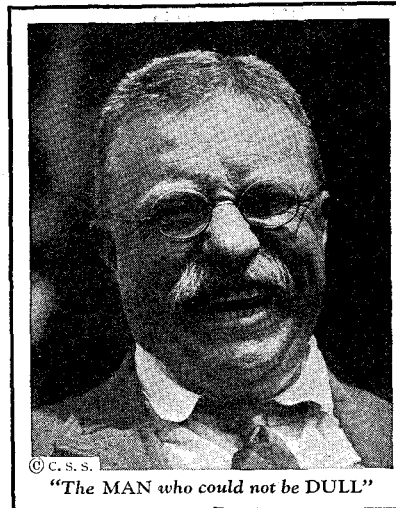
On an adjacent farm lives young David Cord. He is a potential sculptor. The love affair between Davie and Sue is a sickly thing of long standing. Recognizing even then the great snare set to trap the feet of the business woman, Susan prays passionately, "Mother of God, hear me swear from now thenceforward to let no weakness, no love of man, nothing of any kind at all, interfere with my life and my business and my great success. Ave Maria, ora pro nobis! Amen." Many things do interfere momentarily with the success of her several stores, but her dream of having a restaurant in New York with "Susan Shane" in gilt letters on the door comes true. Hard-boiled Susan overcomes the weakness of her love for David, and the end is marriage with Bernard Moore, who can give her her youth's desire—"a full-length mirror, a dressing-table covered with silver, silk to wear, and expensive perfumes." The author has painstakingly developed a vivid, if unsympathetic, personality. The steps in her career have a mechanical sureness. Susan herself is a humorless exponent of efficiency.

PORTIA MARRIES. By Jeannette Phillips Gibbs. Little, Brown & Co., Boston. \$2.

"Portia Marries," by Jeannette Phillips Gibbs, written to prove that a career and marriage, with its family obligations, are not incompatible for a woman, may be taken as an answer—perhaps intended—to Mr. Hutchinson's "This Freedom," written to prove that they are. Both authors establish their point, since characters may be created to support any theory, but Mr. Hutchinson is perhaps more convincing. Mrs. Gibbs, who is the American wife of A. Hamilton Gibbs, author of "Soundings," writes from personal experience, but in her own case she limits her law work after marriage to writing briefs for other attorneys, while Miss Thorndike, in the story, curtails her professional work not at all. A week-end suffices for the honeymoon, and when her children are born there is a skip of seventeen years to permit them to grow up and be educated. The process is not divulged. So the author fails to demonstrate her proposition in detail. We know that means to provide proper helpers are not wanting, for both parents are

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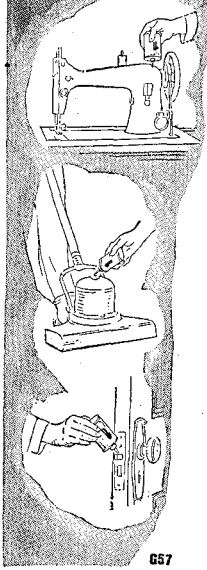
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money-makers, and Miss Thorndike—in private life Mrs. Kent—is too clever a woman to fail in making a pleasant home for her family; but whether it is possible for the mother of a family, not a super-woman, to repair to her office every morning, as does her husband, rise to eminence in her profession, and bring up a family successfully, as Miss Thorndike is made to do, still remains to be proved. Mrs. Gibbs has written an entertaining story, and she may cite instances in real life in support of her theory, notably that of ex-President Taft's daughter, Mrs. Manning, who with a family on her hands carries on her duties as Dean of Bryn Mawr. Incidentally, almost a counterpart of Paul Leicester Ford's well-known description of his heroine's eyes in "The Story of an Untold Love" as "too dressy for the daytime," we find in Jane Thorndike's eyelashes, which are "too long for daytime wear."

THE CHARWOMAN'S SHADOW. By Lord Dunsany. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York. \$2.

This book is "of the stuff that dreams are made on." The story takes place during the Golden Age in Spain, when magic was firmly believed in, and fearfully respected. "As sin increases on earth the need for gold grows greater." With these words the "Lord of the Tower and Rocky Forest" sends his son Ramon Alonzo forth to get gold for the dowry of his sister Mirandola. Ramon comes to the forest hut of a great magician, who promises to teach him the secret of making gold in return for his shadow. Collecting shadows is the sinister passion of this master of the Black Arts. Despite the doleful warnings of the "shadowless charwoman who minded that awful house," Ramon Alonzo gives up his fine, sleek young shadow in exchange for one which the master cuts out of the gloom in the air to fit him. Wherever he goes the false shadow, which will neither shrink nor stretch with the sun, sets the hand of all men against him. The master keeps his locked box of shadows in a dim cobwebby room. Ramon realizes now that he must have back his own and the pitiful charwoman's shadow. He steals in and by an incantation forces the box. "Then he opened the lid of the box a little way and took out a shadow in finger and thumb by the heels, as he had seen the magician hold his." There were limp fluttering shadows of all sorts of folk which he laid on the floor. Ramon falls in love with one of the shadows, that of a beautiful girl. It proves to be the charwoman's own shadow, stolen from her as a young girl. With her shadow back, Anemone's flesh takes on the lines and beauty of the shadow, and the lovers run away from the wood to happiness ever after. Among an increasing number of realistic novels, this illusive fantasy of Lord Dunsany's is a delight to the imagination.

Travel

EAST AND WEST OF HELLESPOINT. By Z. Duckett Ferriman. Houghton, Mifflin Company, Boston. \$5.

It is to be hoped that people who like to buy books will like to buy this one, and the remark is made in the full knowledge of what may happen to thoughtless people who go about indorsing travel books—the Putnam's 'll get 'em ef they don't watch out! Seriously, books as good as this are not yet frequent enough to be passed without comment.

Z. Duckett Ferriman is an old hand on a journey. He seems to have been taking trains and going places and doing things ever since bustles went out. Indeed, he admits with candor that the first typewriter he ever saw was in the United States' Consul's office at Jerusalem, and it was from a Turkish military band on the

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