

Washington's Diaries

THE DIARIES OF GEORGE WASHINGTON, 1748-1799. Edited by JOHN FITZPATRICK. 4 vols. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. \$25.

Reviewed by WILLIAM MACDONALD

THE material contained in these handsome volumes constitutes beyond question one of the most important human documents that has lately been added to the literature of American history. Not all of the material, to be sure, is new. "Unrelated portions" of Washington's diaries have been published from time to time, notably the account of the early visit to the Ohio country and the record kept from 1789 to 1791. What has been published hitherto, however, Mr. Fitzpatrick tells us, is hardly one-sixth of what has survived, and the public spirit of the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association of the Union, who have supported the present undertaking, and the learning and skill with which Mr. Fitzpatrick has done his editorial work, deserves the most hearty praise.

The diaries, such as they are, begin in 1748 and extend to the day before Washington's death in December, 1799. The gaps, however, are considerable. Mr. Fitzpatrick thinks it probable that the earlier diaries were kept "only as records of special and unusual times, such as the trip to Barbadoes in 1751-52," while the two diaries of the French and Indian War period were "more in the nature of official reports than private diaries." From 1760 to 1767, too, the entries are irregular. From the latter year until June, 1775, on the other hand, the record runs on without interruption. Then the stress of war banished diary-keeping, and with the exception of entries for a few months in 1781, including the Yorktown campaign, and the brief period of a western journey in 1784, the diary was not regularly resumed until the beginning of 1785. Thereafter the entries are continuous until the latter part of 1789, and continue with many gaps until 1791, after which date the entries are brief and of a different character. Mr. Fitzpatrick, who thinks it probable that the diary was kept regularly from 1789 onward, is inclined to ascribe the numerous gaps mainly to the loss or destruction of the original manuscripts. It is to be hoped that the detailed chronological list which he has prepared of both existing and missing portions may result in the discovery of some, at least, of the parts that are lacking.

From the point of view of public affairs the diaries, it must be admitted, are somewhat disappointing. With the exception of the first two years of his presidency, when Washington appears to have noted in a good deal of detail the things that happened from day to day, hardly any of the important political events of the time are so much as mentioned. But for Mr. Fitzpatrick's informing notes the reader would find little to remind him of the stirring events that filled the years from 1763 to 1775, when colonial resistance to Great Britain was being prepared. For November 1, 1765, for example, the day on which the Stamp Act went into effect, the only entry in the diary is: "sent 1 Bull, 18 Cows and 5 Calves to Doeg Run in all—24 head branded on ye Buttock GW." Another period of silence covers the sessions of the Constitutional Convention of 1787, although, for that, the injunction of secrecy imposed by the convention offers an excuse. What Washington had to say about politics he appears to have reserved mainly for his letters, and since the volume of his correspondence was great, we may perhaps assume that he did not think it worth while to repeat in his diary what he had already written to his friends.

What the diaries do give us, on the other hand, is an interesting view of Washington as a man. One of the disadvantages of having soldiers and statesmen as national heroes is that their public life comes to be pretty much the only aspect of their existence that is thought of, and the fact that they had also a private life to be ordered and personal interests to be cultivated or conserved is likely to be forgotten if the story is not scandalous. The publication of Washington's diaries gives us at this point an intimate picture of real importance.

Washington was first, last, and always a planter. From the time when he took possession of Mount

Vernon until public duties claimed him, he passed almost all his days on his estates, and the multifarious duties of supervision and planning occupied his time and his thought. If he cared for reading, his diaries do not show it, and on the cultural side his life was narrow and prosaic enough. Day after day we find him in the saddle, riding over his plantations, overseeing the labor of his slaves, of whom he came to have two hundred and more, directing the sowing and harvesting, and carefully setting down at the end of the day the state of the weather, how the crops came on, when, where, and how much the ditches were being extended, how the cattle and horses fared, or what success attended the breeding of dogs. As a planter he was, it would seem, both methodical and progressive, and the minute record of prices and sales goes hand in hand with accounts of his efforts to improve the prevailing methods of cultivation and his experiments with new plants.



Between cultivating land and speculating in it the interval is not great, and Washington spanned it early and easily. In 1763 he took part in an ambitious scheme for draining the Dismal Swamp in North Carolina, and references to the project appear in his diary for the next three years. His journey to the Ohio country in 1770, on behalf of the Virginia officers who, with himself, had been granted land in the region for their services in the French and Indian War, showed him to be possessed of a keen eye for good land and all requisite shrewdness in acquiring it. Later, in his presidential tours of New England and the South, he was constantly noting the quality of the soil and the state of the crops, and asking questions right and left about the general condition of agriculture. Mr. Fitzpatrick notes that he was one of the first Americans to pay attention to the coal fields of Pennsylvania, and he had an exceptional knowledge of trees and wilderness life.

With all his preoccupation with farming and his reputation for dignity and formality, however, he found time for hunting, fishing, card-playing, and dining, and long before the Revolution the stream of guests had begun to flow. Rather curiously, the references in his diary to the social and political life of which he was a part show little early hostility to the British régime and no apparent apprehension of war or political separation. At the election at Alexandria on December 4, 1771, which returned him to the House of Burgesses to succeed himself, he paid twenty-five pounds and upwards for a ball, with a fiddler and cakes, as became a gentleman who was one of the largest landholders in the colony. On a visit to New York in May, 1773, to place the young John Parke Custis in King's College, he dined with General Gage, his old associate in the Braddock campaign, and a year later dined and spent the evening with Governor Dinwiddie on the very day on which the governor dissolved the Virginia House of Burgesses for expressing its sympathy with Massachusetts under the Boston Port Act; then, on June 1, he "went to Church and fasted all day," as the proscribed House had appointed. There were teas enough in Philadelphia during the Constitutional Convention to keep him busy almost every day, and during a recess of the convention he went fishing.



On the rare occasions when the diary mentions politics or general American affairs the entries are usually serious. On May 1, 1781, when the diary was resumed after a lapse of nearly six years, the first entry is prefaced with the following gloomy picture of the state of the country:

Instead of having Magazines filled with provisions, we have a scanty pittance scattered here and there in the different States. Instead of having our Armies well supplied with Military Stores, they are poorly provided, and the Workmen all leaving them. Instead of having the various articles of Field equipage in readiness to deliver, the Quarter Master General (as the denier resort, according to his acct.) is but now applying to the several States to provide these things for the Troops respectively. Instead of having a regular System of transportation established upon credit—or funds in the Qr. Masters hands to defray the contingent expenses of it we have neither the one nor the other and all that business, or a great part of it, being done by Military Impress, we are daily and hourly oppressing the people—souring their tempers—and alienating the affections. Instead of having the Regiments compleated to the new establishment . . . scarce any State in the Union has, at this hour, an eighth part of its quota in the field

and little prospect, that I can see, of ever getting more than half. In a word—instead of having everything in readiness to take the Field, we have nothing and instead of having the prospect of a glorious offensive campaign before us, we have a bewildered and defensive one—unless we should receive a powerful aid of Ships—Land Troops—and Money from our generous allies and these, at present, are too contingent to build upon.

It was the darkness before dawn, for in a few weeks the successful Yorktown campaign, of which the diary gives an especially full account, was under way.

When the Constitutional Convention completed its work in September, 1787, Washington returned to Mount Vernon and resumed his planter's life. Scarcely a hint appears in the diary of the struggle in the States over the ratification of the Constitution. On June 28, 1788, however, news having been received at Alexandria that Virginia and New Hampshire had ratified, he attended a dinner and celebration there in honor of the event, but taking care to visit all his plantations *en route*, and entering at the end of the day the usual record of planting, ploughing, harrowing, and seeding. On January 7, 1789, he "went up to the Election of an Elector (for this district) of President and Vice President," and dined on "Venison" at Page's Tavern "with a large Company." From February to September of that year the diary is missing, and we accordingly have no record of the election of Washington as President, or his triumphal journey to New York, or the first months of his presidency. A note by Mr. Fitzpatrick recalls the little known fact that short crops and other causes had brought Washington into debt, and that he had to borrow £600 of his friend Captain Richard Conway to satisfy the claims of "numerous people in Alexandria and elsewhere."



Washington is not commonly thought of as a traveller, but the record of his journeys, which were many and long for that day, compares well with the accounts which other American and foreign travellers have left us. On a journey to the Ohio country in 1784 to inspect his landed property, he packs his diary with detailed information about the progress of settlement, the state of agriculture and trade, and the habits of the people. He was keenly alive to the importance of the West, and records clearly his belief that unless the region were made accessible from the Atlantic coast by roads and waterways, the development of commerce with Spanish, French, and British territory by way of the Ohio and Mississippi would gradually alienate the attachment of the West to the Union. On an official tour of New England in the fall of 1789 we find him asking questions everywhere about land, trade, and manufactures, and recording the answers faithfully and fully in his diary along with his own observations and the account of official entertainment. At Hartford he ordered a suit of domestic broadcloth, "not of the first quality, as yet," but "good," and wore the suit, with buttons made at the same place, at a reception following the opening of Congress in October. In March, 1797, he set out on a tour of the South which took him as far as Savannah, with a week at Mount Vernon going and two weeks returning.

Washington's second term as President closed on March 4, 1789. Of the inauguration of his successor, John Adams, and the affecting scene in the House of Representatives, where, as Adams wrote to his wife, "was a multitude as great as the space could contain, and I believe scarcely a dry eye but Washington's," the diary characteristically makes no mention. "Much such a day as yesterday in all respects. Mercury at 41," is the only entry for the day. Three days later he left Philadelphia, then the capital, and on the 15th "got to Mt. V. to dinner." The diary continues with little interruption, but the plantation record was not resumed, the weather and the endless succession of visitors being almost the only happenings set down. The last entry was made on December 13, 1799: "Morning Snowing and abt. 3 inches deep. Wind at No. Et., and Mer. at 30. conth. Snowing till 1 o'clock, and abt. 4 it became perfectly clear. Wind in the same place but not hard. Mer. 28 at Night." The next day, bled to excess by his physician for a sudden cold, he died, distinguished victim of the crude medical practice of the time.

Vitriolic Reminiscences

MEMOIRS OF LEON DAUDET. Edited and translated by ARTHUR KINGSLAND GRIGGS. New York: The Dial Press. 1925. \$5.

Reviewed by WILBUR C. ABBOTT
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TO THOSE who enjoy the grilling of their fellow-creatures—and there are few of us who do not—no book of recent years will afford more entertainment than this selection from the vitriolic "Souvenirs" of the French Royalist. One need not trouble much with the mystical royalism which fills the concluding pages of the volume more than to wonder how such a confirmed cynic can, at the same time, be such a devoted upholder of divine right. Fortunately not even a royalist need be consistent, and as so many of these barbed shafts are directed against the upholders of that institution which of all things in the world M. Daudet holds most detestable, the paradox may find whatever explanation it can out of that circumstance.

From the opening paragraphs when the author tells how first Renan with a face "like that of an elephant who has lost his trunk"; then Gambetta "as big around as a table set for twelve, and as red in the face as a man who has just swallowed a flag the wrong way," promised the youthful Daudet "We'll do something for you one of these days," the same note of contempt, the same brilliant, bitter descriptions fill the book. Especially for Hugo. How he despises Hugo, his works and especially his admirers! Catulle Mendes wrote a "second-rate poem" on the Master's birthday; and "Catulle Mendes writing about any sincere feeling is like nothing so much as a slimy worm crawling over a sound piece of fruit." Hugo's son-in-law, Lockroy, and his "crowd" of professional politicians, the "real rulers in the poet's drawing room." "The skin of the lion was infested with these fleas." Of them all only one of these republicans extorts his praise. It was Clemenceau—and even he, despite the generous tribute to his great services, was, in 1913 "nothing but a little garrulous old man chattering outworn formulas," whence he redeemed himself by "a glorious change of front, in which one sees the hand of Providence."

It is not all gall and wormwood. Daudet has his admirations. Read what he says of Forain, or Carrière, of the physician-scientist Charcot. He believes in honesty and simplicity, in decency, above all in loyalty. He has a hatred of sham which is a passion, and a rare and generous passion. His scalpel is reserved for the crooked ways and men, for stupidity and hypocrisy. And there are few men of this time who have developed the art of removing the epidermis of their enemies more neatly and skilfully. If it is not a pleasure to be skinned, one may at least admire this genius for skinning others.

Moreover he is one of those rare creatures, an admirable story-teller. Every page is alive with anecdotes. Before us defile all the great names of two generations of French literature, art, politics, medicine, each one with a tale attached, some of them with several. It would be impossible even to begin to quote them. One would never stop. And there is, beside, in this book, a good deal of history, seen through royalist glasses, and much of it from the under side, but none the less important and certainly interesting. The Dreyfus case, the preparation to meet the German attack, Caillaux and "Caillautism," the Camelots du Roi, all the amazing panorama of French politics, seen, as it were, in bits here and there with comments by the wittiest, if the most prejudiced, of men. There is, as our moving-picture people say, "not a dull moment" in the book. If the author is prejudiced it is—barring his royalism, some may say with much truth—prejudiced on the right side. You should read it, discount all that you do not believe in, nor approve; reject, if you like, what you dislike; and thank author and translator and publisher for an extraordinarily enlivening entertainment. For, whatever he does, he is not like that poet whose work he describes "This eminent maker of cut glass carafes, this person who hammered out flat-footed alexandrines, had discovered the secret of freezing solid the Iliad and the Odyssey." Whatever else he does, M. Daudet had filled the carafes with that liqueur of wit which his countrymen decoct so well; he has made his literary alexandrines dance; and he has even humanized that amazing Iliad and Odyssey of French politics until one can almost believe it true.

The BOWLING GREEN

The Broadway Limited

I THINK Mac and I will always have a reminiscent affection for Drawing Room A in the car *Penn Square* in which we journeyed to Chicago. Quite a little home from home, we told the delightful conductor and he agreed. That conductor is a charming fellow. We persuaded a Philadelphia friend of ours, who happened to be in the Pennsylvania Station, to ride the first two hours with us. He was a bit anxious about it, as the gate-man insisted the first stop was Harrisburg. But we believed that any train, no matter how important, must stop somewhere in Philly; and sure enough it did. Our friend, we will call him Phil, got as far as the platform, but it seemed such a pity to break up the argument we were then having about Thomas Hardy that we persuaded him to come back on board. The conductor cheerfully agreed that for the necessary consideration Phil might ride to Harrisburg, the next halt. But when we reached that capital, we were just beginning dinner. "What, you here still?" cried the conductor when he saw Phil gaily dabbling in his soup. "Well, it's all business for the Company." So it wasn't till Altoona that Phil finally left us. There is a train-man who works in the Altoona Station who will remember a man leaping from the car as soon as it stopped and asking eagerly, "What's the next train back to Philly?" The Altonian was a little nettled I think, by this apparent disregard for his city's charms; he begged Phil to linger long enough to admire the municipal Christmas Tree which glittered gaily hard by the station. I think it only just to mention these facts because Phil was a bit anxious about the explanations he would have to make when he really did get home. He doubted whether it would be believed that he had been in Altoona; he desiderated corroboration in ink.

I would enjoy limited trains more if I could sleep in them; and even lying awake is not very profitable as one's mind rolls round so uneasily that it cannot seem to tuck any thoughts about its toes. Yet these trains are a delightful laboratory for studying certain cheerful phases of the American temperament. The printed warning that "Card Sharks and Con Men have started their winter campaign in railroad trains" was gallantly offset by finding reprinted on the menu the New York *Sun's* familiar editorial assuring us that There is a Santa Claus. And there was a pretty little Christmas Tree tinkling and swaying in a niche in the observation car. Which reminds me, I wondered what a foreigner would make of the printed leaflet, distributed to all passengers, saying "A new feature is the Ladies' Lounge and Bath in the Observation Car."

Phil's argument against Hardy was that there is possibly a certain lack of perspective in Mr. Hardy's sense of humor. "Hardy doesn't see," he said, "that whereas if one child hangs himself it's tragic, but if four of them do, it's comic. He doesn't give an even break. Whenever anyone takes a train he has all the neighbors at the railway station. Now you know that in real life it isn't as bad as that."

And yet I read in the P. R. R. menu of "A New Idea in Announcing Trains." The train announcer at Broad Street Station, Philadelphia, has been authorized to go beyond his honest business of stating arrivals and departures. He has become, as almost every American does sooner or later, a miscellaneous pulpiter. Now his "endless announcements," as Walt would call them, "include a brief news service, weather reports, and up-to-the-minute comments on topics in which he thinks persons in the concourse might be interested." I wonder if that will include literary notes? At any rate I suspect publishers will take a chance and mail him their press notes.

"The announcer's words can be heard distinctly in all parts of the concourse. Similar sets of megaphones later may be placed in the dining room and waiting rooms. The announcer now does more than merely recite the time table. He 'talks with the public.' When the chance offers he puts a per-

sonal or humorous touch in his remarks. A wedding party inspired this greeting: 'To the bride and bridegroom at gate No. 12, about to start on their honeymoon, we extend our hearty congratulations. You are starting right in starting over the Pennsylvania Railroad. May your other journeys through life be made with the same wisdom.'"

We are just getting into Chicago, so I cannot linger to moralize this. But perhaps Hardy was right?

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

Not Two Of A Kind

HEPHÆSTUS, OR THE SOUL OF THE MACHINE. By E. E. FOURNIER D'ALBE. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company. 1925. \$1.

GROWTH OF BIOLOGY. By WILLIAM A. LOCY. New York: Henry Holt & Company. 1925.

Reviewed by VERNON KELLOGG

HEPHÆSTUS is another one—about the twentieth, isn't it?—of that admirable Today and Tomorrow Series which Dutton is issuing so rapidly; a well-edited series of well-written small books—16-mos of about 10,000 words each—almost every one of them worth reading and several of them positively brilliant.

The author of Hephæstus—the Greek name of the hobbling fire-god whom most of us know better, if at all, as Vulcan—is a ready writer, perhaps too ready, indeed. His ink flows freely, his pen has a smooth nib, and his hand a light touch. He lets nothing cramp his style. But after all in an essay intended for quick reading one cannot put in all the qualifications that scientific-minded persons are rather in the habit of appending, for honesty's sake, to generalized statements of fact.

The author of Hephæstus glorifies fire, steam, and the machine. He sees soul in them. But he more highly glorifies the human being, and will not see humanness explained in terms of machine; he is no mechanist-biologist. He traces with really thrilling sweep the growth, now slow, now rapid, of science and its applications.

The age of science, discovery and invention, the age of mechanism and machinery and power has come and come to stay. Man, liberated from mechanical drudgery by the machine—(of course it is also sadly true that some men have been particularly enslaved by it; the author recognizes this, however)—has time to develop his intellectual and artistic powers. His necessities being supplied by pressing a button, he is liberated to enjoy a more varied existence.

"The Growth of Biology" is very much another kind of book. No writing for writing's sake, here. It is the first of two volumes projected by the author, the late Professor William A. Locy of Northwestern University. But his death found only one completed. It covers the history of "zoölogy from Aristotle to Cuvier, botany from Theophrastus to Hofmeister, physiology from Harvey to Claude Bernard"; in other words the growth of the science of biology from the Greeks to about the middle of the nineteenth century.

Locy's earlier volumes, "Biology and Its Makers" (1908) and "Main Currents of Zoölogy" (1918), revealed his competency as historian of biology. The new book confirms it. It is careful, well-organized, simply written, illustrated by 140 figures, most of them portraits of early workers, others interesting reproductions of pictures in early books, and the kind of book that one not only reads with profit but keeps for later reference.

A wave of interest in the history of science has spread over Europe and the United States in the last quarter century. Societies, institutes, and periodicals devoted to this history have been set up, courses in the general history of science and in particular sciences are being given in the universities; even a few special professorships have been established. The American Association for the Advancement of Science has (1921) added to its other sections a new one in the history of science.

It is being more and more clearly recognized that a knowledge of the history of biology is helpful to present-day biological workers. Professor Locy's book comes in a most timely way to help meet a positive need. Some other competent man should immediately write the projected second volume, covering the history of biology since 1850.