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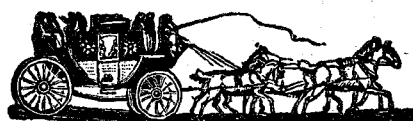
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By RICHARDSON WRIGHT
Editor of House and Garden

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authors green with envy. To discuss the wandering peddlers and preachers, the men with dancing bears, the artists and musicians, the fakers and dealers in nostrums who tramped the country roads during the first two hundred years in America—what a chance this was, and what great fun for the man who should do it! Mr. Wright has done it in the best possible way, and made a book which many readers will devour in two or three evenings, and that others will keep like a loaf of plum cake to eat a slice at a time. He is thorough and scholarly (the extent of his bibliography alone would indicate that), but he keeps the smoke of his lamp out of his pages. His own touch is light and his book very easy to read. Many a subject which has undoubtedly cost him hours of research and weeks of correspondence is adequately and pleasantly discussed in two pages. He kept the hard work and weariness to himself and passed nothing of it to his readers. Nevertheless, with

the hard work, I think he had a jolly good time with his hawkers and walkers, else he would not have written such an entertaining book.

How amusing it must have been to investigate the development of pins, the history of the Jew's-harp, the rise of the tramp printer and why he was a tramp, the makers of silhouette portraits, the early dancing masters, the beginnings of the circus, the queer customers, vagrants, and swindlers of Revolutionary days—men who blossomed into full flower as literary figures in that great pair, the King and the Duke in "Huckleberry Finn." Their spiritual ancestors are described in Mr. Wright's pages in his sections on Matthias, the Imposter, and Stephen Burroughs.

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E. P.

Fiction

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THE MANCHU CLOUD. By James W. Bennett. Duffield & Co., New York. \$2.

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THE PATRICIAN. THE ISLAND PHARISEES. THE COUNTRY HOUSE. FRATERNITY. By John Galsworthy. (Grove Edition.) Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. \$1.25 per volume.

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War Books

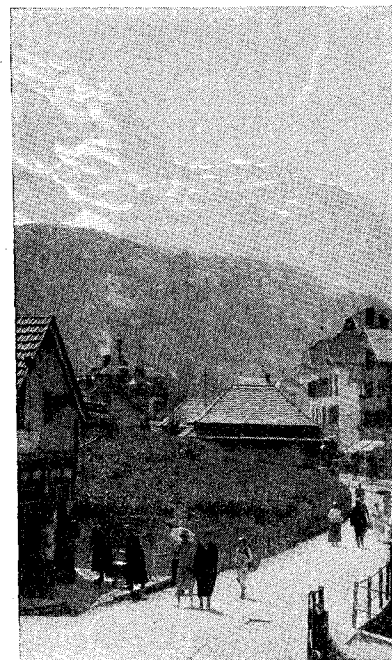
WAR BIRDS: DIARY OF AN UNKNOWN AVIATOR. Illustrations by Clayton Knight. Edited, with an Introduction, by George H. Doran Company, New York. \$3.50.

What Captain Thomasson has done for the Marine Corps in his tales and vignettes the Unknown Aviator has done as brilliantly for the youngest arm of the military service. This large octavo, replete with cleverly drawn illustrations, many in color, by Clayton Knight, himself an aviator, purports to be the diary of an American who sailed with a detachment of brother aviators in September, 1917, completed his training on British fields, and was fortunate enough to see service with a British unit rather than one of our own. The diary extends over a year. It ends with a notation that the author was shot down by a German plane twenty miles behind the German lines.

There is nothing studied or forced about the writing. It has all the freshness and vigor of a letter written by a keen observer who details an adventure to his friend. At times conversational, it is in the main excellent narrative, never for an instant dull. Humor and gaiety aplenty, but one can't escape the Macaberesque undercurrent, the horror behind the curtain. These aviators subscribed to the soldier's philosophy—eat, drink, and be merry. They were better able to obey the precept than most A. E. F. combat units, being often billeted in comparative luxury, and always where they could get drinks. Unforgettable are the pictures of London in the spring of 1918.

Women, drink, and death are elements whose synthesis is the motif of the book, but one detects a certain bitterness that will evoke unpleasant memories in many a veteran.

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