

# MURRAY HILL REPORTS BOOKMAN WEEK

*With Thumbnail Sketches by William Gropper, William Saphier,  
Dwight Taylor, and E. T. Middleditch.*

NEW YORK, November, 1921.



*Joseph U. Lincoln*

I don't have to read anything any more to keep up with literary matters. I just go around and hear the speeches and find out all about everything. It's a wonderful season for speeches. The movies and the literary speakers combined will probably within a fairly short time "do for" reading altogether.

Last week I was at the Book and Play Luncheon arranged by Emma P. Mills in honor of J. C. Squire, editor of "The London Mercury". All this week I have listened attentively every afternoon from half-past two until five to the speakers in the auditorium of John Wanamaker's store. It has been BOOKMAN WEEK there. And a most excellent affair it has been. Next week on one day I attend a memorial meeting in honor of John Burroughs held by the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the National Institute of Arts and Letters, the speakers to be Henry Fairfield Osborn, Bliss Perry, John H. Finley, and Hamlin Garland. And on the following day I go to the laying of the corner stone of the Academy's permanent home, by Marshal Foch. There are a number of other things, too, which I will tell you about later.

At the Biltmore I found a remarkable number of haughty hotel attend-

ants, apparently stationed for that purpose at frequent intervals, relaying literary luncheon guests to the Music Room. In the immediate approach to this room I discovered Miss Mills chatting with a couple of boyish looking young men whom I did not recognize. She presented me to them. I failed to hear their names, and for a moment I wondered who they might be. They seemed to be rather shy, spoke very softly, appeared to hold close together, and were in informal dress. Then I grasped the matter. They were Mr. Squire and Alan P. Herbert, English novelist. Mr. Herbert's recent book, "The House by the River", I have heard very highly praised, but I have chanced not to read it.

Now I had heard a great deal of Mr. Squire as (something like this the phrase ran) "the most influential literary man in London". I fancied a personage who behind the scenes could make or break any author over night. A man of awful power in English literary politics. I pictured London literary society cringing before his majestic tread. Perhaps I expected him to present the dominating figure of a Tammany chieftain. At any rate, I was considerably surprised by the mildness of his aspect, and the decidedly retiring character of his manner.

"This seems to be a very literary hotel," I observed. "The last time I was here," I said, "was when I made



Frederick O'Brien

a call upon Mr. Chesterton." "You couldn't meet a better man," Mr. Squire replied, reverently shaking his head. "He is the best there is," he added.

Henry Seidel Canby, editor of "The Literary Review" of the New York "Evening Post", in the course of his well-turned address, ran rapidly over the various periods of American literature, leaving us today, as we hold, with a native American literature, unimitative of our parent English literature. Doctor Canby speaks with rattling energy and, so to say, right out of his head. Mr. Squire has very dark hair. He is of medium build or, in the pugilistic term, a light middle-weight. He arose slowly, not as though he found any zest in public speaking. He stood throughout his talk somewhat inclined forward, much of the time slyly peering down at notes before him on the table. But if he doesn't particularly enjoy talking, his hearers generally, I think, do. In his remarks he came around to the matter of imitateness in literature. He thought it was well for one not to try to write like Tennyson, or like Thackeray; but he thought it was not well for one to try *not* to write like Tennyson, or Thackeray, or any other writer. He did not think there was so much difference between American literature and English literature as you might think. Nothing fundamental. In America, he said, in New England, in the middle west, in our California, as in England and everywhere else, the basic story of a man's life was very much the same story.

He was not dramatic in manner, he

employed no tricks of emphasis, but he was in effect exceedingly eloquent. A man was born, he had a childhood upon which he looked back with more or less of a degree of tenderness, he probably fell in love, usually he married, commonly he had children, he looked forward to old age, and beyond that was a mystery which must concern him all his days. And was not that the essence of his life everywhere? The simplicity with which this was said somehow made it very striking.

The briefest address I think I ever heard was made by Franklin P. Adams. He had come not expecting to be made to speak. He arose, very reluctantly, in response to a clamorous demand for him to talk. He prefaced about twenty-five words by the statement that this was the "first speech" he had ever made. Among others who talked very well were Hamlin Garland, Professor John Erskine, and Mr. Herbert. Professor Erskine always has beautiful clothes. In the introduction of Mr. Herbert I learned that he is one of the editors of "Punch". There seem to be many editors of "Punch", and apparently they all have very pleasant editorial jobs.



Captain Traprock

E. V. Lucas, who made a trip across this continent last year in a tour of the world, is an editor of "Punch".

The BOOKMAN LITERARY WEEK opened on a Monday with "Fiction Day". It opened to a packed house. A most interesting audience it was that had turned up for a book affair.

Very catholic. Numerous well-known authors and editors to be seen here and there; charming flappers all about; hosts of substantial looking middle-aged and elderly people; a youthful Japanese not far from me; and in one corner a couple of young negroes. A striking thing was the large proportion of able bodied and active looking men present at literary doings. As an able bodied, active looking man I have more than frequently felt decidedly lonely at literary gatherings.

Those on the program but not at the moment performing were kept behind a richly dark stage curtain falling in noble folds. Before this curtain suddenly appeared a couple very entertaining in contrasting effect—lithe and agile, featherweight John Farrar, editor of *THE BOOKMAN*, and the looming, rolling figure of Heywood Broun. Mr. Broun wore a very negligée collar. While Mr. Farrar was introducing him he sat relaxed forward, his elbows on his knees, and smiled in a quaintly intimate way at the audience. Remarkably black hair. Very swarthy complexion. Effect in general curious. Looks like a mammoth elf, if those terms can be combined. Ambled up and down as he talked. And, much of the time, clasped his jowls in his hand. Andrew Lang was so productive that he was accused of being a syndicate of writers. Mr. Broun's productivity certainly is at least equally bewildering. It is difficult to remember offhand all the publications in which he is a regular feature. Alexander Woolcott one time remarked of his mind that it was a huge vat into which everything was poured.

Mr. Broun talked about the books which he regarded as the "first ten" novels of recent publication. He

began with "Alice Adams", and included among others, "Three Soldiers", "The Beginning of Wisdom", "Messer Marco Polo", "Mr. Waddington of Wyck", "Dangerous Ages", and "If Winter Comes".

It is, of course, quite impossible to report in any detail a packed program filling six whole afternoons. All naturally that I can undertake to do is to try to reflect something of the spirit of this strikingly successful affair. A few personages whose names appeared on the printed program failed to arrive; but as the week proceeded Mr. Farrar inducted into his show a considerable string of acts not originally announced. So well did it all go off that I think next year the enterprise should be a *BOOKMAN LITERARY MONTH*. On Wednesday the weather was exceedingly foul, but there was standing room only in the auditorium and not an abundance of that.

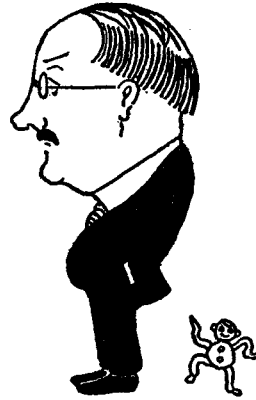
An immensely taking feature of the program was the presentation on divers days of bits of the art of the theatre. There was much hilarity and excellent acting in the one-act play "What Is Your Dangerous Age?", a burlesque by Otto Liveright and Beatrice Kaufman on Rose Macaulay's book. The audience witnessed the psychoanalyzing of a number of ladies. The cast included Dorothy Nathan, Leah Javne, Tom Powers, Juliet Brenon, and Blanche Hays. Far and away the most entertaining dragon I ever saw was valiantly slain to save a distressed maiden in the Marionette Theatre production of "Orlando Furioso" under the direction of Remo Bufano. On a stage embellished with South Sea paintings from Jerome Blum's collection Dr. Traprock appeared in person (completely outfitted in the most approved explorer's equipment) and told the story of the cruise

of the "Kawa", to the accompaniment of gigantic lantern slides. The title of Expeditionary Editor of THE BOOKMAN had just previously been conferred upon him. He was followed by Mrs. Traprock (née Margaret Severn) in a dance which was all that a South Sea dance ought to be, whether or not a South Sea dance is all that. That was on "Travel Day", when Harry Franck and Frederick O'Brien were the first speakers. It was a remarkable retreat that Mr. O'Brien made from the public gaze at the end of his talk. He came through the parting in the curtain (I was behind it) at one leap. Then he and his fellow intrepid adventurer Mr. Franck fell to discussing the harrowing adventure of making speeches. Other brave explorers in the region of oratory were Sydney and Marjorie Barstow Greenbie, Arthur Guiterman, Marguerite Harrison, Hector Mac Quarrie, and Robert Cortes Holliday. On "Drama Day" the Provincetown Players appeared in "Trifles" by Susan Glaspell. Teresa Helburn spoke on the work of the Theatre Guild, and introduced Eva Le Gallienne, the charming heroine of "Liliom". Cornelia Otis Skinner had much to relate of Ibáñez, with special reference to "Blood and Sand". And Frank Craven gave the audience merry greeting.

On the day devoted to poetry Clare Eames gave a scene from Sidney Howard's splendid play "Swords", and Folk Songs of All Nations were presented by the Young Women's Christian Association. Marguerite Wilkinson spoke on the poets of the fall, many of whom were present to read from their works. We were glad to see the three Benéts,—William Rose, Stephen Vincent, and their sister Laura,—Amanda Hall, Aline Kilmer, Bernice Lesbia Kenyon, Jessie B. Rittenhouse, Leo-

nora Speyer, Jean Starr Untermeyer, Margaret Widdemer, John V. A. Weaver, Archie Austin Coates, and John Hall Wheelock.

"Children's Day" was made memora-



Gelett Burgess

ble by the appearance of Palmer Cox and Gelett Burgess, who had something to say about their respective literary offspring, the Brownies and the Goops. Other friends of the children were there, too: Annie Carroll Moore, Anna Cogswell Tyler, Algernon Tassin, and Elmer Russell Gregor. And the following youngsters presented "A Story Book Fantasy" by Eleanor Schorer, with a dance arranged by Mrs. Carter-Waddell.

The Nurse .....	Helen Shea
Beth .....	Natalie Purvin
Buddy .....	Bernard Cohen
Author .....	Harry Tartalsky
Queen .....	Victoria Gilpin
Prince .....	Sherwood Clements
Clown .....	Chester Herman
Singer .....	Nancy Neilsen
Villain .....	William Shea
Witch .....	Janet Meyer
First Page .....	Louise Mele
Second Page .....	Florence Gunther
Fairy (dancer) .....	Josephine Waddell
Priest .....	Max Rubin
Fiddler .....	Doris Scott

I wish I had space to do justice to the antics of the clown, the terrifying powers of the witch, the loveliness of

the fairy, and other delightful impersonations, but I must hurry along.

The BOOKMAN LITERARY WEEK doubtless left a great many people grateful for much excellent entertainment provided free of any charge for



*Jean Starr Untermeyer*

admission; it is very likely that it left a good number of people stimulated with a greater interest in books than they had before; and it must have left the habitual reader thoroughly awakened to the fact that things in our literature are not as they were. The spirit of a new day echoed throughout the week's program.

Henry Aikman, a square-cut young man with an effect of much very white collar and very sizable spectacles, early on Monday brought into view the "epidemic" of young authors.... More young Americans writing novels than ever before.... A fine thing, he thought. Owen Johnson declared that every author realizes that he faces a different audience than before the war.... Different in its conception of its relations to the family and to the state.... Different in its ideas of nationalism and internationalism.... The next ten years will see a new world.... The idea of his recent book "The Wasted Generation" was that that generation to which he belonged had

failed to come out with the leadership that should have "been ours".... We now stood on the threshold of a forward movement. A stocky chap, Mr. Johnson, a hint of baldness at the crown of his head, who as he speaks stands with folded arms. Alexander Black proved to be a graceful speech-maker. Dr. Blanche Colton Williams, of Columbia University, in an animated discussion of the present trends of the short story, was the fastest talker on the whole program. Bob Nathan appeared for a brief moment. And Fannie Hurst, who appeared to have been shot into the elevator from a taxicab caught at the Grand Central Station six minutes before, made a dashing picture.

Joseph Lincoln, who was scheduled to appear on Monday but did not arrive until the following day, which was devoted to the theme of "the younger generation in literature", remarked that in this situation he felt like a typographical error. Fine, hearty fellow, rather hoarse voice, hands in pockets. Well, there is a whole lot to this younger generation business but there was too enthusiastic a response to Mr. Lincoln and his salt-savor stories of old line Cape Codders for anyone to get the notion that it is the whole works.

Mr. Farrar stated that the purpose of this day's program was "to visualize for you that there is an awakening in literary life". A good deal of liveliness was given to the afternoon when it developed that the plan of it presented a sort of game, or debate, between two somewhat contrasting teams, so to say. That is, several quite recently arrived at considerable distinction in the literary affairs of the country, had their say as to what they considered their generation felt it was trying to do. And several



J. V. A.  
Weaver

others who have been prominent in this field for a more or less longer time had been invited to comment upon the activities of the younger writers from the position of their perspective. There seems to be, however, some shuffling up of the various "generations" of our literary men. Dr. Canby, who had been introduced by Mr. Garland at the Biltmore luncheon as something very like a young radical, was here presented as, so to put it, a figure belonging to the old guard of literary traditions. It struck me that Dr. Canby was remarkably graceful in both rôles.

John Erskine sprang a generation yet to come into the fray. He dwelt on the real promise of "even younger writers than these children you are to look at today"....The writing that goes on in the public and private schools....What aptitude those students have!...A phenomenon!... Shortly our country in general will be as normally artistic as any. The new group was in the van guard today. He had envy for the young groups, for the opportunity they have, and applause for the use they were making of it. It was to be noticed that they were all friends....Great deal of chumminess among them all.

...A writer in his younger years had no companions in misery....No kindly interest of others of the same age as today. Perhaps there was a danger of the present little groups admiring each other too much. They admired each other, indeed, but what else did they admire? Their books were mostly disagreeable. Then he came upon



John Hall  
Wheelock

what he very frankly called a stricture. There had been a hope that our literature would get out of preaching. But the younger generation was the most Puritanical we ever had.... Didn't preach about the same things the Puritans preached about....But the feeling just as strong....Trying to reform us....We were waiting for some interest in art as art—not opportunity to criticize social relations. Poetry was altogether given over to the poet's personal symptoms....Remarkable confessions....In which, perhaps, the ladies excel. The best day for American literature would be when American literature portrayed American life with enthusiasm.



Palmer Cox

Donald Ogden Stewart has a striking platform manner. Marches up and down, up and down, with steady even tread, from first to last, talking over his shoulder. Slender supple figure. Lightly scoffing humor. He would tell a fable....The fable had no moral....Because the younger generation had no morals....They had irony....But sentimentality went out with the younger generation....They were disillusioned....Perhaps it was the war that disillusioned them....One of the nice things about that was that the further away from the war you were the more disillusioned you could be.... There is only one illusion the younger generation wants to hang on to....If they become disillusioned about disillusionment there'll be little left of the younger generation. Then he told his fable. It was calculated to disillusion the elder generation of critics concerning the advantage of their perspective. Dorothy Speare, whose book "Dancers in the Dark" has been said to be a re-

ply to "This Side of Paradise", explained that what she was up to was an attempt to interpret the young girl of today. At the age of ten she had written a novel of marriage. When she showed hesitation in showing it to a gentleman who had asked to see it, and he told her that he was sure she need not be ashamed of it, her reply had been, No, but she feared it would startle him.

John Weaver contended that it was a wrong idea that the younger generation had no precedents, that they were jumping off a spring board into the air. They read, but they read Conrad, not Wordsworth.... Wordsworth had died because he forced the moral.... The younger generation looked not at anything as either good or bad.... And got the name of *révoltés* because they would not accept the old "bromidioms" and platitudes.... The younger generation had gone through the war in service, coming into active life when the war came.... And the kind of world which let such a war come was not the kind of world they liked.... Why not kick to change it?

Dana Burnet struck a note which there are divers indications we shall hear more and more of shortly. Impressively earnest young man; aggressive manner; sturdy build; heavy voice. He observed that we heard so much of the new realism that it was time that somebody should say a word about the new romanticism. He had just written a romantic novel. And as the romantic writer had become such an abject figure, he would say a word for him. The romantic writer of a little while ago *was* an absurd figure.... Because he used a drug store kind of fiction formula.... And the revolt against him had inclined the present

generation toward their attitude, defined as a realistic movement.... But realism was merely turning over soil which would produce a new movement.... The ancient romantic writer became highly moral in his message.... The new movement didn't know where to hit the recent romantic writer, so it disowned him altogether.... There was danger of the new cult doing away with imagination.... Art was not a department of life but a form of life.... Romantic writer was a poor name, anyhow.... The really imaginative, creative artist belonged to all ages and all times.... He gave not merely an imitation of life, but life itself.

In Dr. Canby's "definition" of the younger novelists they were young romanticists who had grown up in an atmosphere of suspicion.... Things did not seem to them to be what they were said to be.... In what happened to them they found evidence that the United States was wrong, and they put it down as evidence.... They put down everything that happened to them because they knew more about that than anything else.... And the result was a new kind of book.... Not Zola realism.... A romantic attempt to free their souls. Henry Sell, in his celebrated young-man-about-the-liveliest-spots-in-town style, considered pure literature versus commerce, and recalled his instructions to Stephen Vincent Benét to give him "something for the illustrator to get his teeth into". He was followed by John Bishop, managing editor of "Vanity Fair", and Bob Duffus, lately arrived on the New York "Globe".... But, as I said before, I can attempt to give only the gist of what went on in this week's affair.

MURRAY HILL

## THE LONDONER

*New Year's Resolutions for Publishers and Authors—J. D. Beresford—  
The Passing of the Romantic Novelists—Four Noteworthy New Books—A.  
Clutton Brock.*

LONDON, November 1, 1921.

BY the time these notes appear, I suppose, everybody in America will be thinking of good resolutions for 1922. Why one should make resolutions is not clear. It is only an annoyance, and other people are so annoying that it seems hardly worth while to make an enemy of one's self. However, the thing is "done", and will be "done" as long as human beings are imperfect and aspiring. One of my resolutions is to write a good book. It will be seen that this is an ambitious and hopeless scheme. But not more hopeless than many of the plans to be made in good faith by Americans on the first of January. It would be better to confine all such aims to the simplest possible desires, for there is no sense in discouraging one's self by wild plots against one's own happiness and self-complacency.

All publishers will probably determine to publish only good and successful books during 1922. They will be sure to plan to give deserving authors the highest possible royalty upon each and every copy sold of every book in their lists. And authors will set themselves to give publishers and the public only the very best work that they can do. It is a dream. Even if an author is capable of doing good work, he cannot control himself. He has his fits of sterility, his exhaustions, his unsuitable subjects, his momentary stupidities, his personal difficulties which reflect themselves in his work

for good or ill. Does anybody ever think of that in reading his books? I believe not. After all, why should they? The work is to be judged upon its merits. It is offered to us for our delight, and we cannot judge it upon humanitarian grounds. And yet when one hears the circumstances in which some work is done (especially literary work) it does occasionally seem as though there should be a special clause in every criticism allowing for the author's personal weariness. I know that in my own case I never make any allowance for difficulties affecting the work I am considering. I say to myself, "Is this a good book?" and if it does not seem so I do not consider whether the author had a headache or a cold or a fit of the blues or indigestion. The point has often been urged before by wits such as Gilbert that the jester has to go on entertaining, even though he has trouble on hand, and Mr. Prohack, the hero of Bennett's new novel, makes a similar remark. But when all is said and done the writer, unless he is a journalist writing against time, has plenty of opportunity to change what he has written in a bad mood, so perhaps we should not offer him our sympathy without some exceedingly searching inquiry.

The great thing, then, for the writer, is first of all to wish and intend that there shall be no bad work from his pen during the year; but a further resolve should be that he will take each piece of work he does and