

ican's Boston correspondent in the fifties) often severely criticised men and measures favored by the *Republican* in its editorials. Such freedom has been the paper's traditional policy toward correspondents . . . in whose integrity it placed confidence even if its judgment and theirs did not always agree." And: "It was his (the second Samuel Bowles) creed that a newspaper man should not accept public office and should keep himself free from every entanglement that might affect his independence."

Temptation came the way of the Bowleses as it does to every editor whose influence is worth a farthing. Invariably they stood by their principles in a quiet, unassuming way that reflected an inner compulsion rather than a seeking for plaudits. How curiously remote appears today the announcement of the first Samuel Bowles that he would enlarge his paper to meet his readers' complaint "that advertising had so increased as frequently to reduce the amount of reading matter below that to which they felt entitled."

Under the third Samuel Bowles, the *Republican* on March 16, 1905, was the only paper in Massachusetts to print an account of the debate in the state legislature on compelling patent medicine manufacturers properly to label the contents of their nostrums—every other daily in the state prized its patent-medicine advertising too highly. In relating this episode Mr. Hooker briefly exchanges his rôle of chronicler for that of fellow-publisher by courteously footnoting that such uniqueness would doubtless not be the *Republican's* today. The fact is, however, that analogous suppressions are still current in the leading journalistic luminaries of the Bay State. And more recent than the above was the discovery of the New Haven railroad's president, Mr. Charles S. Mellen, that it could not buy or bully the support of the *Republican*, whose editor, he admitted, was "a dyspeptic crank, but honest." He had no difficulty in finding other Massachusetts moulders of opinion whose digestion was unimpeachable.

There is no evidence that the light of the *Springfield Republican* has dimmed in its fourth generation. It is its present pilot who speaks with propriety of the present-day consolidated newspaper "in which freedom from strict party affiliation has sometimes faded into a colorless although commercially prudent editorial neutrality, wholly alien to . . . progress," and who takes pains to quote the second Bowles's tribute to a fellow worker as "both an honor and an ornament to the profession of journalism." If the present-day *Republican* has adopted the externals of the current age—even to the extent of eight pages of Sunday comics—has yielded to a somewhat discordant and tawdry syndicated magazine section, and has bowed to what it conceives to be the necessity of printing automobile "reading notices," the essential spirit of a century is unaltered. The *Republican* is today wholly objective and unbiased in its treatment of news. In its editorial columns one finds a dispassionate and mellow search for the rock-bottom of truth. Well-reasoned, ably written, judicial, the editorials on the other hand lack vigor or extraordinary inspiration. The paper is less a crusader than a gentle philosopher and guide. So indeed it has always been—never a lone voice in any wilderness of temporary confusion; a leader, but never very far ahead of the crowd. Thus it opposed William Lloyd Garrison's and Wendell Phillips's earlier anti-slavery efforts, and consistently the *Republican* was never the first to strike conspicuously for the abolition of abuses within our body politic. It has blown the gentler zephyrs of reform, and while doing this from conviction and not for expediency it has happily found a policy which has proved practical and appropriate in its environment. The *Republican* has been typical in the best sense of the evolutionary method of American progress.

If the *Springfield Republican* is today less conspicuous than formerly in our national life it is for reasons that are largely mechanistic. America has grown, geographically and numerically, away from and beyond its Atlantic seaboard and is less subject to influences, whether individual or institutional, that once affected a smaller and more compact nation. It cannot be fairly said that the *Republican* today wields national influence as it did in the past. Spiritually it has made the most worth-while contribution to America which has been offered to our country by American journalism.

The Adventure Magnificent

MAGELLAN: His Life and Adventures by Land and by Sea. By ARTHUR S. HILDEBRAND. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1924. \$3.

Reviewed by ROCKWELL KENT

Author of "Voyaging"

"OF the state of geography in the year 1493; of the work of Prince Henry the Navigator and how the Portuguese nation sought a route to the east. How Magellan came to the court at Lisbon; of Vasco de Gama's and other expeditions; and how Magellan enlisted for service in India. Of the voyage to India, and what transpired there. How the great city of Malacca was taken by Alfonso de Albuquerque. Of how Magellan went to the spice islands; and what happened there—." So, roughly, begins the table of contents; and so, packed with the promise of great adventure, of intrigue, of mutiny, of shipwreck, of rebellion, of disaster, of discovery, and final triumph, it continues.

Those were great times. Suddenly on the complacent states of Europe dawned the consciousness of the whole, vast, undiscovered world beyond their bounds, of unknown continents beyond the seas, of riches greater than thought, of trade and treasure that were his who reached them first. Discovery announced itself upon a world quite unequipped to follow it. Men's courage filled the gap. Out into seas beset with every real terror of the deep, and with the imagined horrors of the unknown, they blindly steered their silly coastal craft, accepting the threat of death and its appalling toll as but a necessary part of such adventuring. It was a "strike," the greatest that the world had known or can ever know, a stampede of gold-mad nations staking out seas and continents as claims. Greed?—the most colossal! And it spurred men to a pitch of courage that the world may never see again.

"Magellan": the age of great adventure, and the great adventurer! The pageantry, the blood and thunder of the stark events! God, what a book it ought to be! A stirring, rousing, glamorous book; a story that would lend to the most precise and unimaginative narrative the power of great drama, a natural drama that might stir the most prosaic writer's soul into abandonment. Turn to a bare narrative of those times; the stilted chronicles in Hakluyt carry the thrill of "Treasure Island." And the scenes! Read but the uncolored prose of the "Pilot Guide," and shudder at the naked facts about Magellan's strait. It would seem hard to tell the story of Magellan's life and make it unimpressive; yet it has been done.

It is difficult for a writer possessed of a personal grace of literary expression to divest himself of it when the stern occasion demands that he should. Mr. Hildebrand writes charmingly. On page 1, and we may safely judge of such a matter at the very beginning, occurs, to choose almost any single passage, this:

The ships lie all one way, like sheep in the wind; the current gurgles along their sides, keeping the hawsers taut, and rolling and bumping the little short-boats under the high sterns that rise like unsteady leaning castles. Great banners are streaming.

One has written this who has heard the tide's sound along hollow wooden sides. And again in Chapter VIII. is borne out the impression that the writer knows and loves the sea:

They pushed broad ridges of tumbling foam before their full broad bows; their high stern-works lurched and staggered, leaning and swinging, now on this side, now on that; they were broad and heavy and low in the waist, with short thick spars that hung forward over their heads, and sails that bulged and billowed; they tripped on their own skirts when the white crests caught up with them, and yawed alarmingly as they coasted down the steep leeward slopes;

Yet, save when the author's own sensitive impressions of the sea appear to grace his narrative, the very personal charm of his style, its impressionistic gaiety, disastrously affects the dignity of his great subject. By the suspected riches of historical material that is so lightly touched upon, by the drama that is forever promised and never achieved, the solemnity, the fervor that are always imminent and never reached, the reader is at last exasperated as at one who violates the cravings of a mood. Here, where we look for a picture of an age impressive with achievement, and of men dignified by courage, we are confronted by a puppet show, and at last be-

hold our hero in a comic scene expire in the arms of Ponchinello—that most worthy scientist, the Signor Pigafetta.

Footnotes to History

CHRONICLES OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY. By MAUD WYNNDHAM. Founded on the Correspondence of Sir Thomas Lyttleton and his Family. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1924. 2 vols. \$10.

Reviewed by WILBUR C. ABBOTT

Harvard University

IF one needed proof that the great days of the great English families have passed or are passing, he might find it in the chronicles of those families which are now appearing, chiefly from the pens of their womenfolk who seem to be taking a melancholy pleasure in the recital of the past greatness of the houses to which they belong or of the class which they represent. From the archives of the Lyttleton family, from histories and diaries of the eighteenth century, the present author has drawn the chronicle of one of these families for the entertainment and the edification of the present generation in an admirable picture of the society in which the Lyttleton family made its way and its fortune.

Such volumes as these form interesting and often important contributions to history. They show, first of all, the connections between individuals and events which are too apt to be lost sight of in more formal accounts. They do not so much narrate as explain and interpret. They show in many cases the other side of the picture. They interest one in the warp rather than the woof of that fabric which we shall call history; they show on what the formal pattern was based; what holds it together; and how it was woven. More than that they serve to correct many accepted views of men and events. A man who seems to play a minor part is often revealed as a moving force in affairs; one who makes a great show in full-dress history is not seldom exhibited as a very different creature from his public counterfeit presentment. One perceives himself attaining a very different perspective as he reads these volumes; for history seems at once more human and less imposing a thing than he conceived.

The author of the present volume has done her work well. From her pages one gains a peculiarly clear picture not only of the Lyttleton family, but of the society in which it played its part. He gains, no less, much insight into the characters—and the character—of eighteenth century politics, for the Lyttletons were in the midst of it. And it is more than dead gossip. One needs only to read the chronicle of Admiral Smith to gain some idea of the navy and its deeds and misdeeds in that eventful period—and more than an idea. He gets the spirit of the service. Moreover there is here no inconsiderable amount which no one knew before these volumes appeared; for they are drawn in no small measure from unpublished material. They may be called "foot-notes to history."



A Suggestion

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review of Literature*:

DEAR SIR:

FOR many years I have cherished two ambitions: (1) To be colorful; (2) to be helpful. With regard to the former I cannot, I fear, report much progress. The uses of the word are so confusing. Novels are colorful, plays are colorful, so are personalities and crowds and crossword puzzles. It is difficult to pick out the common element in all these so as to aim at it. Thus I feel rather blue about my prospects. But this is not the right color. I cannot hit the mark even by accident.

In regard to the second, I am doing fairly well. I thrill to the sound of that word service, and there are moments when I am so suffused with the spirit of helpfulness that you might almost mistake me for a Rotarian. This is one of them. How then, you ask—(at least I hope you do)—am I proposing to help you? Loyal to the spirit of service, I want to help you to help others. But how? you ask again.

(Keep on asking. You must not go back on me now!) I want you, quite literally, to take a leaf out of the Women's magazines, the leaf or page devoted to Household Hints, for each of which the sender receives a dollar. You remember the sort of thing. Mrs. Smith, Kansas, Mo., informs a palpitating world that a wonderful way of removing ice cream stains from velvet is to rub them with a toothbrush dipped in vinegar. Well, my suggestion is that *The Saturday Review* should run a page of Literary Hints, for each of which you might offer—I do not say pay—the nominal sum of two dollars. There must be thousands of your readers who are as eager for tips on writing as any housekeeper is for suggestions looking towards cunning and colorful little salads. There must be many thousands more to whom two dollars is not to be sneezed at. Lastly, think how it would make your readers feel that they were all just one big happy helpful family, just a cozy group of one hundred thousand subscribers. In these days of organized intimacy this would make the paper popular. Just to give you an idea of the sort of thing I have in mind I enclose a specimen page.

Yours very truly,
CHARLES A. BENNETT
MINCED POETRY

The following is a simple recipe for a modern poem. Take three or four lines of prose of average length. Remove the capitals. Strain out all punctuation marks. Chop fine, arrange capriciously in little dabs on the page and send to *The Dial*. An asterisk or two will lend a pleasing decorative touch.

INSPIRATION

I have found that a few bay leaves laid end to end around the brow are more conducive to inspiration than the conventional wet towel.

SAVE YOUR STALE JOKES

Do not throw away your jokes when they become stale and tasteless. When steeped in gin or brandy I have found that they recover much of their pristine freshness and flavor.

HOW TO KNOCK SPOTS OFF AN EDITOR

If an editor persistently returns your offerings a good plan is to borrow a large sum of money, buy his magazine, and then write him a letter telling him that his services are no longer required.

YOUNGER GENERATION EN CASSEROLE

Take a couple of fresh youngsters just out of college. Knock their heads together. Remove the pulpy interiors composed of high falutin' literary ideas. Stuff the cavities with some solid information and the rudiments of grammar and style. Set them aside for a year to cool off, and serve them right.

A USEFUL SUBSTITUTE

When your muse fails to deliver inspiration regularly mix one part of midnight oil with two parts elbow grease, apply continuously for several days and you will be pleased with the result.

A USE FOR VULGARITY

Do not try to remove traces of vulgarity from your work. Go into advertising. A fortune awaits you.

REVIEWS

Many people dislike any tart or acid flavor in reviews. A useful recipe for achieving complete neutrality is to cancel in the second half of your review everything you have said in the first. For example, in reviewing a book for children, declare in the first paragraph that from the adult point of view it is rotten, and in the second that nevertheless children will enjoy it. Scholarly works may be dealt with by devoting most of your space to pointing out a number of trivial errors and adding at the close a brief paragraph beginning, "But these after all are minor blemishes, and it would be ungracious to quibble at a work which, etc."

SEX AND THE SUBCONSCIOUS

We are holding over until next week a number of suggestions on these topics for treatment in a page specially devoted to The Problem of Garbage Disposal.

Charles A. Bennett.

P. S. King & Co. of London announce the immediate publication of "The Geneva Protocol," by Philip J. Baker. Mr. Baker, who has been connected with the disarmament work of the League of Nations since its foundation, is a fellow of King's College, Cambridge, and Cassell Professor of International Relations in the University of London.

The BOWLING GREEN

A Publisher's Reader

WE were speaking of the kind of notes that editors think it necessary to append to schoolbook editions of great poetry. I had chosen a number of hilarious examples from the "Comus" I "studied" at the age of fifteen. They had to be omitted last week for want of space; but I will go back to the subject long enough to quote just one.

In lines 317-18 of "Comus" Milton speaks (very prettily) of the "low-roosted lark" rousing from "her thatched pallet." I spare you the scholastic editor's explanation that "low-roosted lark" means "the lark in her low resting-place," and that "roost, even today, is used figuratively for any temporary resting-place." But on "thatched pallet" he is beyond price. Oyez:—

Thatched, as Masson suggests, may here refer to the texture of the nest itself, and not to the covering. Keightley, however, says: "The ideas here belong rather to a hen-house than to the resting-place of the lark, which has no *thatch* over it, and in which, as it is on the ground, he does not *roost*."

The encyclopædies must be wrong when they say that Duns Scotus died in the fourteenth century. He is immortal. This sort of commentary is on a par with the moving picture director who, in filming "Peter Pan" (and very delightfully) thought it necessary to have Slightly and Toodles and the other Lost Boys refer to each other as *American* gentlemen; and to run up the Stars and Stripes to the main-trunk of the pirate ship (with appropriate strains from the orchestra). This suggests a gruesome thought: perhaps in Barrie's M. S. Slightly and Toodles were originally Scottish gentlemen, but the London publisher wouldn't stand for it. Literature is full of such small difficulties of translation. I remember that in the enchanting Mr. A. P. Herbert's "The House by the River" one of the characters was described as so unimportant that his death would be mentioned only on the front page of the newspapers—a statement entirely incomprehensible to American readers not familiar with the position of obits in the London press.



Imaginative literature fights its way down to us from the past through a thick fog of just such cuttlefish comment as the above on the lark's nest. In this great biological process there is one character who rarely receives his due tribute: the Publisher's Reader. The Publisher's Reader is not only the one who first spots the genius of such things as "Comus"; he also wades grimly through quagmires of twaddle and spares us much of it. The other day, in the course of such exciting adventures as a round among publishers' offices always offers, I came across a charming example of the Reader at his best. I am not permitted to identify the episode; but I copy here, because it is really interesting—and valuable to all young writers—the report written on a MS submitted lately to a New York publisher.

The MS came in with the following letter:—

Dear Sir:—

Will you be so kind as to criticize the following enclosed Poems? They were all written from twelve to eighteen years of age. I shall deem it a favor to me if you will do so.

In a small provincial town like this, very few, or none at all, are interested in Poetry or writing in any form.

I shall appreciate this kindness, and hope to hear from you as soon as possible. Thanking you in advance, I am,
Yours very truly,

FRANCES

P.S.—I enclose stamped envelope for return. Could you suggest any text-books to study rhyme, meter, versification, etc.? Thanking you for this information.

After reading the MS the Publisher's Reader wrote as follows:

A little collection written from twelve to eighteen years of age. The author asks for criticism and suggestions, and says: "In a small provincial town like this, very few, or none at all, are interested in poetry or writing in any form."

I do not think it is desirable to offer any detailed criticism. The author surely knows now—or will surely have to learn—that any writing worth while is not a matter merely of moods or good intentions, but of travail and constant care. She should be able by now to form some adequate opinion of work that she did years ago. Nobody can help her unless she is willing in a very real sense to help herself; to put away imperfect work resolutely; to read, study, and compare. She is evidently eager to learn;

but she does not realize yet that her only real teacher must be herself; that she must develop her own powers of observation and self-criticism. She cannot learn to write poetry by reading text books, though she may gather some useful information from time to time.

Some of the verses in this little collection have a very pleasant atmosphere, but they are immature and unimportant. She must not mind my saying this. False impressions are not helpful; and false praise is a very poor thing. There is no reason for her to be discouraged. But she has to begin at the beginning, and it is idle to let her think she has yet travelled any considerable portion of the poet's path.

Here is a stanza from the first piece:

*I saw the dewy roses
That laughed with you
They were but poesies
And could not be true.*

This means something to her, because she gets the color and rhythm of the mood in which she wrote it; but if she will examine it with detachment, she will see that it is unreal and meaningless. And she should not write "poesies" when she means "posies." Nor should she send out work which she has not taken the trouble to read herself, and expect people unknown to her to be more interested and more careful than she is herself. This is a point that she should remember; and she must remember too that it is suggested in kindness, and not carpingly. Here are two examples:

*Awake cried the three
Our camels are not tired now
The Christ-Child we long to see
And hiss His noble brow.*

You should have corrected that, Frances. And read the next verse again:

*Startled they arose
From their beds on the bround
"Go as far as the star goes"
They said as they sheep quieted down.*

Take pains with what you know, Frances; try to get the simple things right; and fuller knowledge and understanding will come day by day.

Only one more quotation is necessary:

*If from Heaven's graces you fall
Everyone can't be saints, you know
Just with humility call
For pardon here below.
If for some reason you are blind
Just open your eyes wider next time.
If to a neighbor you are unkind
Give him the best that is thine.*

This is not poetry, Frances; it is not even good verse. But if you are disappointed, face the disappointment bravely; see what other people are doing; write very little, and be very critical of your own work for some time. Gradually you will see why the verses you have written are not good, and you will determine that the verses you are going to write will be increasingly better.

I don't know of any text-books, Frances, that would be especially helpful to you at present. You see, I really know so little about you that it is difficult to advise you sensibly—and you are a long way away. But I will try to find a book that deals simply and clearly with some of the questions that perplex you; so I have made a note of your name and address. In the meantime, you must not worry because I am sending your little collection of verses back to you. Every author has to accept such an experience; and you would be astonished to know how often well-known people have their work returned.



I am glad to have had an opportunity to copy this letter. It deserves to be reprinted where aspiring writers can see it. It is no necessary part of a publisher's duty to "criticize" material obviously impossible. A printed rejection slip would have been plenty. But once in a while the anonymous and weary Reader bubbles over like that, for the honor of his profession; to which, as Lord Bacon reminds us, every man is a debtor. Some of the most interesting tidbits of literary criticism lie buried irretrievably in publishers' files. What wouldn't we give for a little volume of George Meredith's reports on MSS in the long years he was a reader for Chapman and Hall?

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.



The first and second volumes of the English translation of Helmholtz's "Handbuch der Physiologischen Optik," prepared under the editorship of Professor Southall of Columbia University and published by the Optical Society of America, is now ready for distribution. In selecting for translation the third (and latest) edition, 1909-10, the editor has in large measure been influenced by the incorporation in that edition of most valuable appendices by v. Kries, Nagel, and Gullstrand. Since, on the other hand, the third edition, based by v. Kries and Nagel on the first, omitted the very important work of König done in direct development of Helmholtz's ideas and incorporated in the second edition, this phase of the subject has been treated in an appendix (which appears in the second volume) by Christine Ladd-Franklin, which will also contain a critical examination of the Helmholtz and Hering theories of color-vision and an exposition of her own theory. The third volume will come out in the Spring.