

# CHECK LIST of NEW BOOKS

## BIOGRAPHY

### OMAR KHAYYAM.

By *Harold Lamb*. Doubleday Doran & Company  
\$3.00 5¼ x 8; 316 pp. Garden City, Long Island

History says little about Omar Khayyam. That he was probably court astrologer in Malikshah's reign; that he wrote most of the quatrains popularly ascribed to him; his work upon algebra, his commentary on Euclid, his research into mathematics and astronomy, his creation of a new calendar; his quarrel with Ghazali, head of the powerful academy of Islam; his grave at Nisapur; that he was past his boyhood in 1073, and died around 1135; this is all we know. With these bare facts and others gleaned from a painstaking study of contemporary writings and traditions, together with deductions of his own imagination, Mr. Lamb has woven a brilliant tapestry which recreates in gorgeous colors the Persia of the Eleventh Century and the life of Omar ibn Khayyam. Altogether biography and history of a high order.

### THE UNSINKABLE MRS. JAY.

By *Lewis Graham & Edwin Olmstead*. Covici, Friede  
\$2.50 5¾ x 8½; 308 pp. New York

This partly fictitious and partly biographical account of the adventurous career of Mrs. J. J. Brown, one of Colorado's most colorful figures of the past three decades, turns out to be a surprisingly good piece of light entertainment. Born on the Mississippi mudflats, she marries a bonanza king with the help of whose millions she rises from the depths of illiteracy to the heights of social prominence: a mere "pot-wrangler" back in her early days, Molly Jay lives to become a Knight of the Legion of Honor. The reader last sees her on the stage in Paris, amusing herself by playing the rôle in "L'Aiglon" made famous by Bernhardt. She acquires her unusual sobriquet following her survival of the *Titanic* disaster when reporters inquire if she will not in the future be afraid to travel by water. "Hell, no," she replies. "I'm unsinkable."

### AMERICA AND ALFRED STIEGLITZ.

By *Various Hands*. Doubleday, Doran & Company  
\$3.50 6½ x 9; 339 pp. New York

This bombastic title appears over a collective portrait of the well-known photographer. According to the editors, the book "portrays the symbolic share of Stieglitz as the leader of a communal creative movement within the march of modern thought and the central preoccupation of our era; the creating of a new civilization, a new culture, a new world." The contributors, twenty-five of them, are known in literary and artistic fields. William Carlos Williams writes a descriptive piece entitled, "The American Background." Lewis Mumford's piece, "The Metropolitan Milieu," is one of his finest. But "Lighthouses and Fog," by Charles Demuth, out-Gertrudes Stein, who also has a place on the table of contents. There are 120 illustrations by fifty artists, presumably nurtured or brought out by Stieglitz. They include Steichen, Clarence H. White, Marin, O'Keefe, Henri Rousseau, Toulouse-Lautrec, Auguste Rodin, Matisse, Picasso, and Cézanne. There are a bibliography, a chronology, and an index.

### THE WILFRID WARDS AND THE TRANSITION.

Volume 1. *The Nineteenth Century*.  
By *Maisie Ward*. Sheed & Ward  
\$3.75 5½ x 8¾; 428 pp. New York

Wilfrid Ward and his wife were among the more prominent Catholic lay people of England. They grew up during the stormy days of the Oxford Movement and in their adult lives took important parts in the struggles of the Church in England, becoming intimately acquainted with such figures as Cardinals Newman and Manning, Tennyson, Huxley, Gladstone and Baron von Hügel. In this volume their daughter writes of their lives and of English Catholicism about 1890, reprinting large sections of her father's "Reminiscences and Narrative," which he was writing when he died. There is an index.

## THE AMAZING MADAME JUMEL.

By William Carey Duncan.

Frederick A. Stokes Company  
\$3 5¼ x 8½; 321 pp. New York

Madame Jumel's extraordinary life has long been considered fertile material for an experienced biographer to pounce upon. Unfortunately, Mr. Duncan — whose literary efforts heretofore have been confined to the writing of librettos for musical comedies — was not the man logically suited to do the pouncing. But his book, weighted as it is with innumerable colloquialisms, wise-cracks, and hackneyed phraseology, never actually becomes unreadable for the simple reason that the subject stubbornly refuses to be dull. It is the story of a young harlot, the illegitimate daughter of a sailor's sweetheart, who becomes first the mistress of one of the wealthiest merchants in New York, later the idol of Parisian society, and finally — after filching the Jumel fortune — the wife of Aaron Burr. Selfish, ambitious, gay, beautiful, generous, and picturesque to the finish, Madame Jumel is certainly one of the most outstanding specimens of self-made womanhood that this country has ever exhibited. The book contains an appendix and a bibliography.

## THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MONTAIGNE.

Edited by Marvin Lowenthal.

Houghton Mifflin Company  
\$3.50 5¼ x 8½; 394 pp. Boston

Believing that Montaigne has as much to say to the world today as anyone above or below ground, yet realizing that it would be folly and impertinence to write the life of a man who had spent his genius writing it himself, Mr. Lowenthal has contented himself with piecing together, with the help of scissors and paste, all of the more significant autobiographical passages which are to be found in the *Essays*, the *Journal*, and the *Letters*. The result is a continuous narrative, shorn of all unnecessary digressions, quotations, and literary allusions, of which Montaigne was so exasperatingly fond: in short, a clear-cut portrait of one of the greatest minds of all ages. Montaigne's views on education, religion, love, friendship, and marriage; his self-confessed humors and prejudices; his inmost philosophy of life — all are to be found carefully recorded on the pages of this one treasurable volume. To Mr. Lowenthal, lovers of Montaigne should be exceedingly grateful.

EARTH CONQUERORS. *The Lives and Achievements of the Great Explorers.*

By J. Leslie Mitchell.

Simon & Schuster  
\$50 6 x 9¼; 370 pp. New York

Mr. Mitchell's biographical studies of nine explorers, from the year 1000 A.D. to the Twentieth Century, include Lief Ericsson, Marco Polo, Columbus, Cabeza de Vaca, Magellan, Vitus Bering, Mungo Park, Richard Burton, and Fridtjof Nansen. All of these men, he says, sought not merely fame or gold or adventure or new trade routes, but rather an escape of some sort to what he calls the "Fortunate Isles" and the "Unknown Land." None of them ever found this land which they consciously or unconsciously searched for, and their lives are therefore "in a fashion tragic epics." The sketches themselves are very readable. There are a number of illustrations and maps, and an index.

## AMERICAN SECRET SERVICE AGENT.

By Don Wilkie. *The Frederick A. Stokes Company*

\$2.75 5½ x 8¼; 309 pp. New York

Born in an atmosphere of criminal investigation, the son of John E. Wilkie, who for thirteen years was the Chief of the U. S. Secret Service, the author of this book has plenty of interesting disclosures to make in connection with his own thrilling experiences in the Service. There are stories of smuggling, white slavery, dope peddling, and espionage — many of the details of which have been culled from the confidential files of his father as well as from his own case-books — and at the end of the book there is a chapter devoted entirely to the subject of gangland's notorious activities in Chicago.

PIONEER PADRE. *The Life and Times of Eusabio Francisco Kino.*

By Rufus Kay Willys.

Southwest Press  
\$3 5¼ x 9; 230 pp. Dallas, Texas

Dr. Willys has written a good, substantial account of one of the outstanding Spanish missionaries of the Seventeenth Century, Eusabio Francisco Kino, whose field of operations was Mexico and the Southwest. Whatever may be one's feelings about missionaries today there was much to be admired in these roving friars at a time when "the missionary was in a sense a government-paid emissary of good will to the natives — a combination of explorer, Indian agent, preacher and empire-builder." Dr. Willys has dug up some excellent material.

## MILITARY

## DEMOCRACY AND MILITARY POWER.

By Silas Bent McKinley. *The Vanguard Press*  
\$3 5½ x 8½; 313 pp. New York

In this interesting, clearly written and original study Professor McKinley attempts to show that the citizen-infantry, more than any other part of a nation's fighting forces, has always represented the popular will, and that whenever it has triumphed democracy or democratic trends in government has resulted. Stating that more popular forms of government have had to be won by violence from a ruling class, he traces the history of past governments from the city-states of Greece to the present day and shows that this has been accomplished only when the infantry, recruited from the populace at large, formed the nucleus and indispensable strength of the military forces. With the World War, however, came new military developments — airplanes, gas, tanks — which made the infantry of secondary importance, thus threatening democratic government and paving the way for the many dictators which we now have. For today scientific advances in warfare make it possible to seize military power without the support of the soldiers on foot. The author's arguments are generally sound and convincing, but, as Charles A. Beard points out in his excellent introduction, a criticism which might be made of it is that "he has given too little attention to the rôle of ideas in the processes of history, despite the pomp and plenitude of physical power." There is no index.

## THE BACKWASH OF WAR.

By Ellen M. La Motte. *G. P. Putnam's Sons*  
\$2 4¼ x 7½; 204 pp. New York

When Miss La Motte was in a French field hospital in Belgium during 1915 and 1916 she wrote these sketches of the goings-on inside the hospital wards. Her book, first published in 1916, was barred in France and England, and after going through several printings in this country, it disgusted Uncle Sam, too, who suppressed it in 1918. The author says it was "considered damaging to the morale." For these hospital pictures — their truth is vouched for — are ugly and terrifying, most of them being descriptions of suffering and death from gas gangrene and other horrors. They were anything but pleasant and seductive reading for a people at war. Some of the sketches will leave you dumb with consternation.

## THE GHOST OF NAPOLEON.

By Liddell Hart. *The Yale University Press*  
\$2.50 5¼ x 8¼; 199 pp. New Haven

The purpose of this little book is to show the true historical importance of those who have molded the minds of the men whose actions have molded history in the past. It is a record of the gradual development of military science from the days of Marshal Saxe, pioneer of the Napoleonic strategy, down through the days of Bourcet, Guibert, Jomini, and Clausewitz. Most of the wars of Europe since the Eighteenth Century, according to Captain Hart, have been fought by tactics developed in theory by these men. At the end of the book the author devotes some space to his ideas on the importance of more adequate military schooling in the colleges. There is an index.

## REPRINTS

## CANTERBURY TALES.

By Geoffrey Chaucer. *Rendered Into Modern English*  
by J. U. Nicolson. *Covici, Friede*  
\$3.75 6 x 9¼; 627 pp. New York

This is perhaps the best Chaucer in modern English that we have. In fact, as Professor Gerould of Princeton points out in his introduction, "Mr. Nicolson apologizes, but quite unnecessarily, for the rendering he has made. His work has the merit of faithfulness; he has added less and subtracted less than most of his predecessors, having chosen wisely to translate instead of paraphrasing. What Chaucer said is here, even if not quite as he put it." The volume is handsomely bound and printed, and there are many illustrations by Rockwell Kent.

## THE WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

*The Oxford University Press*  
\$3 6½ x 10; 1263 pp. New York

This new one-volume edition of Shakespeare's complete works differs from most earlier ones chiefly in the arrangement of the plays. The usual method has been to arrange separately the comedies, histories, and tragedies, but here they appear chronologically, in order that the reader might be able to approach them, "not as a static monument of achievement, but as a vital and growing organism revealing the evolution of the poet's personality and genius." The volume is handsomely bound and is printed in clear type. The glossary was prepared by Malcolm Dougherty.