

Books of Special Interest

The Roosevelt Expedition
EAST OF THE SUN AND WEST OF THE MOON. By THEODORE ROOSEVELT and KERMIT ROOSEVELT. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1927. \$3.50.

Reviewed by FREDERICK R. WILSON

IN 1925 Theodore Roosevelt and Kermit Roosevelt undertook an expedition to Central Asia, to get specimens of the Ovis poli, the ibex, the Asiatic wapiti, and other species for the Field Museum of Chicago. Accompanied by George K. Cherrie and Suydam Cutting, they crossed the Himalayas by the Karakoram Pass in June. The Roosevelt brothers hurried north across Chinese Turkestan to the Tian Shan Mountains for big game, while Cherrie and Cutting followed more slowly, collecting birds and small mammals and photographing as they came. Nearly two months later the two parties again joined forces for a time. Finally Cherrie and Cutting returned from Kashgar through Russia, while the Roosevelts went on to the Pamirs for Ovis poli, and then recrossed the Himalayas to India.

In "East of the Sun and West of the Moon," Theodore Roosevelt and Kermit Roosevelt tell the story of this journey. As a record of what was done and how, the book leaves little to be desired. Its best portions deal with details of hunting, and the animals hunted: ibex, sheep, wapiti, and bear in the Tian Shan, and Ovis poli in the Pamirs. The chapters which describe the crossing of the Himalayas are excellent. It would be puerile to find fault with the book for lacking historical and anthropological detail, for one cannot gather this sort of information about a country without staying some time in its cities.

Theodore Roosevelt and Kermit Roosevelt wrote alternate chapters, yet their styles are so similar that one is unconscious of any break in the narrative. They saw and noted much and tell it well. The amount of marching and hunting done, in the time available, is simply extraordinary. It takes not only physical strength but real skill in leadership to move a caravan through mountains as fast as they did. The hours per day spent in hunting are even more impressive than the distances marched. To climb and stalk in high mountains from dawn until long after dark is lung-breaking work. They kept at it for day after day without a break. The tremendous territory covered, and the collections gathered in one short season, are evidence enough of the energy and endurance of the authors.

Some readers may ask themselves whether the job was worth doing. Why all this fuss about the Ovis poli, the ibex, and the Asiatic wapiti?

Now it happens that wild sheep are distributed over all the continents of the northern hemisphere; ibex in Asia and Europe. They are, as a rule, found only

in wild and inaccessible mountain ranges, where cold, wind, altitude, and precipitous heights render hunting incredibly arduous. Many species and races are known, each with its own geographical range. Others doubtless await discovery, for many an isolated mountain of western China, Tibet and Turkestan has never been explored by the scientific hunter. The relationships of the various groups present many interesting problems; we are far from having the final word on the subject. These facts, and the need for a complete series of specimens of all the world's fauna in all our great museums, must be borne in mind when one appraises the record of such a journey as that chronicled in this volume.

Bird History

PHEASANTS: THEIR LIVES AND HOMES. By WILLIAM BEEBE. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co. 1927. \$15.

Reviewed by ROBERT CUSHMAN MURPHY
American Museum of Natural History

THESE sumptuous books include all the text of the magnificent four volume monograph published in 1918-22, with the exception of the technical descriptions of the birds and the citations of earlier literature. The present text, moreover, has been in part rewritten and has been brought up to date by the inclusion of recent discoveries, such as those of the French ornithologist, Jean Delacour, in Cochinchina. Since the folio edition was limited to six hundred copies, bird lovers throughout the world are deeply indebted to Col. Anthony R. Kuser, Mr. Beebe's patron during the pheasant investigations, for his decision to issue the work in smaller, inexpensive, and more practical form.

"Never, perhaps, in the history of the birds of the earth," writes Professor Henry Fairfield Osborn in the preface, "will it be possible to produce another work of quite such scope; for not a month passes but the rarer birds of all kinds are being pushed back farther into the jungle and into the mountains, where, before long, they will make their last stand. Hence, the volumes present a very strong sentimental appeal to all bird lovers."

Fifty-four plates illustrate the new edition. The reproductions in color from paintings by Lodge, Thorburn, Knight, Fuertes, Jones, and Grönvold include some of the finest book portraits of birds which have ever appeared, while photographs by the author are not only glorious pictures, but also cleave even more closely to their object of illustrating the haunts and homes of pheasants than do those in the greater edition. The reproductions are, of course, in quadricolor and half tone instead of in the more costly manner of the monograph. A certain reduction in the number of plates is not an important loss, but the elimination of bibliographic references increases the lack of documentation for which even the larger work was somewhat open to criticism.

It is not always possible to tell where the discoveries of earlier observers leave off and those of Mr. Beebe begin. However, the merits of this book far outweigh any conceivable deficiencies. The admirable introduction concerning pheasants in general is a treatise of interest to all zoologists, whatever their special fields. In the discussion of the various species and races of these beautiful and fast disappearing birds, the author has brought together all available published information, together with vivid original matter derived from his own unparalleled field opportunities. The whole text is naturally enriched by the "ornithological background" in the way of word pictures of exotic environments such as we have come to expect from the pen of Mr. Beebe.

Along with its rare literary quality, the work is also filled with genetic and taxonomic information of a high grade. The order in the moult of the tail feathers is one of the characters by which Beebe divides the pheasants into their natural groups, and it is interesting to recall that he first directed attention to this curious criterion more than thirty years ago. Space forbids a consideration of any single biography. One of the most interesting and significant is doubtless that of the jungle fowl, the ancestor of all our domestic poultry, and a bird which has been bred from time immemorial, the value of its flesh and eggs being scarcely more weighty, in historical aspect, than its use in cock fighting. Nor has the fancier's hobby of developing ornamental or abnormal strains been without importance, even during the remote past.

All in all, the combined life histories of the pheasants, and the colorful record of an expedition during which nine men sacrificed their lives, have been welded by the author into one of the most notable ornithological works of all time.

Escapades

WHOOOPS DEARIE! By PETER ARNO. Simon & Schuster. 1927. \$1.75.

MR. ARNO'S Whoops sisters in *The New Yorker*, as they appeared from week to week, were funny, often very funny. His text to them was briefly convulsing. He and Mr. P. G. Wylie have expanded the idea into a book and have given Pansy and Mrs. Flusser 174 pages and a plot, such as it is. And the big laugh has gone out of the material. It might have been expected.

The story is simple, and vulgar. It is also human—and purposely impossible. Strangely enough the most interesting thing about it is its utterly preposterous moment of retribution, when Mrs. Flusser comes into her enormous fortune; and then there are those pleasant young people, Allan Allen and the Arno-ish blonde, Janet Weston. But Gertrude, the elephant, is really the most endearing character, she and her fabulous mahout, Algonquin Navajo Porter. Fester, the boy, is quite a stick. He sticks to Gertrude. But we have only an indication of what finally became of Gertrude. That is a pity.

The AMEN CORNER

FROM VARIOUS sources come conjectures that the Oxonian is Christopher Morley. This may be correct, and it may not; the world is full of imitations concocted to deceive all but the most wary eye!

Others seek the identity of Pamela, who is at once the rose and the thorn of the Outer Sanctum. This is a more serious matter; to inform our readers the true name of Pamela, would be to lay bare the tenderest recesses of the Oxonian's heart. The Publisher's Young Man, Young Harvard, and Pamela's Latest Victim unite in opposing this disclosure, on the plea that it would swell outside competition for Pamela's favor. A clue must suffice; since Pamela's departure from Smith College in 1923, Northampton has been a sadder, albeit more reposeful, place.

The Publisher's Young Man, who is a "stout fellow" in the Bowling Green, sent a copy of Brandenburg's *From Bismarck to the World War* to Professor Schmitt of Chicago University. The reply has caused Pamela to do vivacious Charles-ton amid the impedimenta of the Outer Sanctum. "The best book yet written in any language on the subject of pre-war diplomacy," says Professor Schmitt. "I have no hesitation in saying that Brandenburg is a *sine qua non*."

DOCTOR MABEL ULRICH tells us of a very modern flapper who entered her Muncie-apolis bookshop to purchase a Bible. Viewing with mingled astonishment and curiosity this notable conversion, Dr. Ulrich exhibited Bible after Bible (all of Oxford⁽²⁾ make, we hope!). But the flapper rejected even the cheapest, with the statement, "But I only want to use it temporarily." This has led the Oxonian to speculation. What was the temporary use involved? Could not one write a captious essay on "Temporary Uses of Bibles"? And why not a Temporary Bible for Modern Youth, who outgrow its exhortations so rapidly that pages might be loose-leaf for quick removal? Whereas the story of the Prodigal Son, being a satisfactory theme, might be featured in red ink. Surely Modern Youth could supply its own Revelations!

We are told, however, that among shop-lifted books the Bible takes first place. Here is further food for thought. Who steals Bibles? Are our modern criminals secretly addicted to the consolations of religion? Certainly a view of some of the fine Bibles at 35 West 32nd Street gives the most moral of us an acquisitive twitch of the fingers. At any rate, when an Oxford Bible disappears we are always secretly elated at this instance of good taste among thieves!

BIBLIOPHILES, whether professional or light-hearted, will undergo another acquisitive thrill at the news that the Oxford University Press will soon publish (for the first time) the journal of David Garrick.⁽³⁾ A happy sequence of circumstances, of which more anon, has rendered available this rare document, hitherto known only to a few collectors. There is much of interest to friends of the drama and of general literature in this journal of the famous actor's trip to Paris.

The desire for guidance in reading seems a characteristic of most Americans. Overcome by too many requests, the American contingent of the Oxford Press has begun to issue a serious series of reading guides, under the general title of *Oxford Reading Courses*.⁽⁴⁾ The first little book, recently published, is on *The English Novel*. There is an introductory essay and an interesting list of questions on each book in the course, all prepared by one A. C. Valentine, a kindly old gentleman who is known at several universities. Other books on *Biography* and *English Poetry* will soon appear. These are more carefully prepared than many guides to reading now available.

SIR J. A. MARRIOTT, whose knowledge of statesmanship is the fruit of experience as well as study, spent twenty years on his new book *The Mechanism of the Modern State*.⁽⁵⁾ The two books which placed him among leading authorities on politics: *Second Chambers*,⁽⁶⁾ and *English Political Institutions*,⁽⁷⁾ were undertaken merely as preliminary studies for this magnum opus. Many will buy the latter to study; many more will buy it, as they buy the *Oxford English Dictionary*,⁽⁸⁾ because they cannot do without it!

Which accounts for the fortunes made in safety pins!

—THE OXONIAN.

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Foreign Literature

American Fiction

LE ROMAN AMÉRICAIN D'AUJOURD'HUI. By RÉGIS MICHAUD. Paris: Boivin et Cie. 1927.

Reviewed by ARTHUR W. COLTON

IN a recent article on M. André Siegfried's "America Comes of Age" a reviewer remarked that "an American writing of his own country would unconsciously minimize the one characteristic which looms largest in M. Siegfried's more detached field of vision. The American sees unity. We conceive ourselves to be a nation. To M. Siegfried we are a strange and wonderful conglomeration of diverse races trying to be a nation."

That M. Siegfried sees this diversity is all to his credit, and indeed he seems to be a more discriminating writer than his critic. For—quite to the contrary—Americans, like the natives of any country, tend to see diversity among themselves, and it is the visitors who tend to see unity, or uniformity. The natives are much nearer the truth, particularly in respect to America. The subject is complex but it is probable that the uniformity is more superficial than the diversity. At any rate it lands all thinking in a futile mess to say "unity" when you probably mean "uniformity," or to say "nation" in such a way that nobody knows whether it means something political or something social. Most Germans are not bawling drill sergeants or fusty professors. Most Englishmen are not like John Bull, and never were. Most Americans are neither "puritans," nor Babbitts, nor money mad millionaires. The habit of visualizing a nation, or any group, as a person, is the old myth-making faculty and habit, vital to art and poisonous to fact. There is no Germany, or England, or America, which thinks or acts thus and so. There are only enough persons who do something of the kind, sufficiently similar and sufficiently noticeable to attract attention. There need not be, relatively, very many.

All this is apart from M. Michaud on the American novel, except to note that there seem to be some exceptions to the general rule that books on America by Europeans are not worth reading by Americans; and except that M. Michaud's commentary is all built around a thesis.

He is a Professor of French in the University of California, but all his books seem to be on American literature, most of them on Emerson. A French critic may be as inadequate on English poetry as one of our critics on French poetry, but the best foreign critics of English literature in general are usually French, and M. Michaud on the American novel is not only competent but up-to-date. The four novelists of today whom he selects for his main analysis are Dreiser, Sinclair Lewis, Sherwood Anderson, and Cabell; and probably the selection is sound. The novelists of the past selected as leading up to these are Hawthorne, James, Howells, and Mrs. Wharton. The last is both past and present, and M. Michaud perhaps, takes her somewhat too seriously.

He is hardly to be blamed for the thesis or doctrine, so familiar now to us all and which demands the intensive, incessant, and

indeterminate use of the word "puritan." He only echoes our current criticism. If we could but drop psychoanalysis for a while, and especially its terms as literary terminology, and do a little analysis of words! Psychoanalytic terms have reached the status of a common slang, portmanteau words ranging all over the area of a mood. "Complex" is as invertebrate as an octopus. We say "inhibition" meaning what our fathers meant by "reserve" or "scruple." They had a theory, about it, which we have exchanged for another theory, and our theory is riding us as tyrannically as theirs. Dr. Freud has replaced Dr. Calvin and that Doctor Angelicus, Thomas Aquinas, and reversed their values. Instead of its being dangerous and probably wrong to follow one's impulses, it becomes dangerous and probably wrong not to do so. In short we are engaged in denying "the puritan" and all his works, whatever we may mean by "the puritan." Historically perhaps we should mean an extreme protestant in England or America, abstractly perhaps anyone who thinks conduct is nine-tenths of life. But Dr. Canby, recently in *The Saturday Review*, implied that Cooper was no puritan because he disliked Yankees, his own ancestry being Quaker. Evidently Quakers were not puritans, and "Yankees" were. More than a third of the old churches in Charleston were Presbyterian, but as no one yet has said "puritan Charleston" it must be that Presbyterians are not puritans either. The reading of the young is more severely Bowdlerized in Latin countries than here. Twelfth century in Europe piety had a much greater horror of "sex" than nineteenth century piety in America, and the Catholic clergy seem to be stiffer than the Protestant in the matter of feminine nudity.

Anyhow, the Mayflower passengers were puritans. But the bulk of the immigrants who poured into New England for two hundred years thereafter did not come escaping from religious persecution, but to own land and improve their fortunes, and how many of them thought conduct nine-tenths of life nobody knows. Early in the seventeenth century one Malvolio was denounced as a "puritan" who thought that because of his virtues there should be no more cakes and ale. That is a definition with some appealing points. It seems almost to include prohibitionists.

At any rate, if one looks at things in place of words, most of the "things" that so much of our twentieth century literature denounces as puritan are much the same things that used to be denounced as "Philistine" or "bourgeois," and in England now sometimes as "Victorian"—old fashioned proprieties, taboos, conventions, ideas, assumptions, as they appear to a generation quite a little "fed up" with quite a number of them. I am only suggesting that the vocabulary of this revolt against conventions is becoming fearfully conventional, and some of us are getting quite a little "fed up" with hearing the dubious rather crassly assumed to be the obvious. The fanatic is always with us and is usually in some kind of revolt.

To return again to M. Michaud, his analysis of Dreiser, Lewis, Anderson, Cabell, Hergesheimer, Miss Cather, and so

on, is good and suggestive. His chapter on "Esthetes et Neo-Freudiens" deals with writers with whom I have almost no acquaintance and with several of whom I have never heard the names. Naturally I doubt their importance. I suspect his thesis leads him to include those who illustrate it and exclude those who do not, and that the result is a somewhat doctrinaire and one-sided picture of "Le Roman Américain d'Aujourd'hui." But in general where he is dealing purely with literature he is competent and intelligent, and where he follows it back into society he usually goes astray in the wake of American controversialists. The interpretation of literary movements in terms of social backgrounds is treacherous footing. Literary movements pass like cloud shadows over the lake, but the waters below are deep and dark.

It is probably untrue that anything that could properly be called "puritan" ever was—it certainly is not now the "dominant strain" in American life. Successive waves of miscellaneous Europeans have been pouring across a continent, practically empty before them, for three hundred years. What they were, what they have experienced, how they have reacted to it and to each other,—the large features of the phenomena—are the main causes and the best indications. The frontier or the empty continent has probably had far more to do with individualism than incidental religions. The extraordinary experience, the types it developed, and the reactions against those types, these if anything, are the "dominant" things. A wilderness may stimulate control as well as liberty. Too much regulation may represent an effort to bring some order out of too much miscellany. You cannot represent such a social history by a set of catchwords.

Our literary mood is showing a tendency to shift from self-complacency to self-criticism, and the shift is welcome enough. But after all disillusion is but a name for a different outfit of illusions, and literary critics should make an effort to keep their feet under them.

M. Michaud's book however is one of those exceptional books, by a European but worth reading by an American, because of the Frenchman's native instinct for intelligent literary criticism.

The Eternal Quest

GABRIEL MAURIÈRE: L'Homme Qui ne Meurt Pas. Paris: Editions de la Vraie France. 1927.

Reviewed by AMELIA V. ENDE

FROM those remote times that live only in the lore of the people and the songs of the poets, to the present, when every simple desire of the human heart is made the subject of serious scientific research, we have an endless record of the eternal quest for means to prolong youth and arrest the ravages of age. Across Bifrost, the rainbow, did the gods ride from heaven to the well of Urd, at the foot of Ygdrasil, for a drink of its rejuvenating water. Fierce was their pursuit of the giant who kidnapped Idun, the keeper of the youth-restoring apples. When they began to feel indifferent and inert, a sip from Odhrarir inspired them with youthful zest and enthusiasm.

The story can be traced through the mythology of many nations and through history, from Roger Bacon, the learned monk, to Ponce de Leon, the romantic explorer, and beyond to the Metchnikoffs, Steinachs, and other seekers through whom science continues the old quest. The problem has not been neglected by poets. We owe to it the figure of Faust. Now a French novelist, Gabriel Maurière, has created the character of an old scientist, whose ambition is to discover the secret of longevity, if not immortality. In an old hotel of the Quai Bourbon, Olivier Sandreau is engaged in experiments to find a substance which would renew the waning life-force, and is greatly irritated by the visit of Paul Rabardy, a reporter for *Le Mondial*, but succeeds in throwing him off the track.

Some years before, Sandreau had traveled in Asia and brought home a little girl and her nurse, natives of India, whose kin had been slaughtered in an altercation with Chinese. One day he finds in his apartment a bit of parchment with these words in Sanskrit:

On the Blue Peak, under the eyes of Buddha, the tower blossomed. The Immortals send you the Kalari from the fifth terrace. . . . The sage who partakes of the seed of the tree of life, lives one thousand years. . . .

The girl admits that she has used the parchment for curl papers, and brings him the box in which the nurse had carried it during their flight from India. Sandreau discovers in it fragments of a peculiar seed,

which on examination he finds richer in vitamins than any substance known to him. He promptly associates them with the seed spoken of in the parchment, and tells the women to prepare for a journey to Asia. Arucha makes a farewell call upon Madame Cabibol, whose husband is a rival of Sandreau, in order to meet her sweetheart, the reporter, who promptly plans to meet her in Asia.

Thus reads the introduction to the fascinating record of adventure and mystery, which the author has invested with all the exotic charm of the Tibetan landscape and the tantalizing elusiveness of Buddhist sainthood. Through his guardianship of Arucha, who to the natives is known as Princess Kara-Vitse, Sandreau obtains admission to the Blue Peak with its five terraces. He represents himself as an Occidental seeker for truth, and the reaction of the Hindu sages squatting in silent meditation on the terraces, is hardly different from that of the young Messiah who recently visited America. They tell him that the West, in bondage to war and evil, is far from truth, and that only love and renunciation can insure peace. Finally Sandreau cannot restrain himself from saying what is foremost in his mind; he asks:

"Can man be immortal? Venerable master, have you the secret?"

whereupon the interview is brusquely terminated. But when a saint of a higher order receives him, before Sandreau has spoken a word, he is told:

If you would live forever, tear out of your heart the love of self and the pride to dominate men by your science. Embrace the whole world in a sentiment of peace.

As he is led from terrace to terrace, the sages assume a more and more taciturn attitude. One has for him but one word: "Love!" and with the Master, the Buddha incarnate, Sandreau is allowed to communicate only in silence through the medium of a cord, which the mummy-like form holds in his hand, while Sandreau applies it to his brow! But, before the interpreter returns to lead him away, Sandreau has caught sight of the fifth terrace, separated from the others by a wide ditch, alive with monstrous serpents, and in the gruesome depths has spied plants with a metallic bluish lustre, like the fragments of seed secreted in his wallet. How the reporter who to his dismay has joined the expedition, secures for him the coveted plant, but under duress wins from him the hand of Arucha, whom he had expected to wed after his rejuvenation, furnishes the dramatic climax of the Tibetan adventure.

The third and last book of the novel forecasts events which some time between 1940 and 1960 may happen in Europe and shake the foundations of the Western world even more deeply than did the World War of 1914-18. The magic berries of the Tibetan jungle have marvelously rejuvenated Sandreau. He has renounced love and pursues his secondary goal: superhuman power. He had been disappointed in his dream of founding a "divine dynasty." He is disgusted with the vulgarity and vileness of the period in which he is living and men like Paul Rabardy are hauling in rich dividends.

Money, ambition, all tyrannies more or less disguised in a civilization from which liberty was gradually disappearing under the reign of the most daring and the most cruel, were ruling the world. Power alone, a supreme power could conquer them. . . . And after that conquest would come thy reign, sublime, Gautama, and Thy kingdom of love—Jesus!

Science had made the previous war a horror never to be forgotten and science was to make all war impossible in the future. From a formidable fortress in a Swiss mountain, in which he has installed a prodigious electro-magnetic plant, Sandreau sends forth his power. He is the unknown *deus ex machina* behind the stage of the new world tragedy. Thus he plays the rôle long before chosen for himself, that of *le dieu terrestre*.

On the background of these varied and stirring scenes, Gabriel Maurière has clearly and firmly limned a series of remarkable portraits: Sandreau, the thinker and scientist who supplants in his heart the desire for love by the lust for power; Arucha, the "Hindu kitten," who lives the life of a typical Parisienne, but in her heart longs for Asia; the clever, unscrupulous climber Paul Rabardy, a type too numerous in our materialistic age to need further comment; Weisskrone, the financier, who succeeds in serving his own country and its enemy; Stany, the incorrigible idealist, and others. He has ably welded fact and fancy, science and speculation.

Eugene O'Neill's greatest play

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