

The Book Table

An Amphibious Hobo

A Review by GREGORY MASON

WHETHER they deal with unusual experiences or not, most travel books are the work of mediocre or worse than mediocre writers. A few are the work of gifted authors describing ordinary experiences. Once in a blue moon a writer of rare talents describes experiences of unusual interest, and the result is a travel book to buy, borrow, or beg.

Such a volume is "Voyaging," by Rockwell Kent.¹ To begin his voyage Kent made a little preliminary jaunt of seven thousand miles, from New York to Punta Arenas, in a freight steamer. At Punta Arenas, on the Straits of Magellan, the southernmost city of the world, he bought a lifeboat from a wrecked steamer. "She was a double-ender, clinker-built, with light, bent ribs. The stem was splintered; seven planks were stove or rotten; she was warped, dry as a bone, and open everywhere. She was of slipshod factory construction, with every knee and brace a false one sawed from straight-grained plank. Such was our boat, a derelict. She cost me twenty dollars."

¹ Voyaging. By Rockwell Kent. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York. \$7.50.

In this boat Kent and his partner in adventure, an erratic young Norwegian, the ex-mate of a windjammer, started for Cape Horn. All circumstances considered, it seems fair to say that the feats of Thomas Fleming Day, William Nutting, and John Kelly, each of whom crossed the Atlantic in a small sailboat, were cautious and colorless by comparison with Kent's accomplishment.

When Kent and his partner reached Tierra del Fuego at the head of Admiralty Sound, they left their boat and took to their feet. With nothing else to carry them, they cut a new trail across an unexplored piece of mountain range. Footsore and penniless, they made their way to the small town of Ushuaia, the southernmost village in the world, as Punta Arenas is the southernmost city. Nearly everywhere they were hospitably received by Indians, poachers, outlaws, and exiles, who considered Kent's flute-playing ample compensation for the food and lodging given to the wanderers. At Ushuaia, Kent borrowed a small sloop. In this he penetrated the Wollaston Islands to within a few miles of Cape Horn, when the boat's proprietor lost his

courage, in the face of snorting weather, and turned homeward.

Even from such a brief sketch it can be seen that this was an adventure rare enough to give even a commonplace writer an interesting book. But Kent's record of his voyaging is a work of art. To those who enjoyed the drawings with which Kent illustrated the story of his Alaskan experiences in "Wilderness" the black-and-white illustrations in this volume will be a delight. Moreover, the book is delightfully written—now and then there are really purple patches in Kent's prose.

Not the least of the abilities of this versatile amphibious hobo is his knack for picking out the important facets of everything he sees. As he crosses the track of Darwin's ship Beagle (which, by the way, a great passenger vessel is soon to follow in circumnavigating the whole continent of South America), and as he picks up the footprints of the early missionaries and traders, his comments have the nutty flavor of good biography and history.

A rollicking spirit blows through "Voyaging," crude sometimes, but clean and strong like the winds of the Horn. Here is a specimen, a glimpse of the weary American and the lame Norwegian arriving at Ushuaia:

... The mate was spent with pain.

"Let's rest a bit," he said as we reached the outskirts of the town, "because we've got to blow in in style."

In a few minutes he could stand it. With heads thrown back and swinging arms, to our marching tune of "John Brown's Body" we tramped in.

The dogs announce our coming, folk come to their doors and stare.

"Where are you from?" asks a fellow.

"Admiralty Sound."

"God! Where are you going?"

"CAPE HORN!"



Courtesy G. P. Putnam's Sons.

From "Voyaging," by Rockwell Kent

The New Books

FICTION

HISTORICAL NIGHTS' ENTERTAINMENT (THE). By Rafael Sabatini. 2 vols. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston.

Dramatic episodes of history (similar to Dumas's "Celebrated Crimes") related by a novelist and historian.

RED SAND. By T. S. Stripling. Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York. \$2.

Offhand it is hard to recall any American novelist since Richard Harding Davis who has had much success with the Latin-American scene. Our fiction writers with a flair for exotic background go to Africa, the Near or Far East, and

Which Type of Character Is YOURS ?



Quick Thinking, Quick
Acting Type



Slow Thinking, Quick
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Quick Thinking, Slow
Acting Type



Moderate, Well Balanced
Type

Signs That Reveal Character —at a Glance

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WHEREVER you go—whatever you do—you are bound to meet people. Your ability to say and do the things that please them—your ability to make them think what you want them to think—to make them believe what you want them to believe—to make them do what you want them to do—all this depends on your ability to size them up.

That is the real secret of putting big ideas across in every business—it is the secret of popularity—it is the secret that makes men big—it is the secret which, consciously or subconsciously, lies behind every success, in every field of human activity.

How to Read Character At a Glance

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denote certain definite traits of character. These signs and their meanings have at last been classified and tabulated in an amazing new course which shows you how to analyze yourself and others at a glance.

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As a result of Dr. Blackford's revelations thousands of men and women have decided just what their life work really is and have thereby doubled and tripled their salaries. Others have saved themselves from business disaster and unscrupulous partners. Many salesmen are using the knowledge they gained to judge and approach their prospects. Executives use it in dealing with their employees. Lawyers are finding it of great help in their court work and in their action toward clients. Public speakers employ it in judging their audience, and in debate.

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the South Seas, but by chance or design the better ones seem to have avoided those countries of color which are at our very doorstep. With the pleasure which novelty brings, therefore, we mark the rise of a first-rate American writer who understands the psychology of the people across the Caribbean.

In his first novel, "Birthright," Mr. T. S. Stribling handled Negro characters with an understanding which marked him as unique in a literary age dominated by the popular magazine insistence that story populations must be one hundred per cent American. His second book, "Fombombo," showed no new capacities of importance, but in "Red Sand" he more than fulfills his earlier promise. Like Richard Harding Davis, he has gone to Latin America for his scene, but "Red Sand" is distinctly superior to any novel written by the hero of 1898. For not only is Stribling a born story-teller, but he has something important to say. Moreover, he has had the courage to put no character in this vivid drama of bull-fighting but Venezuelans, and he has had the skill to make all the characters live. To the superficial, "Red Sand" may be a romance with a tragic ending; to the discerning it is a work of art.

BIOGRAPHY

GENERAL BOTHA. By Earl Buxton. E. P. Dutton & Co., New York. \$5.

The former Governor-General of South Africa does not claim to have written a complete biography of the man who probably did more than any one else to shape the Union of South Africa and to keep it loyal to the Allied cause during the Great War. He merely records his own personal reminiscences of a man who was at once a lovable human being, a great commander in peace as well as war, and an international figure of unusual interest. The book is somewhat overburdened by trivialities, but full of valuable material.

MEMORIES AND FRIENDS. By Arthur Christopher Benson. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York.

Essays upon many notable figures, including Ruskin, Mrs. Oliphant, Oscar Browning, Henry James, and Rupert Brooke.

POE: MAN, POET, AND CREATIVE THINKER. By Sherwin Cody. Boni & Liveright, New York. \$2.

In this book, as much compilation as treatise, the author has done good service by assembling and arranging the salient facts of Poe's life and work. Inevitably his own critical apparatus has been set going. Smith's facts about the "real Jones" are bound to be selected as well as collected, since Smith, as well as Jones, is a man, and not merely a mechanism. Having chosen Jones as a theme worthy of his typewriter, Smith's good opinion

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