

description and characteristic unexpected turns of phrase. Mrs. Whitaker is not among the writers contributing to "The Furnival Book," a very representative collection of short stories issued by Messrs. Joiner & Steele. All the tales are on a high level, and have been so chosen that taken together they combine to produce unity throughout every diversity of theme. Specially good are Mr. T. F. Powys's "The Key of the Field," Mr. H. E. Bates's "The Hessian Prisoner" and Mr. John Collier's "Green Thoughts."

Rereading Miss Irwin's "Still She Wished for Company" brings home to one still more clearly her exquisite certainty and grace of expression. Indeed in the form and structure of her writing, in her combination of inborn talent with a wide and highly wrought culture Miss Irwin is unique among present-day novelists. She is one of the few, either men or women, of whom it can be said that she is a master of her art.

MEN AND WOMEN IN LOVE

The Bridge.

By Naomi Royde-Smith. 7s. 6d. (Gollancz.)

The Gods Arrive.

By Edith Wharton. 7s. 6d. (Appleton.)

Family History.

By V. Sackville-West. 7s. 6d. (Hogarth Press.)

A Long Time Ago.

By Margaret Kennedy. 7s. 6d. (Heinemann.)

Moon in Scorpio.

By Helen Granville-Barker. 7s. 6d. (Sidgwick & Jackson.)

Candle Flame.

By Barbara Willard. 7s. 6d. (Gerald Howe.)

The Seraphim Room.

By Edith Olivier. 7s. 6d. (Faber & Faber.)

She Was Sophia.

By Ruth Manning-Sanders. 7s. 6d. (Cobden-Sanderson.)

Which Is Bitterness.

By Beatrice Henry. 7s. 6d. (Barker.)

The Triumph of Time.

By Storm Jameson. 8s. 6d. (Heinemann.)

by Norah Hoult

Most of these novels by women writers are concerned with the personal relationship between man and woman, an eternal theme which in modern fiction is viewed from more and more subtle and complicated angles. No longer is it that he or she loves, or he or she does not love: the question is how much and how little, in what way, and for how long. And so forth. In analysing such congenial complexities, women writers have come into their heritage.

Miss Royde-Smith is a peculiarly feminine artist, interested in details rather than outlines, in personalities rather than principles. Her story, like that of others on my list, is of a liaison, but a liaison hedged about with so many subtleties, and approached with so much delay that the word in its masculine straightforwardness seems out of place.

Andra is the young wife of a timid middle-aged parson. She nearly loses her life in childbirth at the age of nineteen, with the consequence that for many years she lives a cloistered life with her husband in their country rectory. When she is in the middle thirties she goes abroad for a holiday and becomes involved with people whose standards are completely removed from those native to her. This world is free from moral taboos and petty restrictions, and though Andra feels herself to be an outsider she also feels no disposition to be shocked. On her way home she encounters in a railway compartment a French officer who is returning to his birthplace after many years' service in Africa. A three days' idyll in Avignon results, but the

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Times Literary Supplement

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And of Course

Education and the Social Order

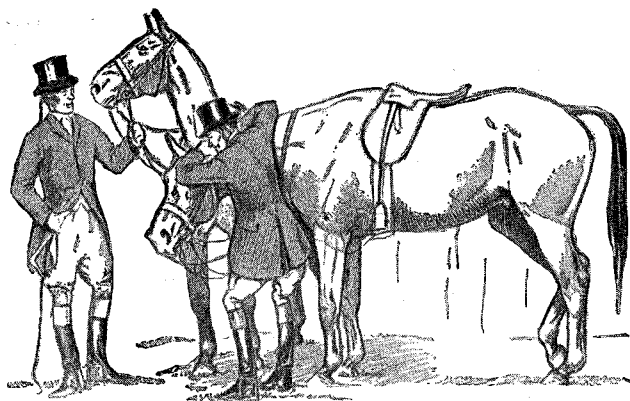
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"Challenging and pointed wit."—

Manchester Guardian

THE BOOKMAN CHRISTMAS 1932



From *A'Hunting We
Will Go*
By Brigadier Geoffrey Brooke
(Seeley, Service).

"WHELAN'S BROTHER'S
FUNERAL OF COURSE."

legendary bridge of Avignon leads nowhere, nor does this episode. Andra returns to her placid country home to remember and to find happiness in her remembrance.

But such an outline reflects very badly the exquisite detail of the whole finely wrought story. It is a matter of taste whether such fine embroidery inspires admiration or some occasional impatience.

For Mrs. Wharton's book I confess I have very little patience, since here an intricate relationship is placed in a setting which seems to have neither significance nor reality. We move in circles where the overwhelming importance of a writer of novels is taken for granted. Halo has left her husband, and accompanied Vance in his ways because she believes that he is a genius and that in her he will find true inspiration and criticism. Vance is, it should be said, one of those novelists for whom women put out clean blotting paper with devotion, and who are accustomed to read their works in progress, chapter by chapter, if not page by page, to admiring audiences. He is also a restless genius; sometimes he takes Halo's advice; sometimes he listens to less wise counsellors. And there is of course an experience with another woman. So we read description after description of the artistic temperament disporting itself in New York, Spain, Paris and London. The total effect is curiously old-fashioned, and for all Mrs. Wharton's skill unimportant.

Miss Sackville-West and Miss Margaret Kennedy are in comparison straightforward and competent story tellers. They have done what they set out to do with economy and complete success. Miss Sackville-West's story is that of a possessive middle-aged woman in love with a young rising Labour politician. The contrasts here are broad but real.



From *Irish Airs*
By D. M. Large
(Constable).

THE REUNION.

Evelyn Jarrold is a lovely pleasure-loving woman in the conventional Edwardian tradition. Her lover, Miles, is an iconoclast, impatient of any preservation of the proprieties and passionately interested in his career. The differences between them are more important than the woman's seniority: Evelyn cannot give Miles sufficient length of rope, and the end is a cleavage followed by Evelyn's death of an old-fashioned broken heart.

Miss Margaret Kennedy handles satire with a sure and admirable touch. An old family scandal has been resurrected by the publication of a famous singer's autobiography. Some twenty-five years ago Elissa Koebel, the operatic star, has at the behest of her carefully nurtured tempestuous temperament gone to the North-West of Ireland, to a convenient island, and there met various aunts, uncles and children on holiday. The last arrival is Dick Napier, an overworked doctor who is almost on



From *For Adults Only*
By Beverley Nichols
(Jonathan Cape).

"CORR, DARLING! IF ONLY
I'D KNOWN!"

the verge of a nervous breakdown. He succumbs eventually to the physical bond between himself and Elissa, but as it happens his wife Ellen, gentle and unsuspecting, is spared the knowledge. None of the family can believe that she does not know; but she does not know, and twenty-five years later, when the book is published and her husband dead, it comes into her hands and falls out of them with complete naturalness.

"The print looked small and uninviting and she had left her glasses downstairs. In any case she did not suppose she would care for it. There had been something unpleasant about Elissa Koebel. A silly woman. . . . A phrase caught her eye:

"My soul had become a battlefield. I was torn between Byron, Jesus Christ and Edward Carpenter . . ."

"A very silly woman. She put the book back into the suitcase . . ."

With Mrs. Granville-Barker we return to the characteristically feminine viewpoint, but in this case no one is likely to complain, for here is a writer who is gay, wise and witty and who has given us a wholly delightful book. An intelligent but rather plain young girl and an elderly beauty are friends; perhaps, the suggestion is made, they have gravitated together on the impulse of a natural law. The setting is Rome, and Olivia and Frances entertain among others two young

Englishmen, Alan and Daniel. Daniel is the choice of both women, and each he treats finally with cruelty and indifference. For Frances, the young woman, there is the faithful and admirable Alan, but for Olivia there is nothing more since her life has been a succession of love affairs and admiring suitors. When she herself remarks complacently upon this, Frances replies spontaneously, "How dreadful—never to have belonged just to yourself." Here a fundamental contrast is given in a few words, and it is one of the many virtues of this book that Mrs. Granville-Barker can present in a phrase what most writers need to spend a chapter upon.

"Candle Flame" takes us back to the boudoir. Another awkward tempered artist—a painter this time—keeps an adoring young woman on tenterhooks, while a young man, Konrad, hovers unhappily within call so that Anna may exploit his affection in order to make Blaise, the artist, jealous. This scene goes on till Blaise makes the mistake of succumbing to another woman more wholeheartedly than usual, and Anna decides that Konrad is really the right man after all. Whereupon Blaise commits suicide after slashing his pictures to pieces and mourning for his wasted life.

The other three new novels on my list fall into a different category. Miss Edith Olivier has given us a book whose plot is a novel one, since it is concerned with the lack of a proper drainage system to one of the old houses in a cathedral close. It is not that Mr. Chilvester is neglectful of his house which he loves and serves as others love and serve more human idols. But he holds very decided views upon the modern spirit, and includes in his dislike not only electric light, telephones and bath-rooms, but modern sanitation. He has two daughters—one, Lilian, is an invalid who lives for her painting, and is by way of being a saint; the younger, Emily, wishes with all her heart to be more



From *Diary of a Stage Struck*
By Donald L. Henderson
(Houghton).

SITTING DEJECTEDLY ON
A TROLLEY AT SHEFFIELD
CENTRAL STATION.

modern, to be allowed freedom; but when a young man kisses her she cannot help taking it for granted that he must necessarily want to marry her.

Miss Olivier has made a decorative and appealing pattern of the three lives, the angry old man struggling to fight against ministries of health and corporations to preserve his own ideals, the unhappy young girl, and the elder sister painting peacefully in her attic bedroom. But the sister descends from her bedroom to seek her tormented

sister who has run away and tried to drown herself, and though she finds her, loses her own life; while Mr. Chichester is eventually beaten by the law, and also dies. Emily is left to try and fit into a world which baffles her.

"She was Sophia" and "Which is Bitterness" have this in common, that they belong to a type of not unattractive novel which gives the impression that the author has gone straight to "real life" for the characters, and translated inessentials with precise care. They are realistic without being for a moment convincing, for the author is copying human beings and forcing them to walk in the way of a hackneyed and indifferent plot. Mrs. Manning-Sanders is the more competent writer,

"The Lovely Ship," "The Voyage Home" and "A Richer Dust," by Miss Storm Jameson, have now been collected into one volume, and the whole story of the indomitable Mary Harvey well repays the reading.



From *Pretty Pictures*
(John Lane).

THE COMPLEAT CRIMINAL

Death On the Way.

By Freeman Wills Crofts.
7s. 6d. (Crime Club.)

The By-Pass Murder.

By David Frome. 7s. 6d.
(Longmans.)

Beginning the Adventure.

By Augustus Muir. 7s. 6d.
(Methuen.)

Cottage Sinister.

By Q. Patrick. 7s. 6d.
(Longmans.)

Rabbit's Paw.

By Selwyn Jepson. 7s. 6d.
(Hodder & Stoughton.)

The Fourth Dagger.

By Luke Allan. 7s. 6d.
(Arrowsmith.)

by

Francis D. Grierson

The British citizen claims, with not unjustifiable pride, to be the most law-abiding in the world. It is amusing therefore to note his intense interest in the doings of the criminal, both real and imaginary—an interest in which I confess I share very heartily. There is something horribly attractive in a good full-blooded murder, to be honest; one shudders at the crime itself, but the motive which inspired it must always



*From Small Talk at
Wreyland
By Cecil Torr
(Cambridge University Press).*

THE PIXY GARDEN.

vibrate that sensitive life-nerve common to humanity of all classes and creeds. Every man is a potential saint; every man—although few will admit it—is a potential criminal, given an overwhelming motive and an adequate opportunity.

There is quite a crop of really good motive and mystery in the five books on my desk. To begin with, there is "Death on the Way," by Mr. Freeman Wills Crofts, one of the three or four really great criminologists of modern fiction. He has the uncommon knack of being as accurate as a railway timetable, without ever being dull. The simile is appropriate, because the scene of his latest book is a railway line on which Roger Ackerly, an engineer, is cut to pieces by a train. One is of course hampered by the reflection that to reveal the secret of his death—or those of the victims in the other books presently to be considered—would be impossibly unfair to the author; but those readers already familiar with Mr. Crofts's work need only be told that he is at his best. Once again we see the patient Inspector French following the

slightest clues with that dogged perseverance that leads him to his goal in a much more satisfying manner than



*From Houses and Gardens of England
(Batsford).*

GARDENS AT LEVENS HALL, WESTMORLAND.