

# Fond of Animals

Verses and Drawings by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

## EQUINEIMITY

I DO so love a cheerful horse,  
A coy, coquettish equine,  
Though some are variable, of course,  
And mooch along with meek whine;  
But some, again, are oh so gay  
I wonder how they get that way.  
I simply shout to see them play,  
Exhilarate as with weak wine.

They scamper champing round the lot,  
They kick and whicker—My word!  
An overplus of life they've got  
To make their names a byword.  
And so I love to see them skate  
And crash across the garden gate  
And paw my roof devoid of slate.  
I never speak a shy word.

For Oh I love the agile horse,  
The artful horse, the bold horse!  
I never learned to ride, of course,  
Nor even on an old horse;  
But when the Spring is in the spinney,  
Oh Gosh, I like to hear them whinny  
And shake their legs so long and skinny  
And hoof it, every foaled horse!



SHEEPISH

IF—  
You were up upon a cliff  
Like the Rocky Mountain Sheep,  
Could you grip—  
Till it gave you the pip  
Where the drop was so deep?  
Could—  
You be understood  
As insouciant on the steep,  
If  
You were up upon a cliff  
Like the Rocky Mountain Sheep?

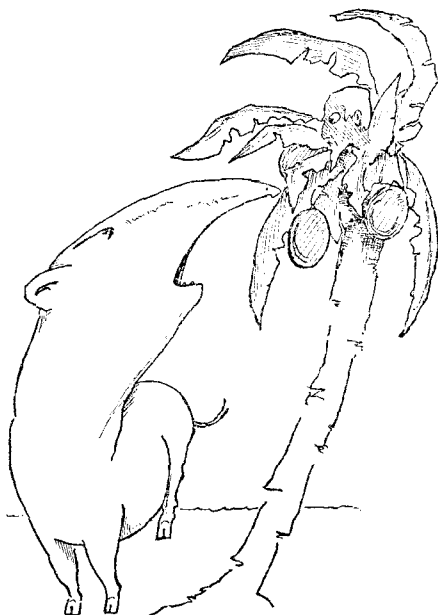
I—  
When so near to the sky  
Get as giddy as can be.  
I—  
Couldn't teeter, looking shy;  
That would never do for me.  
I  
Should immediately slide . . .  
To the bottom in a heap  
If  
I were up upon a cliff  
Like the Rocky Mountain Sheep.



## DILEMMA

O TAPIR, be calm!  
From that coconut-palm  
A Fakir is asking an alms—  
Or maybe no tapirs  
Could ever cut capers  
In countries with coconut-palms—  
Or maybe no fakir  
(And for the rhyme's sake here  
*Fah-keer*, as pronounced, I eschew)  
Could stare upon tapirs  
Who seem to be gapers  
At sights that are witnessed by few . . .

So I really don't think it will do.  
Do you?



BROODING BABOON

BROODING baboon, ah the world is but  
mockery;  
Monkery-unkey-aper-Jockery;  
Life's a fandango and fate calls the tune,  
Brooding baboon.

Many's the day when the women and men  
I see  
Cause me to marvel at minds that in Ten-  
nessee  
Flout the connection that scientists croon,  
Brooding baboon.

Sometimes, compared to your poise and your  
pondering,



Most of mankind seem amazingly maunder-  
ing.

You face the facts in the blaze of full noon,  
Brooding baboon.

Little you reck of our wrath or our railery,  
Wound all around with your flourishing  
tailery,  
Searching and scratching from June unto  
June,  
Brooding baboon.

Sometimes the brows that you bend as ap-  
praising us  
Would, if we thought, come extremely near  
fazing us . . .  
Well, now I'm off—but I'll see you quite  
soon,  
Brooding baboon.

## HAPPY TIGER

O TIGER, whom in hours of ease  
Ingratiating cocktails please,  
Down with that glass, you grizzled sinner;  
And take the lady out to dinner!

The frosted shaker I'd not shout down,  
But you're too much the Man-About-Town;  
I really am surprised at you—  
Would you act thus in your own zoo?

The tiger harked not my demur;  
I think he has too thick a fur;  
But probably—let's face the worst—he  
Than *hungry*, is far better *thirsty*.



IDEALISM

BLITHE bird that now with hasting gait  
Across the clouds dost fare,  
Art schoolward-bound, and art thou late?  
(Not that I care!)

Blest bird that streak'st it through the blue  
As though on wisdom bent,  
I scarce have time to peer at you  
When you have went.

The jellyfish is all at sea,  
The bear snores in his lair,  
But you are most decidedly  
Up in the air.

I ponder on that look of strain,  
That sharp regard of things,  
I wonder why thou dost not deign  
To use thy wings.

Blithe bird that now—but those are just  
The words I used before!—  
Blithe bird—uplift me if you must,  
But O, don't make me soar!



## Postal Rates

THE National Association of Book Pub-  
lishers has issued a pamphlet to bring  
to the attention of the public a matter which  
it considers of the first importance. It  
reads in part as follows:

For several years this Association has  
endeavored to persuade Congress that a wise  
public policy demands substantial reductions  
in the exorbitant postal rates now charged  
for the transmission of books through the  
mails. It has pointed out to the commit-  
tees of the House and Senate having juris-  
diction over postal rate legislation that the  
cost of manufacturing books has increased  
approximately one hundred per cent beyond  
the costs in 1914; that the selling price of  
books has increased since that time not to  
exceed fifty-five per cent, the difference hav-  
ing been absorbed by the book publishers  
through effecting the strictest economies in  
publication methods and the acceptance of  
reduced profits. It was pointed out that  
this situation had compelled the increased  
postal rates applicable to books to be borne  
by the purchaser, and that this had resulted  
in cutting down drastically the normal de-  
mand for books.

Discrimination against books in the postal  
rate schedules dates from the time when, in  
connection with the establishment of the  
parcel post system, the established flat rate  
of one cent for each two ounces, or fraction  
thereof, on all printed matter was abolished  
and books were classified with miscellaneous  
merchandise and zone rates imposed. This  
fundamentally changed the long-established  
policy of the United States Government of  
disseminating educational matter at reason-  
able and uniform rates to all its citizens,  
and resulted in a high premium being placed  
on the education and culture of the people  
in proportion to the distance of their re-  
spective homes from the great publishing  
center of the East. Experience has demon-  
strated that the increased postal rates have  
had the effect of substantially reducing the  
demand for books and the result is that the  
general public is being deprived of good  
reading matter. It has been conservatively  
estimated that seventy per cent of the books  
published in this country, other than school  
books, are absorbed within the environs of  
New York City. There is no question but  
that the high postal rates, materially in-  
creasing the price of books, have severely  
cut down the percentage of such books  
which otherwise would have been absorbed  
by the country at large.

Under the International Postal Union  
Convention preferential rates upon printed  
matter have long been established in recog-  
nition of the educational value of distrib-  
uting printed matter by mail at a low cost.  
This Convention, prescribing a rate of one  
cent for every two ounces, regardless of  
distance, is in effect between practically all  
civilized countries of the world, including  
the United States. The exorbitance of our  
domestic rates is well illustrated by the fact  
that a two pound book can be mailed from  
New York to Japan for sixteen cents  
whereas it costs ten cents more (twenty-six  
cents) to mail the same book from New  
York to San Francisco.

Last year the American Booksellers As-  
sociation passed a resolution urging upon  
Congress "the passage of legislation to re-  
duce postal rates on books" and another  
resolution expressing to the National Asso-  
ciation of Book Publishers its "appreciation  
of their effort to effect a reduction in the  
postal rates on books, and that we offer to  
them our aid in every possible way to fur-  
ther this object." The following resolu-  
tion was adopted by the American Book-  
sellers Association in convention, May,  
1927:

"Whereas, existing parcel post rates to  
which books are subject are greatly in ex-  
cess of the flat rate of one and one-half  
cents per pound applicable to similar read-  
ing matter contained in magazines and other  
second class matter, and

"Whereas, such parcel post rates are sub-  
stantially in excess of express rates for books  
when sent to any point beyond the fourth  
zone, and

"Whereas, such exorbitant postal rates  
which must be borne by the purchasers of  
books result in greatly discouraging and to  
a large extent, absolutely prohibiting the  
purchase of books by the public,

"Therefore be it  
"RESOLVED, that the American Book-  
sellers Association urges upon the Seventieth  
Congress the enactment of legislation to  
effect a separate classification of mail mat-  
ter for books and lower postal rates there-  
for, such as contemplated by Senate Bill  
(Continued on page 410)

## What's Ahead — and Meanwhile

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Informal and pertinent essays on education, flappers, children, prohibition and international affairs which make exceptionally delightful reading.

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FOR 1927

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—*Ernest Boyd*

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NEW YORK

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## The Broadway Travelers

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Edited by JOHN BERESFORD

The Life and travels of John Macdonald in Europe, Asia, and Africa (1745-1779).

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Translated with an Introduction by Malcolm Letts.

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### Don Juan of Persia

Translated with an Introduction by Guy Le Strange.

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## The New Books

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

### Art

**ANCIENT FURNITURE.** A History of Greek, Roman, and Etruscan Furniture. By GISELA M. A. RICHTER. Appendix by Albert W. Barker. Oxford University Press. \$35.

Every once in a while among the litter of publications on the decorative arts a really significant book appears which marks a definite advance in some phase of historical research or esthetic understanding and is not a mere recompilation for popular consumption. This work of Miss Richter's is a striking instance. Since its subject matter concerns the classical archaeologist as such, on the one hand, and the student of furniture and design on the other, the book can be regarded from two angles which, though both demanding sound scholarship are necessarily concerned with rather different aspects of the material involved and set the author a rather delicate double problem. The present reviewer, while feeling utterly unprepared to attempt any estimate of its merit on the first ground, feels justified in relying on Miss Richter's position as a classical scholar and the opinion of her colleagues as amply sufficient warranty of its archaeological excellence.

From the point of view of the student of design and for that matter of the general reader, Miss Richter has accomplished the difficult task of making her investigation of very momentous value and vital interest. The book is exceedingly readable and made fully effective to the non-specialist by copious illustration and an absence of wanderings into archaeological bypaths which are of doubtful value to those interested primarily in the objects themselves. The reason for this is that Miss Richter's own interests lie not solely in the classic field but include a very real and lively interest in and an appreciation of furniture forms as such, a fact which may be gathered from her references to the charms of the recent antiquities of Colonial America.

Miss Richter's investigations not only revealed the existence of a very great deal of reliable data afforded by vase paintings and sculpture, but that this material was fully capable of classification and, within reasonable limits, of chronological definition. These sources are further greatly reinforced by bringing together all the known survivals of actual pieces which prove to be much more impressive evidence than any casual and scattered acquaintance would indicate.

In brief, Miss Richter finds that Greek furniture in its simplicity of type reflected the simplicity of the Greek ménage. There was little save the couch, chair, small table, and chest. Within each of these groups there was however, a considerable variety of detail and a tendency to the development of definite and often successive types. In the main, however, more attention was paid to the refinement and development of two or three main forms, than to the further compilation or elaboration of detail—an interest which was distinctly dominant in later Roman times.

Judging from the results of careful investigation as shown in Mr. Barker's working drawings, the vast majority of classic furniture shows a sufficient regard for structural logic and propriety of form, but there are still a few questions that remain unanswered. Why, for instance, did the logical Greek mind permit the curious and disturbing incisions on either side of the rectangular leg of couches and chairs since these incisions reduce its effective section by at least two-thirds without giving the effect of lightness which may have been the aim? This seems entirely at variance with the entirely logical and delightful line and construction of the *Klismos* which makes its modern "empire" derivations so clumsy by comparison. Besides offering as exhaustive treatment of Greek forms as available data permits, the book gives a clear idea of their relation to the main Etruscan types. These, save for one or two innovations, such as the "barrel" chair, are merely Greek derivatives. Rather more monumental data is shown to be available for a reconstruction of Roman furniture. This, as we should expect, is remarkable for elaboration of detail and material rather than for refinement of form. No basically different types were evolved though far greater elaboration of treatment gives a much greater superficial variety.

No student of the industrial arts can afford to neglect Miss Richter's work as it throws a great light on the origin of many late European developments, and should provide an excellent basis for much needed investigation of early medieval forms about

which so little is known. It is hard to show how the work could be improved either as to cogency of text or wealth of illustration.

### Belles Lettres

**NEW ESSAYS AND AMERICAN IMPRESSIONS.** By ALFRED NOYES. Holt. 1927.

It is sufficient that Mr. Noyes's impressions were mainly agreeable to him. One turns in search of greater interest to the "New Essays," which are literary, for the literary impressions of poets always have a presumptive interest.

The first two—"The Dominion of Literature," and "What Shakespeare Means"—leave no memorable impression, but "The Tercentenary of Bacon, A Spurious Reputation," arrests the attention by its subtitle, and leaves one indebted to it for the quotation from Gabriel Harvey that Bacon "had an eye like a viper," and for the suggestion that the Cecils did not refuse to promote him because of jealousy, but because they suspected, or did not like, his character, which has a certain more or less obvious probability. But is it not over late to attack Macaulay's estimate of Bacon's relations to modern science, a subject on which Macaulay was almost as incompetent a judge as Mr. Noyes is, or as we are; he was a good forger of telling phrases, and his saying of Bacon that "he moved the intellects which have moved the world," being substantially a historical fact, is quoted with approval by men of very different opinions.

Bacon is too complex a character, a reputation too vast and varied, to be affected by small shot, or defined in brief reviews; too extensive and too much debated for any assurance as to exactly what it is. But at least it is not a "spurious" reputation on the grounds of Mr. Noyes's indictment; it includes strange weaknesses of character, a something cold and tortuous, a "yellow streak," if you choose; and it has not included for a generation or two past any claim to "the invention of the scientific method." Yet the "greatness" there is not there obscurely. Mr. Noyes's conclusion that he had "a third rate mind" is as rash and juvenile as Macaulay at his worst. You cannot turn from Montaigne's Essays to Bacon's without feeling that Bacon's is the more powerful mind—and Montaigne's was no "third rate mind." The Elizabethans were seldom—were there any of them?—of the impeccable sort. It is the vigor of the era that is so amazing.

In the essay on "The Real Secret of Shakespeare's Sonnets," Mr. Noyes seems to take the stand that, if there is any secret other than the secret of all great art, it is undiscoverable—which is probably a sound position. But the reason why one is constantly tempted to think the Sonnets autobiographical is that they give that impression, especially after the reading of any other contemporary sonnet series. One happens to know that Sidney's Sonnets were about a woman whom he loved and lost, but whether or not Shakespeare's covered any personal affair one happens not to know. Perhaps they seem more "real" only for the same reason that his plays seem more "real" than any other Elizabethan plays, namely that Shakespeare was made that way. At any rate, when an advocate of the poet's heart unlocked by a sonnet key is shown that many of those "autobiographical" lines were transposed from the "Venus and Adonis" or "The Passionate Pilgrim," it ought to rouse in him many a healthy doubt.

"A French View of Milton" is fortunately only in part conceived with Taine's view,—fortunately because Taine's "History of English Literature" is a book not only remarkable but absurd, and his criticism of Milton is not worth talking about. When Mr. Noyes is differing from Mr. Bridges and Saintsbury on Milton's verse, however, the differences are interesting and valuable.

The presumption of interest seems to be borne out. The English poet turned critic is at his best when he deals with the delicacies and enchantment of English verse. One may be permitted to suspect that the violence of Mr. Noyes toward Bacon is—perhaps unconsciously—connected with Baconian claims to Shakespeare's plays. It sometimes rouses even the judicious to violence, but the cause of the poet is too safe to demand the distinction of the chancellor.

**HELLENISTIC CIVILIZATION.** By W. W. Tarn. Longmans, Green. \$6.

**THEATRE.** By Edith J. R. Isaacs. Little, Brown. \$4.50 net.

### Biography

**JOHN MACDONALD:** Memoirs of an Eighteenth Century Footman. Harpers. 1927. \$4.

This volume in the Broadway Travellers series is the first edition since 1790 of what the historian Lecky called John Macdonald's "curious autobiography." Copies of the one original printing had become so rare that, in spite of repeated advertising, the editor of the present edition had to get the text from the copy in the British Museum. John Macdonald was a person of great candor, little troubled with modesty, false or otherwise. As the anonymous introduction to the 1790 edition says: "He seems always to speak from the bottom of his soul; he confesses, on every occasion, his own weakness or folly. The simple strokes of truth and nature with which he paints the caprices, the vanities and vices of others, possess all the force of satire; and the attentive and enlightened reader finds a gratification in observing how objects strike a sound and sensible mind, free from all system and prejudice of education. . . ."

From the very beginning, John Macdonald's career was eventful. Born in the Highlands of Scotland in 1741, he was deprived of his parents at the age of five, served as postilion and groom until he was nineteen, and after that was valet, body-servant, footman, hair-dresser, and general factorum to some twenty-seven different masters, some of whom he left voluntarily and some of whom dismissed him. He was a true cosmopolitan, ready to pack up his bag and be off to the ends of the world at fifteen minutes' notice. Curiously enough, he is the authority for the last moments of Sterne, to whom he was sent by one of his masters on some message. He was also for a time in the service of James MacPherson, better known as "Ossian."

The whole account sounds straightforward enough. He writes well, with no embroidering, telling more of his masters and of the places he visits than of his own exploits. He becomes quite famous for his ability to make "Queen of Scots" soup which took six chickens and eight eggs, and also for his skill in dressing hair in such a way that it stayed in place. His observations on India are especially good. He apparently had much to do with the popularization of the umbrella in England. When he first carried one over his head, he met with jeers on all sides, which so embarrassed his sister that she ran on ahead rather than walk by his side. Yet he lived to see the umbrella substituted for the sword.

Without having any great sense of humor himself, Macdonald has the faculty of setting down facts in such a way as to amuse readers. His vanity, and pride in his own handsome appearance, were apparently justified. In his amorous adventures, which are many, he makes himself appear more sinned against than sinning. In the end, however, he marries a Spanish girl with whom he had an affair on a previous trip through Spain. This volume can be highly recommended to all who would like to enjoy a piquant description of eighteenth century life, described from a rather unusual angle.

**GOETHE.** By J. G. ROBERTSON. Dutton. 1927. \$2.50.

For the layman who wishes to get a striking picture of the pivotal events in Goethe's life, this little book is excellent. The style is crisp; the incidents related are picturesque. There are quite a few passages in it that make accurate translations of the original Danish of Georg Brandes's book on Goethe. These, however, are so many coincidences. It is in every sense of the word a "personal" biography and for this reason its most novel features will be contested far beyond the boundaries of Robertson's own camp—the University of London.

He claims that Goethe had a "mother complex." Could it not be said with equal truth that he had a father complex? It was from his father that he inherited his pompousness and imperiousness; his love of a big home with many pictures; his *Italienische Reise*; his inability to take an entirely charitable attitude toward others who were also successful; his hatred of onions, tobacco, dogs, and daily newspapers; his thrift, for Goethe was the first poet to make the equivalent of \$112,500 in royalty and to hold on to it; and his utter lack of humor,

for it is not on record that Goethe ever once in all of his eighty-three years laughed uproariously.

Robertson states without a syllable of comment that Goethe was once a general in the Prussian army. Let no one be misled; for "General Goethe" is to be taken even less seriously than the proverbial Kentucky Colonel. He contends that Goethe returned from Italy a wiser man but a poorer poet. A man cannot be a decent poet unless he is wise. He feels that it was an unfortunate incident in Goethe's life that he ever became attached to the Court of Weimar. It may have been; no man can know. But if it was, why not explain the weakness that made it impossible for Goethe to detach himself from this incubus? Of Goethe's admiration for Byron Robertson writes: "Goethe's estimate of Byron's literary genius often puts our confidence in his critical acumen to a hard strain." Not necessarily. Robertson perpetuates the right shabby rumor that Goethe's last words were *Mehr Licht*. The ripest scholarship has long contended that Goethe's last words, addressed to his grand-child, were *Gib mir dein Pfötchen* (Give me your little hand).

The interpretation is equally "personal." Professor Robertson asserts that Faust should have lost his wager and received the punishment. Why? Faust routed Mephistopheles completely by his doctrine that never-ceasing activity in the service of men is the only sound doctrine. Where is there any talk of beds of sloth? But having brought this up, why does Professor Robertson glide in silence around this reef? When the curtain goes down on the first part of "Faust" the hero has three deaths on his conscience; when it goes up on the second part of "Faust" the hero is lying on a bed of roses surrounded by kindly genii. What kind of punishment is that?

Appended to the text is a selected bibliography that ignores American scholarship; translations of the poems quoted in the text, translations that remind more of a canon than of an airplane; and a chronological list of Goethe's works containing both the years of composition and those of publication. This will prove helpful, and help is needed, for the world is still poles removed from a final opinion on Goethe.

### Drama

**THE QUEEN OF NECTARIA, A Fantasy** in Four Acts. By FRANCIS NEILSON. 1927. \$1.50.

In a four-act drama of considerable length and less wit, mingling fantasy and satire, Francis Neilson writes of politics and, incidentally, of love in the Utopian city of Nectaria.

The vague and frequently invisible thread of plot, ornamented with sundry animadversions and episodes that occupy most of the volume, is ultimately concerned with the passion of the young, beautiful, and unmarried Queen of Nectaria for the son of the new American ambassador. The constitution of Nectaria, written by Snitternitch, the Lord High Chancellor, who is burdened with an ineffectual son, provides that the Queen can marry only a native Nectarian,—which Nectarian must be the scion of the Lord High Chancellor. The fortuitous suicide of Snitternitch junior, who "missed his mark all through life, but found it at the last moment," together with the intervention of a pair of gypsy fortunetellers, who turn out to be the King and Princess of Ithaca engaged on a mission of propaganda in the interests of autocracy, result in the final gratification of the Queen's desire.

There is intelligence behind this play, but it lacks sprightliness and dynamic vitality. Because the author has not concentrated his material, the reader's impression is one of aimless diffusion and prolixity, enlivened by a few hits that are almost palpable, such as the American ambassador's observation that our Prohibition amendment is in no danger of repeal, since "one of the most active political parties in the States is the bootleg party—all prohibitionists every man jack of them—and rich—beyond the dreams of Cæsus."

"Beggars on Horseback" is still the most successful dramatic essay in America at satirical fantasy because, despite its episodic defects, it was quick with imagination and instinct with beauty and pathos. Neither in conception nor in execution does "The Queen of Nectaria" attain to high merit. The characters never emerge from their speeches; the fantasy is heavy-footed; and the satire is too good-natured to bite.

**LAZARUS LAUGHED.** By Eugene O'Neill. Boni & Liveright. \$2.50.

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