

Jane Welch Carlyle, A Misplaced Victorian

If Jane Welch Carlyle, wife of the famous Thomas, is forgotten among modern women, James Douglas brings her back as a woman as modern as any to-day. His article in *The Daily Express* (London) is a series of snapshots from probably unread books of the last century, and one may look far for her match.



Ill most of her life, like her querulous husband, from a variety of aches and pains, always "demented," as Harriet Martineau said, "by headaches, colic, face ache, and insomnia. They lived on bread, meat, potatoes, coffee and tea, avoided vegetables, and thought that fruit was of no use but to give people a colic.

"Nevertheless, she was an elf who fascinated everybody by her airy wit, her freshness of spirit, and her contempt for the Victorian conventions.

"At forty-eight she climbs the six-foot wall of Haddington churchyard. At fifty-two she finds Scotch snow in London on her way home from the theater, and is so drunk with the sensation that she runs along with her bonnet hanging on her back, one minute taking a slide and the next lifting a handful of snow to eat it.

"She enlivened a prosy tea-party by throwing her cup and saucer into the fire. She sent a bottle of whisky to the owner of a barking dog, requesting him to quiet it by making it drunk.

"She sent a kiss to a baby, saying, 'I would not do it myself for five guineas. Young children are such nasty little beasts.'

Shocking to Victorians

Defamers of Victorian England, or rather Scotland, might usefully remember that the age produced this woman:

"She shocked the Victorians by lunching alone in a restaurant or riding on the top of an omnibus. When she was accosted in the street she retorted, 'Idiot!'

"She swore! 'Why in the Devil's name don't you write to me?' she wrote. On a dull visit in the country she heads her letter 'Hell,' and is not sure she won't have a seal with 'Damnation' on it.

"At forty-nine she revels in a new evening gown 'cut down to the due pitch of indecency.' She makes jokes about garters."

Mr. Douglas accounts for all this scorn of convention by reminding us that—

"In an age of sickly sentiment Jane Welch Carlyle was a ferocious realist. But her bark was worse than her bite, altho she professed to hate 'that damned thing, the milk of human kindness.'"

"The Old Homestead"—Again and at Home

A century ago, Denman Thompson, author of "The Old Homestead," was born at Swansea. Two centuries ago, Swansea itself was born. So the little New Hampshire town has been celebrating both birthdays by reviving the famous play, with Thompson's granddaughter in the cast.

Indorsed by the clergy—not alone because it was based upon the story of the Prodigal Son, but more particularly because not a line anywhere could bring "the blush of shame" to the most maidenly cheek—"The Old Homestead" was for decade after decade the one play which strictly Puritan America permitted itself to approve.

As Mr. H. I. Brock reminds us in the *New York Times*, "there was not a town of theater size in the good old days to which Thompson did not lead his company, partaking, like Jefferson's, of something of the nature of the old family troupe which produced the Divine Siddons.

"For many the recurring visit of the play was an annual event marked in red on the calendar. The total takings in some two-score years in the closing luster of the last century and the opening years of the present have been figured around \$5,000,000. And that was when millions did not come so easy as they did in the golden days of 'Abie's Irish Rose.'

"Full of years and honors, Thompson retired—then died. Still the old play went on. Still it traveled about the country. Long after New York had ceased to see it,

it continued to make folks laugh and cry, who were just as good as any New York can boast."

Eugene Field once wrote to Thompson:

"I'd rather have your happy knack,
Than all the arts the critics praise;
The knack of takin' us folks back
To childhood's home and childhood's days."



From the Collection of Thomas P. Healy

"Old Homestead"—Act III

Herr Hitler's Wagnerian Festival at Baireuth

Scowling, brown-shirted guards. Menacing rifles. The swastika banner aloft. Hitler, Goebbels, Frick, and other potentates of Nazi régime seated as guests in the Wagner family box. Distribution of printed slips signed by the Chancellor, and reading, "The leader wishes the audience to refrain at the close of the opera from singing 'Deutschland Ueber Alles' and the 'Horstweisses' song or indulging in any other kind of patriotic demonstration, in respect for the works of the master himself."

Thus circumstanced, the Baireuth festival opened the other day, intensely Hitleristic in some respects, and in others not. As Herbert F. Peyser tells the *New York Times*, those who expected a tip-top Nazi jollification were disappointed. As he relates further, "altho the foreigners present were few compared with their numbers in recent years, let alone earlier days, the Festspielhaus was completely filled." Standing room only.

According to the *New York Herald Tribune's* correspondent, Max Smith, "the reason for this phenomenon is not difficult to find. The present government, friendlier to Baireuth than any previous one, bought up a large number of seats and distributed them gratis, or at greatly reduced prices, to impecunious young musicians and music

lovers. While Baireuth has never before been able to show such liberality in distributing favors it should be borne in mind that originally Richard Wagner's own idealistic intention was to have only invited guests at the festival plays, and that a fund to bring the deserving, if financially restricted, to Baireuth was established long ago.

"Adolf Hitler's presence in Baireuth for the whole first series of performances—that is, for more than a week—unquestionably helped to replenish the ranks of Wagnerian pilgrims materially thinned by recent occurrences and circumstances. There is hardly any doubt that Toscanini's decision not to take part in the performances—a decision lamented by no one here more than by his German friends and admirers, including some of the most ardent Nazis—accounted for many defections. Nor can the feelings of those he ignored who stayed away solely because of their bitter dissatisfaction with the present régime in Germany.

"In finding an explanation for the notable scarcity of Americans (the English, on the other hand, seem to be well represented), one should not underrate, however, the state of the money market. With the international value of the dollar at so low an ebb it would be surprising, indeed, if American tourists were as plentiful as usual."

About Books

BY HAROLD DE WOLF FULLER

It seems a long way back to the time when a President of the United States could be unacquainted with the name of Mellon. Yet when Harry Daugherty suggested Andrew W. Mellon as a Cabinet possibility, President Harding said, "Mellon, Mellon; I don't know him." Even then, in Mr. Daugherty's estimation Mellon was the richest man in the United States, richer than either Ford or Rockefeller.

A fascinating history of this man and his fortune has been written by Mr. Harvey O'Connor, a resident of Pittsburgh with broad journalistic experience—*Mellon's Millions* (New York: The John Day Company, \$3). In spite of its antagonistic attitude, the book seems well documented.

The founder of this great fortune was Thomas Mellon, Andrew's father, who, like so many other settlers of the Pittsburgh district, hailed from north Ireland. There was little of the social graces in these people, but they were accustomed to hard work and were imbued with a feeling for the sacredness of debts; theirs was an eye-for-an-eye and a tooth-for-a-tooth philosophy. In Thomas Mellon this philosophy was ingrained, tho, strangely enough, he regarded Benjamin Franklin as his patron saint. Marriage, with him, was a business arrangement, and patriotism had no sentimental value. When in 1863, his son James, then living in Milwaukee, wished to enlist in the Army for one hundred days, for \$25 a month, to guard prisoners of war, his father wrote him, "It is only greenhorns who enlist." Yet one is lost in admiration of the enterprise and shrewdness by which this founder of the family fortune grew from a farmer's son to a lawyer and judge, a banker and business man of large interests. To me, at least, the story of Judge Mellon holds more of interest than that of his sons.

Mr. O'Connor relates how this inherited hardness and love of money, coupled with great shrewdness, have advanced the Mellon interests to a point where they have a strangle-hold on the economic life of the country. It is not a pretty story as it flows from Mr. O'Connor's pen, leading down to the suggested impeachment of Secretary Mellon and immediately thereafter his appointment by President Hoover as Ambassador to the Court of St. James's; but it is a fascinating story, nevertheless.

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The Soft Spot. By A. S. M. Hutchinson (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company; \$2.50). The season of "midsummer madness" is the time appropriately selected by the author of "If Winter Comes" to propound the strange psychological problem around which he builds his latest novel. He has a very elaborate plot to illustrate the numerous aspects of this problem, much too elaborate to recount here; but the central trait, the soft spot, of his principal char-



Keystone

A. S. M. Hutchinson

acter, Stephen Wain, may be described. Stephen Wain is an *homme manqué*, a man lacking mental and moral robustness. He can not resist the temptation to take unfair advantage, even of his nearest of kin. He is not an unregenerate villain, since he is not insensitive to the claims of justice. To escape from his conscience he resorts to a species of fatalism; the very fact that he is not found out may mean that his course of action was predestined. By an ingenious series of coincidences, in which persons are destroyed just when they are in a position to expose Stephen's guilt, the author defers the climax and the catharsis through many chapters of diverse incidents, ranging from England to Peru, back to England, to the Orient, then back to England. Have you ever met a man like this, and is he a possible personage? These are questions which people will be asking themselves.

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The Framework of an Ordered Society. By Sir Arthur Salter (New York: The Macmillan Company; 75 cents). In these three lectures delivered at Cambridge University, England, the author, who was formerly director of the Economic and Finance Section of the League of Nations, attempts to answer a large question—Can the checks and balances of democratic government, which have been put to a severe strain by our machine age, be reinforced in such a way that the integrity of government will be maintained and the best interests of society will be served?

Briefly, the author believes that the old competitive price system must go; that, under regulation, there should still be room for individual initiative; that each leader in a country's economic life should "have a double rôle and function, that of managing his own concern and that of assisting in constituting the framework within which it operates." This would necessitate the forming of sectional economic councils, culminating in national councils, the latter being closely associated with the machinery of the national government. Meanwhile, the executive department of the government, in order that it may function skilfully in this big framework of planning, should receive large mandates from the legislative branch.

On the Screen

The cinema, being a cold and mechanical medium, needs vivid and colorful people to provide it with the proper traces of personality. That, no doubt, is the explanation for the fact that Hollywood is constantly on the search for new and striking players, who can take hold of conventional cinema stories and add to them the necessary suggestions of stirring vitality. At the moment the number of performers possessing genuinely first-rate qualities of personal distinction is decidedly limited. There are many good actors in Hollywood, and probably even more exponents of the much-demanded quality of Sex Appeal. But among the members of the screen hierarchy there are just three people who—when we omit Chaplin, who stands so unassailably at the head of his profession that he is omitted from such discussions—can be considered so definitely distinguished as personages that they become almost symbols of various aspects of cinema glamour and stand as complete representatives of the hold the screen has upon the American imagination. All three are women, and up to a short time ago there were but two in the list. They were, of course, Greta Garbo and Marlene Dietrich. Now Miss Katharine Hepburn can be added.

Miss Hepburn has appeared in just three pictures. Her first was "A Bill of Divorcement," wherein she made an exciting début, but was regarded in suspicious quarters as a mere accident. Then she appeared in "Christopher Strong," in which she was highly effective, but seemed mannered enough to cause the skeptics to declare that her vogue would not last long. Now she has been presented in "Morning Glory," and in a conventional comedy of backstage life she is so entirely brilliant that there can be little doubt that she is destined to be one of the distinguished people of the cinema. In fact, it is her greatest triumph in the new vehicle that when she must play a stagestruck girl who convinces the people in the cast that she probably possesses a trace of genius, the idea does not seem entirely foolish to the audience.



Katharine Hepburn

The Power and the Glory—A widely heralded drama featuring a form of cinema story-telling called "narratage." This "narratage" turns out to be an excessive use of the familiar screen "cut-back" tried out in the director's admirable but unsuccessful determination to hide the familiarity and unimportance of the story he has to tell.

Captured—Life in a German prison camp during the late war. The excellence of some of the details is ruined by melodramatic climaxes. ARGUS.