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## Books of Special Interest

### An Affair of Honor

MEMOIRS OF THE FOREIGN LEGION.  
By M. M. With an Introduction by  
D. H. LAWRENCE. New York: Alfred A.  
Knopf. 1925. \$2.50.

Reviewed by THOMAS BOYD  
Author of "THROUGH THE WHEAT"

THE introduction and the body of this volume are so closely merged that it would be more illuminating to discuss them as a single piece of work than to speak of them separately—even though the prose of Mr. Lawrence is full of beautiful perceptions, of acute sensibility in description, while the writing of the deceased M. M. is sodden, slipshod, no better than that of the average police reporter.

It was in November, 1919, and Mr. Lawrence had not ceased to shudder with the remembrance of the bloody war as he walked down the Lung 'Arno where his friend, N\*rm\*n D\*\*gl's awaited him. With the friend was a stranger, a ridiculous little fellow who "had a way of saying 'physical'—a sort of American way, as if it were spelt fisacal—that made me want to kick him." All three were nearly penniless, but M. M. scurried around for delicacies to feed N\*rm\*n. M. M. "was patient and fastidious. And yet he was common, his very accent was common, and D\*\*gl's despised him."

There was justice for you! N\*rm\*n despised the little bounder and had him serving him like a woman; Mr. Lawrence who at least did not hate him got nothing but ill-fortune out of the acquaintance. M. M. would cheat somebody out of money and Mr. Lawrence would have to help him escape from the police . . . and in the end he had to read this manuscript which the fellow had written, the manuscript which he now introduces to the public.

During the war M. M., who was then living in Italy and who was supposed to have had Hohenzollern blood in his veins from one of the Royal Chambermaids, decided he ought to give his support to the Allies. He wrote letters to the various Red Cross organizations, but they had all the help they needed. The next kind of service he thought of was with the Foreign Legion, and at once he took the boat from Naples to Algiers. What he looked for his Redeemer only knows, certainly it was other than what he found. He discovered that all the Legionnaires were dirty, that all were Germans, and Jews—yet he speaks of counts and haidressers and Frenchmen being among them. He discovered that the uniform was not modish and that the daily drills were rigorous and he viciously criticizes the plumbing facilities of Algiers. In a short while he had gone through too much, really, and he angled successfully for a transferral from Sidi-bel-Abbes to Valbonne in France. There, the plumbing system was no better and he was further annoyed by a scrub named Attey from Baltimore who "used to talk literature, or rather American literature, by the hour, and was *au courant* with all the latest magazine and newspaper writers in America." So after two months of this frightful existence—almost as bad as, say, ten million men went through in training camp—he deserted and went back to Italy where the plumbing was better and the men wore socks. All this he seriously set down, with as much benefit, as much grace, and as much information as if he had copied off the routine bulletin of his battalion. And these "Memoirs of the Foreign Legion"—what a jest of a title—are not a first draft, they are the results of a third revision.

Mr. Lawrence says "let (this book) be read." Yes, but by whom? Mr. Lawrence says, "M. went where I could never go. He carried the human consciousness unbroken through circumstances I could not have borne"; and again, "The war was foul. As long as I am a man, I say it and assert it, and further I say, as long as I am a man such a war shall never occur again. . . .

It shall go. A man I am, and above machines, and it shall go forever, because I have found it vile, vile, too vile ever to experience again." In both cases he perhaps flatters himself.

After M. M. deserted—after two strenuous months in the Foreign Legion—he cheated his way through several years in Italy, then went to Malta where he sponged from whoever he could, and when he had exhausted his material and the police were knocking on the front door he swallowed some painless poison and died. He owed a hundred pounds in Malta and, says Mr. Lawrence, "this hundred pounds must be paid back, . . . which it never will be unless this manuscript pays it back. Pay the gentleman's last debts, if no others." Who would not read the book in such a cause, to help pay for an affair of honor?

### America Abroad

OUR FOREIGN POLICY. A History of the Foreign Policy of the United States.  
By RANDOLPH GREENFIELD ADAMS.  
New York: The Macmillan Co. 1924.

Reviewed by ALFRED L. P. DENNIS  
Clark University

ONLY when one has stood in the trenches himself can the amount of hard work that has gone to the preparation of this book really be appreciated. The author almost disarms the critic by his opening quotation from William Penn which bespeaks his modesty and sincere spirit. He recognizes that the time has not yet come when by coöperation under the guiding hand of editorial authority a satisfactory attempt can be made adequately to tell the story of American international relations. Yet Dr. Adams does contribute materially to a popular survey of the more important topics and fields of the foreign policy of the United States. I hope no one will think me a cynic when I say that this volume should be of particular value to college and high school students and to women's clubs. Its value to more advanced students may be questioned, yet it is a book which will well serve to inform and attract the general reader in a field where there is crying need of such contributions. It is not a fundamental book, but a useful one.

A second edition will undoubtedly provide more careful reading of the proof. Indeed the typographical errors are obvious. The footnotes are largely to the best monographs and articles. They and the short bibliography represent, as the author states, the basis on which the book is constructed: "Many of us who have lived through the last ten years have felt the need of books on our foreign policy which will epitomize the results of research in the field, . . ." Such summaries as are given and such selection of topics treated reveal a mind that is acute, but which at times rushes to conclusions without due measurement of all the factors in the case. In particular the last five chapters dealing with China, Japan, and the events of the last ten years leave the impression that a better selection of facts might have been made. It is furthermore a bit disconcerting to discover that the Hay-Pauncefote treaty precedes the Spanish War in the table of contents and that a discussion of President Wilson's Mexican policy is later followed by a section on the Caribbean in 1850-60. The topical treatment has its advantages, yet it breaks down without a constant system of cross referencing. In general, the foreign background is unfortunately lacking; and this volume should be read with a similar book on European and Asiatic diplomacy at hand.

The attempt to be popular has at times led the writer into the use of colloquialisms and into analogies that appear far-fetched. Yet as a whole the style is good. Such criticisms should not, however, blind us to the fact that Dr. Adams has done a really fine piece of work for the public that he is anxious to catch. Certainly this volume should have a wide sale.

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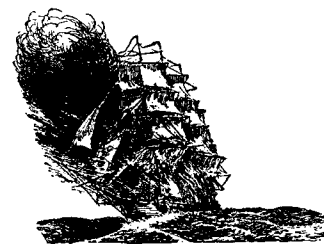
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# A London Letter

By MRS. BELLOC LOWNDES

THE passion—it can be called nothing less—for volumes of personal reminiscence becomes more intense as time goes on, and British publishers are now hard put to it to find noted men and women willing to write their memoirs. All sort of expedients are tried to "get round" the coy celebrity. The new Earl of Oxford who has often been approached but has always refused to write a book of the kind, is, it seems, engaged on a work which though it will be in no sense a book of reminiscences, cannot fail to be full of interesting and valuable recollections, if, as I am told, it is to take the form of a history of the House of Commons during the past fifty years. The writer, as H. H. Asquith, the most brilliant Oxford man of his generation, entered Parliament in 1886 as Liberal Member for East Fife. That, of course, is not fifty years ago, but it will be forty years ago next year, and from his first entry into public life Mr. Asquith was closely connected with the leading statesmen and brilliant social and literary world of the mid-Victorian era.

I hear that Mr. George Buckle, the conclusion of whose life of Disraeli is, in the opinion of good judges, the finest piece of solid biographical work accomplished in the England of our time, has accumulated a great mass of material for his forthcoming life of Queen Victoria. The whole of her vast correspondence has been put at his disposal by King George, and it is to be hoped that the first volume of what should be by far the most valuable contribution to both the personal and the political history of nineteenth century Europe yet written, will be published before the figure of "the Queen," as so many people still call King George's grandmother, has receded into a nebulous past.

The letters of a lifetime cannot lie. Every other kind of material drawn on for a biography not only often, but nearly always, lies. To my mind, the kind of "life," however brilliant, which owes nothing to the correspondence left by the man or woman whose career is under examination may be an admirable example of imaginative portraiture, but it cannot give the inner mind of the individual portrayed.

Dale Collins, whose first novel, "Ordeal," created a considerable stir last year and earned license to be compared, by some people, to Conrad, has finished a new story called "The Haven." It would not be fair to tell the whole plot, but I think it is fair to give, at any rate, an outline of the both original and amusing beginning. The hero is a wonderful film star, the best looking man of his day, and adored by feminine "film fans" all over the world. Wearying of this universal love and devotion, and rich beyond the dreams of avarice, he buys a small island in New Guinea, and retires there under another name to enjoy a long measure of rest and peace. The news, however, leaks out, and a number of enthusiastic women, including an American millionaire, and an English peeress, bribe the old sea captain who had been in the star's secret to take them one by one to his island, each lady believing that she is the only woman to disturb her hero's hitherto free solitude.

A very different type of book will consist of a collection of Mr. Galsworthy's short tales. It will be issued under the name of "Caravan," and a story written early in the writer's career will alternate with one written in later years.

Among forthcoming "first novels" will be, I hear, two likely to be of special interest to those who are concerned with the future of British fiction. "The Tortoiseshell Cat," by Miss Naomi Royde Smith, one of the outstanding figures of the London literary world, well known for her admirable critical work, and her excellent dramatic criticism, will deal with a phase of feminine human nature which has seldom attracted novelists, though Théophile Gautier took it as the central theme of his most famous romance. "A Piano Quintet" is the other first novel in question. It is the work of Edward Sackville West, a very young man who is heir-presumptive to the barony of Sackville, and so future owner of Knowle. "A Piano Quintet" deals with the adventures of five men and women.

Scarce a week passes but I hear of some new book of memoirs dealing with the late Victorian era. A book of this kind, which should be of great general interest, has just been concluded by Lady Troubridge. Née Gurney, this lady and her sister, the late Countess of Dudley, were adopted in early youth by those two remarkable sisters,

Adeline, Duchess of Bedford, and Lady Henry Somerset. Though Lady Troubridge is by no means an old woman, she has known most of the people worth knowing in every class of society during the last forty years, and she and her sister were both on terms of affectionate intimacy with King Edward and Queen Alexandra. She is daughter-in-law to that Sir Thomas Troubridge who lost both his legs in the Crimean War, and whose gallant bearing and piteous physical condition caused Queen Victoria, when he was wheeled past her at the great review at the end of the campaign, to burst into tears. The day following some one observed to a very famous statesman of that time: "I hear that when Troubridge went past the Queen she was touched." Whereupon the statesman answered: "I didn't see anyone touch her." "I didn't mean that, I meant that she was moved." "That also is quite a mistake, for she stood stock still the whole time."

The old question of an author's right to an original title and to how far a title influences the sale of a book has come up in an acute form with regard to Mr. Michael Sadleir, whose new novel has had no less than three titles, the first of which, "Fidelity," was actually printed before he was compelled to withdraw it by the sudden appearance of another story with the same name. One thing is certain. The author who has found what he regards as a new, arresting, and suitable title for a novel will do very well to keep that title to himself till his book is actually announced in the press. One hears now and again of a surprising change of title. Sir Philip Gibbs's brilliant new study of modern society, "The Reckless Lady," was, I am credibly informed, first called "An Old-Fashioned Father." I think one may venture to assert that for one novel reader who would ask for a book called "An Old-Fashioned Father," there are at least a hundred who would be attracted by the title, "The Reckless Lady."

Personally, I look with suspicion on the peculiar, the strange, and the "literary" title. I have a fondness for a type which is, for the moment, in complete abeyance—I mean such names of novels as "Can You Forgive Her?" "The Way We Live Now," "He Knew He was Right," "Not Wisely but Too Well." It has sometimes been said that the best title ever devised was "Vanity Fair," but I should like to put in a plea for "Les Trois Mousquetaires" and its child, "Soldiers Three," "A Tale of Two Cities," and "Under Two Flags."

I feel I cannot close this letter without saying a word concerning the late Mr. John Lane. As was the case with the late Mr. William Heinemann, Mr. Lane had an extraordinary instinct for what was new and original in imaginative literature. He was the first British publisher of many notable American writers, including, to give but one instance, Gertrude Atherton. Among the English authors in whom he believed for long years before his belief was justified by popularity was Mr. W. J. Locke. I think I am correct in saying that Mr. Lane published eight stories by Mr. Locke (and most brilliant novels they were) before their appearance "The Morals of Marcus Ordeyne," which brought to the one, we will suppose, fortune, and assuredly fame to the other. Yet another of Mr. Lane's early authors who was very much attached to him was Mr. Henry Harland, and here again he believed in his authors long before the public chose to do so.

There has been a widespread request for a continuance of the exhibition of manuscript of English authors from the Morgan Library on view at the New York Public Library, and, in consequence, the period has been extended to April 1. The original intention was to close the display March 1. Among additional manuscripts added to the exhibition recently is that of Robert Browning's "Asolando." This was the poet's last poem to come from the press and was published on the day that he died in Venice in 1889.

The publishing house of Kurt Wolff, in Munich, has recently announced the first publications in a series of books designed to foster understanding of America in German readers. The first book to be issued is the anonymously published "Hunch, Paunch, and Jowl," the authorship of which by Samuel Orwitz is now an open secret, and the second is Sinclair Lewis's "Babbitt."



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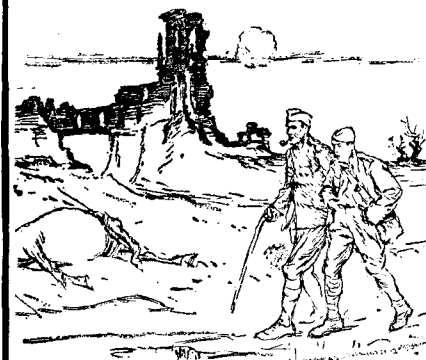
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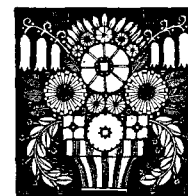
"These stories are not inven-  
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many: Dan Daly, Macon Over-  
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