

The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classification below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

Belles Lettres

SECRETS OF THE FRIENDLY WOODS. By REX BRASHER. Century. 1926. \$2.50.

A very pleasant set of nature essays in the good American tradition for that kind of writing by an author who is also a skillful painter of birds. The scene is usually the lower Berkshires, more specifically the southern Taconics in Dutchess County, the personnel is made up of chickadees, owls, coons, eagles, and squirrels, the style is cool and easy, and the observation close. A literary rather than a scientific book.

THE LURE OF THE SEA. Edited by F. H. Lee. Little, Brown. 1925. \$2.

The sea lore of today and yesterday is collected in this fascinating volume of essays and poems. It leads off with Masefield's "Sea Fever," and this gives a key note to the contents of the book. Thirty-eight pieces have been selected, including such well known favorites as "A Dutch Picture," by Longfellow; "Deep Calleth Unto Deep," by Conrad; "After Forty Years," by David Bone; "The Chase," by Melville; "The Long Trail," by Kipling, and Psalm CVII.

A short biographical sketch precedes each piece, but J. E. Patterson, who is represented by "Pirate v. Shark" is merely noted by the cryptic dates (1866-1919). This is the Patterson who wrote that fine imaginative yarn of the sea "The Bark Sappho." It would be interesting to know more about him. The volume is a worthy addition to any shelf devoted to sea books.

SELECTED ESSAYS. By KARL MARX. International. 1926. \$1.75.

The seven essays contained in this volume, treating of various topics of philosophic and sociological interest, such as the Hegelianism of the Left, French Materialism, the Jewish Question, and the English Revolution were written by Marx between 1844 and 1850, and now appear for the first time in an English translation. They may serve to test Marx's general value as a thinker apart from his specific economic

theories and in particular to set at rest forever all beliefs in his philosophic ability. His intellectual attitude is revealed as narrow and dogmatic, and his understanding of philosophy as singularly superficial. Thus he takes seriously the eighteenth century French "philosophies," perceives none of their glaring inconsistencies, identifies materialism with empiricism, and gives utterance to such unconsciously humorous statements as "The man who destroyed all metaphysics was Pierre Bayle," or "refuted Spinoza and Leibniz," or "Feuerbach, in his first decisive stand against Hegel opposed sober philosophy to drunken speculation" and at his hands "metaphysics succumbed for good and all to materialism"—regardless of the alleged fact that metaphysics had already been destroyed by Pierre Bayle a century before, and that materialism is itself obviously a metaphysical theory. Religion is considered to be in almost as evil case as metaphysics, not exactly dead but moribund. It is, of course, regarded as the mere ideology of an economic situation. The only realities in the life of man appear to be his political and economic relations. It would be hard to find a writer of equal repute who shows so limited an outlook as Marx reveals in these essays.

Biography

ALLENBY OF ARMAGEDDON. By RAYMOND SAVAGE. Bobbs-Merrill. 1926. \$5.

Lord Allenby is one of the outstanding military figures of the war: a man of striking personality and universally recognized abilities, who after an excellent record on the western front took brilliant advantage of the opportunity to carry out a campaign on his own in Palestine. It is unfortunate that so fine a record should be set down in a volume of unrestrained hero-worship; a piece of journalistic publicity rather than serious historical writing—particularly as the author was for a time one of his military secretaries and thus in a position to gather substantial material. In a slap-dash narrative of the war at large, we are shown Allenby at the centre of the stage through-

out, decked out with festoons of random superlatives,—and in the end we learn next to nothing about him. It is the type of military biography produced in haste during the war for quick effects, but in 1926 is altogether an anachronism. In a prefatory note we are reassured to find: "Perhaps it is wise to add that Lord Allenby himself has no knowledge of the contents of this book, but realizing his generosity, I feel sure that he will forgive errors and opinions with which he may not agree." But to expect the reader to do so is asking altogether too much.

Economics

AN ECONOMIC HISTORY OF ENGLAND. By CHARLOTTE M. WATERS. Oxford University Press. 1925. \$2.25.

In recent years the Oxford University Press has produced a number of monographs on historical and literary subjects which have been remarkable for their illustrations. The volume under review is one of these and its pictorial and other graphic aids are particularly useful and interesting. Economic history is popular just now and it is interesting to find in the same year profusely illustrated national treatises appearing in Great Britain and the United States ("American Economic Life," by Tugwell, Munro, and Stryker). One marked difference, however, is that the "fifty-year interval" tradition still dictates that the English volume shall close with 1874, while the American economists deal blithely with affairs of the moment.

To pack the economic history of England into six hundred small pages which are constantly invaded by illustrations is a real achievement and the author has managed it by means of an arbitrary plan of description at intervals of two centuries. As a result the book loses some charm, but the material is well regimented. It is brightened by other illustrations than graphic ones as well, for, throughout, picturesque incident and fact make the reading attractive enough for the mythical "general reader." Scientific analysis of controversy is not to be expected in a volume of this scope, but the very sensible plan is adopted of stating both sides and suggesting a choice. The faults are few and not serious, consisting, as they do, of occasional use of terms not previously explained, and small inaccuracies which usually derive from abbreviated dis-

cussion. Altogether it is a book which will be useful for general reference and entertaining and instructive for those whose interest does not extend to special research. **SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MODERN SOCIALISM.** By M. Beer. Small, Maynard. \$2 net. **LEFT WING UNIONISM.** By David J. Saposs. International Publishers. \$1.50. **THE HISTORY OF THE FABIAN SOCIETY.** By Edward R. Pease. International Publishers. \$2.50.

Fiction

THE DINOSAUR'S EGG. By EDMUND CANDLER. 1926. \$2.50.

It is quite evident that Mr. Edmund Candler has a love of lore,—Eastern lore particularly one may judge from the titles of his earlier works, "The Unveiling of Lhasa," "The Long Road to Baghdad," and three or four others of similar suggestion. In "The Dinosaur's Egg" he treats of a pleasant English family who fare no further from home than to the South of France but who are constantly being visited by African travelers, big game hunters, and collectors of curios. Practically every one in the story possesses "a museum," and there is great exchange of specimens and tales concerning them. Chimbashi, an antelope's horn in which is imprisoned the shadow of a witch doctor, is the real hero of the story and not the dinosaur's egg at all. This evil charm casts a spell on the English circle, and the story is taken up with their adventures and misadventures in this connection. It begins nowhere, travels along at a jog trot for a while, and ends where it began. Readers who enjoy a literary round trip with few thrills and no dangers will enjoy the excursion.

THE SON OF THE HOUSE. By ANTHONY PRYDE. Dodd, Mead. 1926. \$2.

Anthony Pryde has no fear of old effects. His portrait of the Charnwood family has something of the grace of a Du Maurier. The Charnwoods are all young, all Bohemian. They belong to the class of English folk that might be described as the still genteel, with the implication that they have been winged by ill fortune, though not permanently bowled over. The Lalehams, on the contrary, have kept their gentility very highly polished for ever so long, and are ripe for a turn of fortune. The con-

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The New Books Fiction

(Continued from preceding page)

tact of these two families leads to situations developed in the ample tempo of English country life as it was before the war. In order to make sure of his reader Mr. Pryde has resorted to the somewhat doubtful expedient of double-loading his plot, ramming down on the other characters a stray son of the house of Laleham, lost in infancy, and now drifting in from South America to claim his place at the paternal fireside. In spite of the pains spent on his delineation, this superfluous son remains somewhat scratchy and synthetic. Two of the Charnwood boys, on the other hand, are excellently fashioned characters; the one being Julian, the practical young man, winning back the family prosperity; and the other, a still more striking figure, Sladen Charnwood, the tough member of the group, with his queerly warped family affection.

THE PIPER'S FEE. By SAMUEL HOPKINS ADAMS. Boni & Liveright. 1926. \$2.

Mr. Adams is not a writer who needs critical reassessment. He is among the popular novelists who rely (and can afford to rely) on that simple blend of sentiment and whimsy which, though its requiem has often been sung by the moderns, strangely refuses to stay in its properly labeled Victorian grave. Like his colleagues Samuel Merwin and Booth Tarkington, he is a lineal descendant of the eighteenth century "man of feeling." Put him in company with our most approved story-tellers, and he naturally looks a little out of place: an Ik Marvel among the Sherwood Andersons. It is idle to take up an Adams novel with the expectation or even the faint hope of finding more than entertainment. He is a showman, not an interpreter. Therefore we regret his recent attempt to present an American "Forsyte Saga," upon the terms and with the materials at his command.

"The Piper's Fee" is a sequel or continuation of "Siege," the chronicle of the Ruylands family. Once again old Augusta Ruylands, the family despot, holds sway over the destinies of her tribe. But Mr. Adams has nothing to add to his earlier portrait of her: she is the complete dowager of tradition, hardly more than a "character" part, in the stage meaning of the term.

We are conscious that in "The Piper's Fee," Mr. Adams makes a manful effort to be modern and even daring. But somehow it they offer substance far too slight for their form. Most of them are a trifle better than "pretty"—a few stout threads are discernible to come off. What was intended to be the powerful and dramatic part of the action—the episode of Evelyn Ruylands' baby and Dorrie Selover's sacrifice for the sake of the Ruylands family name—is simply make-believe; we don't really accept it for a moment. It is early Victorian melodrama with a modern accent, nothing more. As for Grandante Augusta, she becomes before the end a figure not only tiresome but slightly grotesque. We can but hope that if Mr. Adams intends to make a trilogy of the Ruylands saga, he will consent to kill off the dowager in the first chapter of volume the third.

FLIGHT TO THE HILLS. By CHARLES NEVILLE BUCK. Doubleday, Page. 1926. \$2.

What we may call the Bluegrass school of fiction has lately been enriched by Charles Neville Buck's seventeenth novel. "Flight to the Hills" has all the earmarks of the sixteen others, and those whose taste in literature demands little but a "good story" will find it an excellent substitute for sleepless nights, as publishers are in the habit of saying.

Mr. Buck's story concerns a certain Cynthia Meade, who had gray-green eyes and a head of red bobbed hair that no one could miss. "To her, the world meant New York, and New York meant Broadway," but nevertheless she boarded the train for Carolina, intending to stay just long enough to satisfy the demands of the moving picture company with which she was under contract. The plot thickens early, someone gets careless with a revolver, and the heroine finds a hidden spot in the mountains the safest place until the smoke clears. As the story lengthens, her resolve to return to Broadway weakens; Cynthia discovers that love does not flourish alone in the land of the bright, white lights. She hears someone say: "I will arise and go into the hills from which cometh my strength," and decides that, in company with a gentleman known as Wade Murrell, she will put it to the test, for a while at least.

THE LANDMARK. By JAMES LANE ALLEN. Macmillan. 1925. \$2.

These last stories of James Lane Allen have a slight interest of their own, but largely the interest of outmoded writing. Inevitably one imagines how more modern writers would handle the themes which Allen handled with the rather pathetic grace of his own generation. Under his handling, actor dissection, masterly description of maritime storms and the life of a sailing ship in their texture, but only just discernible among so many slender and meaningless colored strands. Something of life lies at the bottom of at least two of these stories, but on the surface appears that very different thing, the literary production. The two do not merge or integrate—life as it is lived was for Allen something different from life as it must be gracefully and skillfully pictured.

The reason why these stories stand no chance of survival is that they are not vital enough; and they are not vital enough because Allen was essentially an artist without being at all a great artist. He was a professional craftsman whose presentation and style and attitude were a little virtuous; his work was carefully effective in its particulars, but no larger than the exact sum of its parts. He gave finish to his stories, but he failed to give significance; he used the file, but seldom used the shears. His short-stories show his limitations even more than his novels, for nowhere more than in a short-story will essential artifice make itself known. In these short-stories neither the substance nor the writing has sinew; either he could not or would not be vigorous and vital. It is therefore impossible to find much meaning in his type of writing, though it is easy to be lenient concerning what he wrote. "Miss Locke" is readable, occasionally acute; in a sense it does not dodge the issue, but it grapples with it unnaturally, and the story emerges as unnatural. "The Landmark" is readable, but almost goes out of its way to suggest it never happened, and was simply a literary idea. To be fair, this book is not Allen's best work; but none the less it draws down the blinds on his whole achievement, shutting him out of the present and committing him to an impermanent place in the past.

THREE PREDATORY WOMEN. By SYDNEY LOCH. Doran. 1926. \$2.

Of the three very long short stories which make up Mr. Loch's unusually interesting book, it seems to us that the first is by far the best. The tale chronicles the voyage of a barque from Sydney, round Cape Horn,

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to Queenstown, the central figure being Patricia Tyson, who passes for the wife of the skipper. The mates, the captain, his only passenger, a literary man named Clifford, are all under the siren spell of this rapacious and unstable female. Nothing very sensational occurs during the hundred and thirty days they are together at sea, but there is an abundance of first-rate chafing that has the authentic stamp of one who knows the realities of these things.

The second story, that of an obscure Warsaw Jew who rose to be the great operatic singer of his time, only to pay the direst price for obeying too late the prompting of his spiritual self, is hurt by the commonplace characterization of the woman responsible for his downfall. The concluding, and least impressive tale of the trio, whose scene is the interior wilderness of South Australia, with a guileless English boy of twenty-one and a lonely, primitive girl for its principals, though it pictures the arid waste land with a penetrating vividness, is painfully tedious and clumsily designed.

POSSIBLE HUSBANDS. By ARTHUR TUCKERMAN. Doubleday, Page. 1926. \$2.

Mr. Tuckerman's gaily written novel of our native newly-rich at home and abroad is in reality virulent propaganda aimed to glorify the marriageable American male, to shame our blindly selfish heiresses, and to pillory tainted, fortune-hunting noblemen. The sustained obviousness of this patriotic intention ruins what should have been good, solid satire. Besides this, the stark materialism and moronic stupidity of virtually every character in the book, except acknowledged undesirables, are gilded in such tones as may point the heroic or the lovely where neither exists. One grows weary of the incessantly repeated, (but in terms of the ball-room, the Ritz, the Rolls-Royce) "How much has he got?" The adventuring Bosnian prince who so nearly wins a bride from among this depressing crew should be felicitated upon his unwilling escape from her matrimonial clutches.

THE BLUE WINDOW. By TEMPLE BAILEY. Penn. 1926. \$2.

When Hildegard's mother died, to the innocent lass of eighteen there fell the duty of becoming reconciled to her erring, divorced father, a Maryland aristocrat, whom the girl had not seen since her babyhood.

Father, except for the grand manner and illusions of his personal splendor, is nothing remarkable, but the heroine's filial instinct bids her love him with a devotion which he scarcely deserves. On being reunited with him at his ancestral country-seat, friends and suitors from the cream of Baltimore society are Hildegard's to command, but she remains steadfastly true to the early sweetheart who had adored her on the farm. Now all this is tolerably well written and not devoid of evidence that the author means to apply the brakes when sweetness threatens to engulf her, but the fairy tale motive is far too apparent throughout for the book to entertain readers who have passed their mental majority.

Foreign

LA SALUTE PUBBLICA IN ITALIA. By Giorgio Mortara. Bari: Laterza (Yale University Press).

IL PIEMONTE. By Giuseppe Prato. Bari: Laterza (Yale University Press).

LES JOURNÉES DE JUIN, 1948. By Charles Schmidt. Paris: Hachette.

AMERINANISCHE LYRIK. Translated by Toni Harten-Hoenecke. Munich: Kunstwartverlag.

MATTER, MAN, AND MIND. By W. F. F. SHEARCROFT. Macmillan. 1926.

It may fairly be claimed that the author of this volume has fulfilled the intention set forth in the preface: "I have tried to give a wide view of the structure of life, beginning with the solid crust of the Earth as a foundation. The introduction and evolution of life on the surface has (sic!) been painted in broad splashes, and the Mind of Man, the crowning product of creation, I have tried to show as a thing of might and majesty." The book offers a running account in a sufficiently readable style of the achieved conclusions and utilitarian applications of modern science, warily skirting such doctrines as those of relativity and psychoanalysis, and altogether avoiding religious or philosophic interpretations. The author's habit of quotation without naming his authorities is most unfortunate as it may easily in the minds of his readers cast doubt upon the accuracy of his science, which, as a matter of fact, is thoroughly reliable.

OUTLINE OF ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY. By William McDougall. Scribners. \$4.

Poetry

FULL SAIL. By C. Fox Smith. Houghton Mifflin. 1926. \$1.75.

A number of Englishmen can write convincing and exhilarating sea songs and shanties. Kipling and Masefield, of course, immediately come to mind in any consideration of this type of verse. Miss Cecily Fox Smith is, however, the one woman in England who has made this same literary province peculiarly hers. For a number of years now she has been producing swinging rhythms about the sea which display not only a romantic enthusiasm for old clipper ships and the days of sail, but also a technical and historical knowledge of her subject quite remarkable in one who by the very nature of her sex could never by any possibility have served before the mast.

Miss Smith has already given us "Sea Songs and Ballads," and, in a fascinating prose, "Sailor Town Days," "A Book of Famous Ships," and "Ship Alley." Her "Full Sail" is a collection of more sea songs and ballads, and her versification and her handling of detail are thoroughly competent. Over and above this she casts as much glamour about her subject as do Kipling and Masefield, and if a trick of phrasing or a mould of stanza here and there suggests dimly one or the other, there is also freshness, individuality and first-hand enthusiasm displayed lavishly.

No collector of the literature of the sea can deny the work of Cecily Fox Smith shelf-room in this alcove of his library. She knows the old anchorages, the history of the old tea clippers, the dockside old and new. Her brain is full of sea-anecdote and snatches of old shanties. Her work "stands up" with that of some of the best masculine writers upon the sea.

FROM THE RAYS OF THE RAINBOW. By Mary Sanger Simonds. Putnam. \$1.75.

LYNES AND LYRICS. By Virginia McDonald. New York: Rovers.

THE BEST POEMS OF 1925. Selected by Thomas Moul. Harcourt, Brace. \$2.

POEMS. By Kostas Palamas. Selected and rendered into English by Theodore Ph. Stephanides and George C. Katsimbalis.

FROM UNDER A BUSH. By Edna Hyde. Saugus, Mass.: Parker. \$2 net.

HARVEST OF YOUTH. By Edward Davison. Harpers. \$2.

NOT POPPY. By Virginia Moore. Harcourt, Brace. \$1.75.

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