

# THE BOOK TABLE

## POETRY AND COLLAR-BUTTONS

BY DOROTHY GILES

"I SEE," said Philemon, "that the educators have begun to take up poetry in a serious way."

I am not generally accounted an unlettered person, nor one whose ears are unattuned to a concourse of sweet sounds, yet—as well admit it first as last—I groaned. Are we to be educated in poetry, forsooth? To be primed with quatrains? Forced to sit *in statu pupillari* while oracular young Gamaliels in horn spectacles mount the rostrum and dissect a sonnet for our edification? Prut! shall nothing be left us to discover for ourselves?

My sentiments are perhaps the more embittered because I am not myself an educated person, as Philemon has taken pains to point out. That truth has been borne in upon me more than once of late. Though a neat five feet five by my tailor's yardstick, I shrink into puny insignificance when measured by the standards imposed by the keen-eyed gentlemen of the advertisements who point suspicious fingers and demand, "Are you educated?" Mr. Edison's questionnaire was not needed to reveal the haphazardness of my mental equipment, which is like Autolycus's pack, filled with come-by-chances and unconsidered trifles. For no solicitous cicerone guided me by carefully graded steps up the slopes of Parnassus. Rather was my introduction to Apollo one of rollicking informality.

Ours was a nursery built on the generous proportions of the days before obdurate landlords and the H. C. L. took it upon themselves to regulate the size of families. Across one wall were ranged three beds and the wooden crib from which each of us had in turn been graduated to make room for a new tenant, and opposite this wall, and in full view of one lying snugly beneath the blankets, were two doors. One led prosaically enough into the hall and served as an entrance for nurse or the housemaids bearing brooms; the other, into my father's dressing-room. That door was seldom shut. Through its narrow proscenium we saw my father come and go, could watch the intimate ceremonies of hair-brushing and cravat-tying, and—oh, most wonderful!—were drawn into the circle of the mystic Nine. For it was my father's habit, not to stand Narcissus-like before his glass as he dressed, but to pace the floor, and as he strode to repeat aloud in his full voice with its faint suspicion of an Ulster burr, scraps of the verse with which his memory was stored.

"Word was brought to the Danish king  
(Hurry!)

That the love of his heart lay suffering."

Ah! The terror of it clutched my throat. I stood tense, one stocking on,

one a limp banner in my hand, to listen to the thrilling lay:

"And pined for the comfort his voice  
would bring  
(O! ride as though you were flying.)"

Hurry, O king! Spur your charger  
on beside the frozen northland fjord. A  
little girl in ruffled petticoats and hair  
unbrushed shivers with suspense.

"Better he loves each golden curl  
On the brow of that Scandinavian girl  
Than his rich crown jewels of ruby  
and pearl."

Here was high romance. Cinderella  
and her prince were pallid creatures beside  
this northland Cophetua.

"And his Rose of the Isles lay dying."

Does any one read "The King of Denmark's Ride" nowadays, I wonder? Or have the educators flouted Gustavus Vasa along with "Marco Bozzaris" and "The Irish Emigrant," all of whom one used to meet within the respectable confines of the Third Reader? Horrible thought! Perhaps the "First Lesson in Poetry" now begins with polyphonic prose.

There were mornings when we went  
on pilgrimage with Childe Harold:

"Roll on, thou deep and dark blue  
ocean—roll!  
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee  
in vain."

Ferris's Pond, where we went to try  
out our double-runner skates during the  
Christmas holidays, was the only body  
of water more extensive than my bath  
that I had ever seen. But now I stood  
upon a curving strand, I saw the proud  
triremes of Nineveh and caravels of  
Spain sweep by, the horizon was filled  
with belying sails, the salt spume stung  
my cheeks. For my father belonged to  
a generation which devoured its Byron  
as had an earlier one its Pope. I have  
heard it told of his father that, coming  
in, book in hand, and finding his off-  
spring seated expectantly about the din-  
ner table, he sat down at the head of  
the board and read them the whole first  
canto of "The Corsair" while the soup  
cooled in the tureen and the old nurse-

housekeeper glowered in the doorway,  
yet dared not interrupt.

Not that we received our dole of poesy  
in such generous servings. On the con-  
trary. Nor was the recital without in-  
terruptions, as all who have struggled  
to insert gold studs into stiffly starched  
buttonholes will appreciate. But, this  
accomplished, the minstrel once more  
took up his lay, often enough in more  
jocund vein, trolling out the stanzas as  
might one who, having overcome his  
adversary, goes light-heartedly upon his  
way:

"As I was going to Salisbury  
All on a market day,  
I chanced to meet a pretty maid  
A-going the selfsame way."

Once, late in the night, I awoke.  
Through the half-open door glowed a  
thin thread of light, and I knew that my  
father was making ready to go out.  
Lying there snug in my bed, I pictured  
William in the stable, grumbling as he  
put the sorrel to the gig, and I saw in  
imagination the dark avenue with fear-  
some shadows lurking behind every  
tree. Then reassuringly came the sound  
of my father's footsteps, hushed on our  
account, but lacking none of their ac-  
customed firmness, and in a moment his  
voice:

"Our birth is but a sleep and a for-  
getting;  
The soul that rises with us, our life's  
star,  
Hath had elsewhere its setting  
And cometh from afar;  
Not in entire forgetfulness  
And not in utter nakedness,  
But trailing clouds of glory do we  
come  
From God, who is our home."

Long after the gig's lamps had winked  
in at the nursery window and the sor-  
rel's hoof beats died away did I lie  
wide-eyed and staring in the dark. In  
one illumined moment I was made  
aware of the intrinsic value of life,  
though stripped of all its gifts, and,  
filled with incalculable wonder, I en-  
tered upon my heritage.

Hang your heads, O wise young  
Solons! That open sesame lies not in  
hornbooks nor in hustings. As certain  
of your own poets have said, "Beside  
the education of the heart, all else is  
mere moonshine."

## THE NEW BOOKS

### FICTION

**MIDNIGHT.** By Octavus Roy Cohen. Dodd,  
Mead & Co., New York. \$1.75.

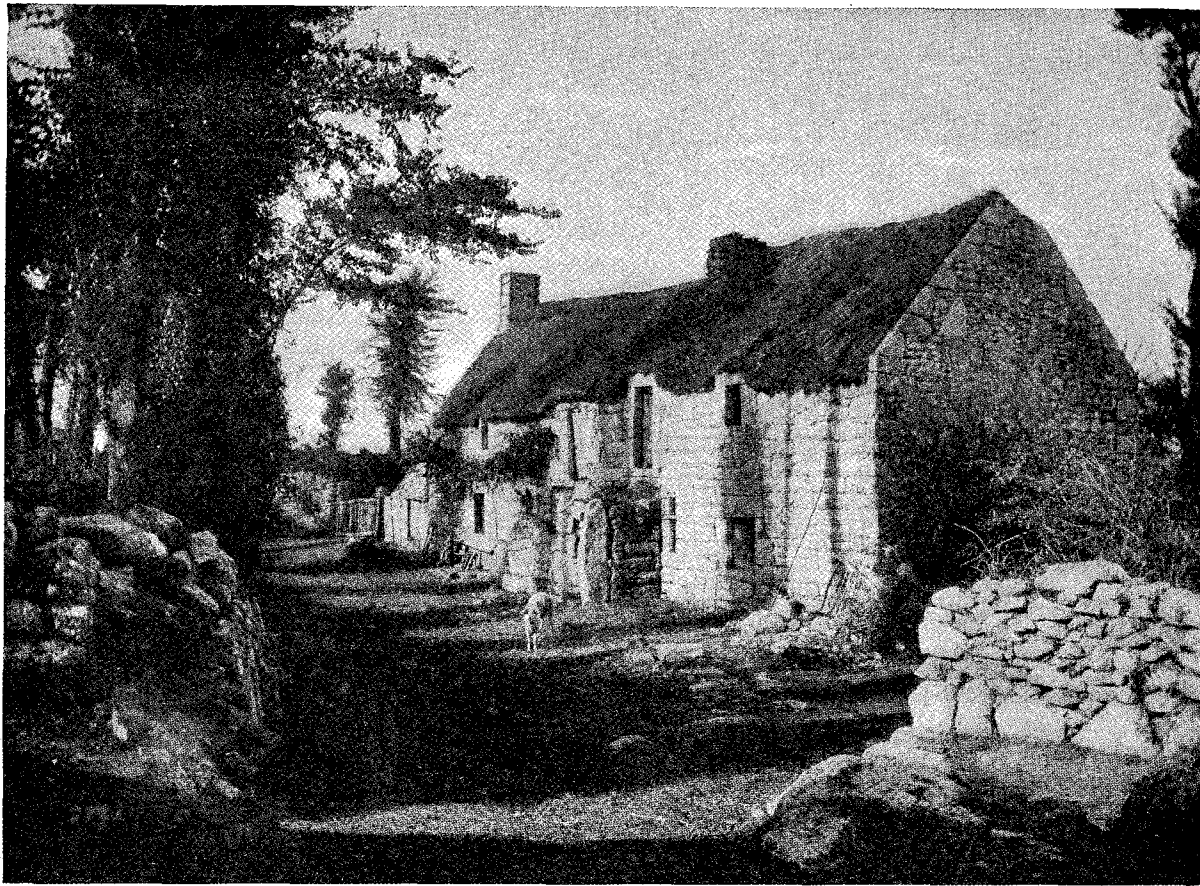
The mystery of a murder is cleverly  
put before the reader. A woman, carry-  
ing a bag, gets into a supposedly empty  
taxicab at midnight at a railway station  
and orders the driver to take her to a  
certain address. When he gets there,  
the woman is not in the cab, but a mur-  
dered man is; and the bag handed to the  
driver by the woman turns out to belong  
to this murdered man and contains his

clothes. The driver is honest and inno-  
cent. The explanation is logical, if not  
quite probable.

**SLEEPING FIRES.** By Gertrude Atherton. The  
Frederick A. Stokes Company, New York.

Mrs. Atherton's stories seem to have a  
tendency to alternate between elaborate,  
well-thought-out novels, such as "The  
Perch of the Devil" and "The Sisters-in-  
Law," on the one hand, and pot-boilers  
like "The Avalanche" and "Mrs. Bal-  
fame," on the other hand. This new  
story, "Sleeping Fires," belongs to the





From "Small French Buildings" (Charles Scribner's Sons. Reproduced by permission)

#### A BRITTANY COTTAGE

less admirable division. It is so sensational as to be yellow and even more disagreeable than it is tragical. It is certainly a long distance from "The Conqueror" to "Sleeping Fires."

#### BIOGRAPHY

**DANIEL BOONE AND THE WILDERNESS ROAD.** By H. Addington Bruce. Illustrated. New edition. The Macmillan Company, New York. \$1.75.

A new edition of a well-conceived and well-executed biography—lucid, entertaining, informative, giving a picture of the stirring times in which Boone lived as well as a vivid account of his life as trapper, explorer, Indian fighter, road-builder, and public official.

**GENERAL ROBERT E. LEE AFTER APPOMATTOX.** Edited by Franklin L. Riley. The Macmillan Company, New York. \$2.50.

General Lee's attractive personality is described by his loving friends in this book, appropriately published as a semi-centennial memorial. Many interesting anecdotes illustrating the character of the great leader of the armies of the Confederacy are told, some of them, we believe, not before in print.

**HEROINES OF MODERN PROGRESS.** By Elmer C. Adams and Warren Dunham Foster. Illustrated. The Macmillan Company, New York. \$2.

Women of such diverse aims and views as Elizabeth Fry, Mary Lyon, Florence Nightingale, Clara Barton, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Jane Addams are grouped together in this series of brief biogra-

phies. The accounts of their contributions to progress are full of incident and will make interesting reading to the rising generation.

#### MUSIC, PAINTING, AND OTHER ARTS

**SMALL FRENCH BUILDINGS.** By Lewis A. Coffin, Jr., Henry M. Polhemus, and Addison F. Worthington. Illustrated. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. \$10.

This beautiful book is almost wholly a book of pictures. We wish that some of them might have been reproduced in color, for the tones of the building material used in French architecture form one of its chief charms. The volume shows us cottages, chapels, churches, and the smaller châteaux. They seem well-nigh as indigenous to French soil as do the poplars themselves. Such a book is almost a truer mirror of French life than are the many volumes which have been published concerning the great cathedrals and other large structures in France which have long taught the world what the highest aspirations in architecture mean. This lesson, indeed, has been so impressive as to drive into the background the lesson we may learn from the smaller examples of French architecture.

#### MISCELLANEOUS

**EX-KAISER IN EXILE (THE).** By Lady Norah Bentinck. Illustrated. The George H. Doran Company, New York. \$3.50.

This is a feminine account of William II of Germany as he is to-day. The picture has merit, but the frame is heavy

with unnecessary details. In the author's opinion, the ex-Kaiser's insanity of vanity is less pronounced than it was in the old days. His vanity, she supposes, is due to his lack of a sense of humor, "or, one might add, of seemliness." For instance, he once gave away some Bibles, so the author was told, and wrote in each of them:

"I will walk among you and be your God, and ye shall be my people."

'Walk ye in all the ways which I have commanded you.'

'Without me ye can do nothing.'

WILHELM, IMP. REX."

#### WORKING WITH THE WORKING WOMAN.

By Cornelia Stratton Parker. Harper & Brothers, New York. \$2.

Mrs. Parker has the rare gift of being able to remember accurately what might seem at the moment to be unimportant conversations and then to philosophize interestingly about them. Not that all the talk she listened to during her experiences as a working-girl was trivial or all her comments philosophical. Some of the conversations she had with her fellow-workers in candy factory, laundry, or brass foundry were tragical in their significance, and much of her comment on her experiences is light-hearted and even humorous. But she combines in exceptional degree the ability to gather facts and to make telling generalizations about them. Her book is an unusual sociological document and it is highly entertaining.





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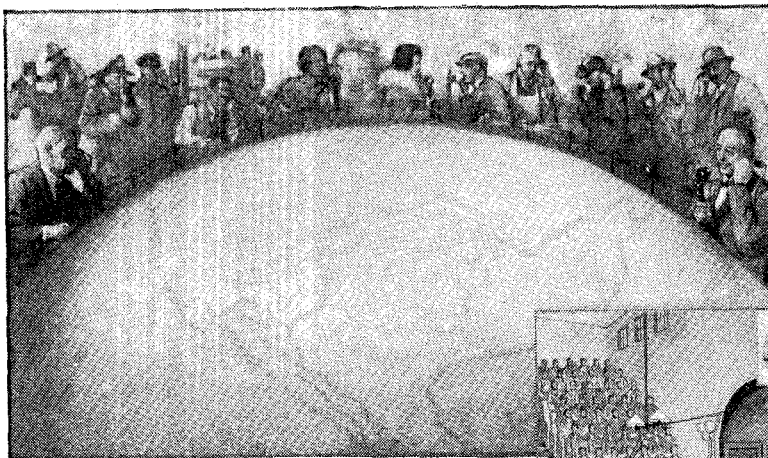
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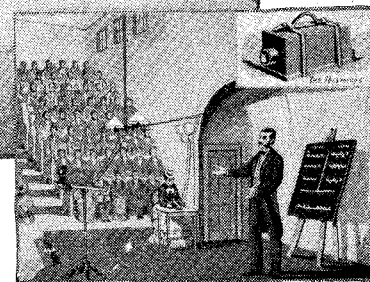
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**F**ORTY-THREE years ago Alexander Graham Bell, the inventor of the telephone, wrote this inspired forecast: "It is conceivable that cables of telephone wires could be laid underground or suspended overhead, communicating by branch to each with private dwellings, country houses, shops, manufacturers, etc., and a man in one part of the country may communicate by word of mouth with another in a distant place."

At the right, an old print of Bell lecturing on telephony, 1877.



## Foresight

More than forty years ago, when the telephone was still in its experimental stage, with but a few wires strung around Boston, the men back of the undertaking foresaw a universal system of communication that would have its influence upon all phases of our social and commercial life.

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This foresight has advanced the scientific development of the art of telephony to meet the multiplied

public requirements. It has provided for funds essential to the construction of plant; for the purchase of the best materials on the most advantageous terms; for the training of employees to insure skilled operators; for the extension of service in anticipation of growth, with the purpose that no need which can be foreseen and met will find the Bell System unprepared.

The foresight of the early pioneers has been developed into a science during the years which have elapsed, so that the planning of future operations has become a function of the Bell System. This is why the people of the United States have the most efficient and most economical telephone service in the world.



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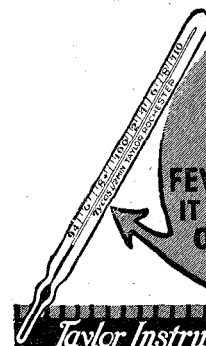
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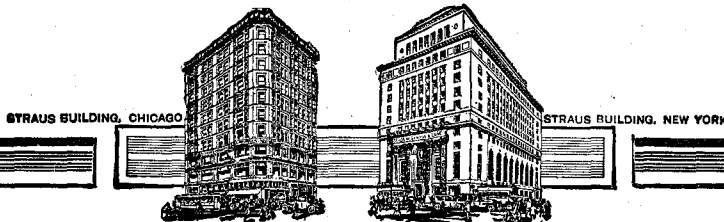
### THE INCOME TAX FOR 1921

**T**HE Bureau of Internal Revenue has given a great deal of publicity to the provisions of the new revenue act for the benefit of taxpayers who are required to file income-tax returns and pay a tax on their net incomes for 1921. In the belief that a concise summary of the requirements may be of benefit to individuals, however, we are led to outline the main features of the law once again.

First of all, income-tax returns must be in the hands of collectors of internal revenue on or before midnight, March 15, 1922. At least twenty-five per cent of the tax due must accompany the return, and extensions of time for filing returns are

allowed only in exceptional cases. If an extension is desired, application should be made to the collector of internal revenue for the district in which the taxpayer lives, but no collector can grant an extension of more than thirty days. For failure to make a return on time the penalty is a fine of not more than \$1,000 plus 25 per cent of the tax due. If the taxpayer chooses, he may pay his tax in full at the time of filing the return, or in four equal installments, due on or before March 15, June 15, September 15, and December 15.

For failure to pay the tax when due or for understatement of the tax through negligence there is a penalty of 5 per cent



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