

The Queen's Aunt by Marriage

MARYA MANNES

THE HEART HAS ITS REASONS: THE MEMOIRS OF THE DUCHESS OF WINDSOR. McKay \$5.

To say that Wallis Windsor's book is a good deal better than one expected may be faint praise, but it is praise nevertheless. For the expectation was that her story of her life would be shallow, vain, trivial, and defensive, and it is none of these. The severest criticism that can be leveled at the writing itself is that it is colorless, sometimes boring, and generally overgroomed—not a reaction out of place or a fumble showing. It is at once a candid and careful book, for though the Duchess is quite honest about the compelling fascination grand society held for her, the unswerving ambition that led her to seek it throughout her life is not admitted. The tragic union that crowned it appears rather as the fateful result of a sequence of fateful happenings.

The book makes only too clear the common fault of this couple: lack of judgment. Whether it concerns the friends they choose or the acts they perform (their appalling trip among the Nazis in Germany in 1937 is a prime example), their personal and political naïveté is astonishing in two people so much of the world. In the case of the Duchess especially, only a deep ignorance of British history and character could have made her so shocked and surprised at the royal family's total rejection of her and the abdicated king she married—a rejection that no preceding decency of motive on her part and no ensuing devotion to her husband could ever erase.

THE IRONY is that the devotion so palpable in this book cannot disguise her royal husband's fatal flaw: that willful and mutinous obstinacy which in the end neutralized his many fine qualities, so that now they are neither useful nor used.

What remains to these two—and this is what makes the story so tragic—is things: houses, furniture, clothes, and food. In all of these they show

the taste so absent in their choice of people.

The Duchess often mentions the inherent sadness in the Duke's face—an expression apparent even at his life's crest. He lived in a closed and lonely world which only she, it appears, could open, warm, and inhabit. It would seem that only his flowers and his dogs inhabit that world today. «»

Book Notes

THE WORLD OF MATHEMATICS, edited by James R. Newman. (Four volumes.) Simon and Schuster. \$20.

Here is a handsomely gotten-up anthology of the literature of mathematics, and what is surprising to a layman is how much of it really is literature. There is pleasurable browsing both for those to whom everything the other side of long division is *terra incognita* and for those who spend their nights brooding about the real function of a real variable. Eves trained to see beauty bare will delight, for example, in Clarence Irving Lewis's paragraphs on symbolic logic, while for the rest of us there are such prizes as I. B. S. Haldane's charming essay "On Being the Right Size." (Readers exacerbated upon learning that Haldane cured himself of stomach ulcers by reading Engels will be soothed by his conclusion that it is "no easier to picture a completely socialized British Empire or United States than an elephant turning somersaults or a hippopotamus jumping a hedge.")

Each item is preceded and to a large degree explained by the editor's commentary. Mr. Newman, who has labored long and lovingly on these volumes, writes with humor and clarity.

DANGER AND OPPORTUNITY, by James P. Warburg. Current Affairs Press. \$0.50.

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and automatic dryers, the statistics the Soviets are willing to show us would indicate that most of the Soviet Union's annual increase goes into such things as steel, machinery, tools, and power-plant equipment—just what the underdeveloped countries crave. If trustworthy, the figures would also show that the Soviet Union is expanding economically at a faster rate than we are. In less than twenty years the Soviet Union might therefore become the chief source of supply for world economic development, achieving what could amount to "Communist victory without war."

To prevent this, James P. Warburg urges the United States to launch, before it is too late, a long-range program of economic aid channeled through a United Nations Development Authority. He says: "Conservative analyses indicate that 2½ to 3 billion dollars per annum is the maximum of foreign capital that could profitably be put to work in the underdeveloped areas. Even if the United States were to assume all of this annual burden, which it would certainly not do, its contribution would be considerably less than the American people spend annually on cosmetics."

TRIBUTE TO FREUD, by H.D. Pantheon. \$2.50.

About a year ago somebody tried to make a fool out of Freud by publishing everything he could remember about a few sessions on the professor's couch. Now the distinguished American poetess H.D. has summoned up her own recollections of what went on in that room in Vienna to portray the founder of psychoanalysis as a kind of "Supreme Being." Freud comes out badly in both books.

There are some charming stories of H.D.'s childhood, relived in rivalry with Freud's other patients to be not just his patient but his heir, and all projected back into Greek mythology. But the living man was surely something more than a prop in a private fantasy, however poetic, and the best tribute to Freud in the bookstores at this centenary of his birth is still the first two volumes of Ernest Jones's thoroughgoing biography.