

A Rare Original

THE DIARY OF HENRY TEONGE, Chaplain on Board H. M.'s Ships *Assistance*, *Bristo* and *Royal Oak*. 1675-1679. Transcribed from the original manuscript and edited with an introduction and notes by G. E. MANWARING. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1927.

THE FRANTIC ATLANTIC. By BASIL WOON. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1927.

Reviewed by CAPTAIN DAVID W. BONE

UPON reading Henry Teonge, his diary, one wonders how the superstition ever arose that parsons are unlucky on board ship. Nothing could the better dispel such a belief than a glance within this book. Was ever a clerk in Holy Orders more sib to life at sea or better shipmate than this naval diarist, Chaplain on board His Majesty's ship *Assistance*, whose keen description of seafaring in 1675-1679 is set out in this handsome volume of The Broadway Travellers series. Humor (often broad enough), insight humane and tolerant, observation, shrewd and penetrating, are all conjured from "a little jugful of ink" that his kindly landlady brought for a parting gift to him as he lay, the blue peter at the fore, at anchor in the Downs.

Here is no studied effort to intrigue the reader. Like Samuel Pepys (his contemporary) he could have had no cold reviewer in his mind when he penned his intimate communings. Humble in aim and circumstance, the cheerful scribe would doubtless think little, ill or well, of his writing. Certainly his would be a scholarly hand, for was he not admitted sizar of Christ's College at Cambridge at the early age of sixteen? But it would be for himself alone he set down the incidents of a cruise abroad: for himself, yes, but I can imagine him quoting his quips in the gun-room, and hear, after two centuries and more, the echo of his shipmates' loud acclaim at his humorous turnover of events.

A day here and a day there. The pauper parson "finding" a ragged towel on the quarter deck "which I soon secured" (that would be before the advent of the ships' corporal and his "scran" bag), the rogueish Reverend describing, humanely, tolerantly, the saturnalia of a seventeenth century sailing day. "... others kissing and clipping; half-drunk, half-sober or rather half-asleep; choosing rather (might they have been suffered), to go and die with them than stay and live without them": the devout Chaplain noting time and text for every Sunday's discourse: the fervid patriot writing proudly of heroics at Malta. "... a boat with the Maltese flag in it comes to us to know whence we came. We told them from England; they asked if we had a bill of health for prattick, viz. entertainment; our Captain told them that he had no bill but what was in his gun's mouths."

A gallant life afloat. On every page the drinking of healths to loved ones ashore or the thunder of saluting cannon—and an ear intently cocked to mark the number of the guns returned as compliment. What pageantry at sea the diarist records. No matter that, line and line, the hard lying incidents of seventeenth century voyaging are dutifully recorded, the pennants beckon all the more gaily at the yard-arms when the tempest is weathered and the trumpets sound a brave levite at reassembly of the squadron.

At feasts and entertainments, afloat and ashore, Teonge was ever boon companion and recorder royal. With what sea-whetted gusto he makes count of the dishes spread "at Assera to a treat of our Consul's providing; but such a one as I never saw before. . . . Turkeys, geese, hens, a bisque of eggs, a great dish with a pyramid of marchpane, a dish of gammons . . . and all washed down with store of good wines," the genial Padre doubtless acting toastmaster to the gathering.

Genial, tolerant of the sailors' lapses from grace, boon companion as he might be when the board was spread, the Reverend Henry was ever zealous in his office. No Sunday passes but he notes text for his sermon or quotes sound reason for an omission in delivery. Does he not stand by at Captain Langston's sick bed as a sterling shipmate could.

'Twas a very tempestuous night, and a hard gale. We discover a fleet of ships: they prove to be Hollanders, fifteen sail, and bound for Alicante. . . . Our Captain continues very ill; and I began to fear his death. And this night I sat up by his bedside all night. Many times he would talk very lightsome, and presently again he would talk light headed.

. . . Brave Captain Antony Langston died a very little after 10 o'clock this night. I stood by his bedside.

And if he had some spiritual consolation for his Captain at the parting, he was no less solicitous in his godly care of humbler ratings.

This day I buried in the sea Henry Spencer of Lancashire, who gives all his pay, and what else he had, to his landlady at Portsmouth.

A day here and a day there. The ideal diarist! I have often wondered what particular qualities one must needs possess to become a quotidian recorder of events. Simplicity first. Patience. Humor, for leavening. Speaking as one who handles diaries unnumbered ("My Trip Abroad" bound in levant, gilt-edged, with lock and key complete), I have rarely seen evidence of a serious record of the voyage. In them all, there is a noble space set apart for the Captain's signature. Demure maidens, prim set schoolmarmes, even expansive merchants from the middle-west bring them to the windy bridge for my holograph. How often have I wished that I might peep within in hope of entertaining phrase. "My Trip Abroad." Virgin pages! Next time we go cruising on the main I shall make it bargain for an autograph that they read "Henry Teonge" and learn how to keep a proper Diary.

From the wind-swept pages of Henry Teonge's Diary to the cheerful blatter of Mr. Basil Woon's *Superstoria* is a curious adventure in comparisons. The seventeenth century Chaplain takes dinner with



A portrait of Gutenberg recently presented by Gabriel Wells to the Library of Congress.

his brother officers in the great cabin of the *Assistance* at sea in a gale, all a-sprawl on the deck, the beef kids doubtless jammed between their knees, but one hand reserved for a stout grip upon the bottle. The twentieth century sea traveler is advised by Mr. Woon in the proper drills for table reservations.

First of all, examine the dining room to see whether it is—as usual in big ships—of two stories, the main saloon downstairs and a surrounding balcony above. If there is a balcony, obstinately refuse any table elsewhere. Experienced travelers invariably choose the balcony. Why, nobody knows. It is another of those puzzling mysteries of the sea. But it is a fact that the "downstairs" crowd in a big ship are not only literally beneath those who eat above, but are so considered figuratively as well.

"Who is he?" you murmur.

"Oh—nobody much. Has a table downstairs!"

Reputations aboard ship have been slain for less.

It seems almost an affront to Father Neptune that such a book should be; but withal, "The Frantic Atlantic" is well done and should appeal to the ever augmenting body of travelers to whom the broad decks of an Atlantic liner are but extensions of the trottoir on Broadway. The way of it is so simple. One saunters out of Tex Guinan's or the Khan Perroquet, hails a passing taxi to the North River piers, and steps aboard the *Superstoria* outbound. The Atlantic? Let it await our pleasure in the morning. "Steward! . . ."

The gay transatlantic flaneur saunters around on prospect. The temperature of his bath decided, table sitting arranged (the collects of animism on board ship as decreed above being duly borne in mind) he is at ease on shipboard. A nod here, a wave of the hand there; he recognizes his friends—the old seasoned travelers who know the ropes. The ladies? As yet, recumbent in deck chair and swathed in steamer rugs, he sets them in their orbits. Here, Miss Gloryana Goldenbosch from Hollywood, and there Mrs. X Van X. Y. Z. on her

way to Paris to establish the necessary residential qualification. All very simple.

But Mr. Woon, if perhaps overly familiar with and appreciative of the super hotel afloat, is not neglectful of the sea and the ship. In a chatty manner brimful of humor, he discourses from his corner seat in the smoking room upon all manner of ship-board subjects. "How far is the Horizon?" "The mensuration of a knot." (Though why he should convert nautical into land miles in an effort to guess the "pool" I am at a loss to understand, the ship's run being always registered in sea or nautical miles). "The size of waves," and so on. A short informative chapter upon the history of shipping is given.

The book is easy to read. Paragraphic. Information, the thing. As a good "bed book" for the enquiring passenger, it is to be commended. Mr. Woon purveys delightful chuckles. Using the argot of the seasoned traveler he makes, *click*, the point.

You will sail from New York, of course. Think of arriving at Southampton or Cherbourg or Havre on a boat hailing from anywhere. Far better had it been, in that case, that you had stayed at home and had never crossed the Atlantic at all. For throughout your trip fellow travelers will ask the standard questions:

See the exchange to-day?

Uh-huh. Dollar down again. Gotta get some francs.

What hotel you at?

Grand.

You ought to come over to the Majestic. Now *there's* a hotel.

What ship you come over on?

You moisten your lips, for this has happened before, and repress a desire to tell him Aquitania or Leviathan or France. Instead you tell the truth.

The—the Aloisia.

The *what*?

The Aloisia. She's—she's a mighty fine boat—

Never saw her name in the N^Y papers.

She doesn't sail from New York. She sails from Boston.

Whereat the fellow traveler will utter one scathing and scornful "Oh!", look you up and down with a sort of withering have-you-got-your-rubbers-on expression, snort pityingly, and turn his back on you forever.

No, no; decidedly you must depart from New York.

It is understood that all balcony table accommodation is being considered by the shipping companies. However, old Father Neptune, who has a spite at the cut beams that make possible the hanging gardens on shipboard, may revise this edition of "The Frantic Atlantic."

A Toy Napoleon

THE WOLF CUB. By MAURICE SOULIÉ. Translated by FARREL SYMONS. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. 1927. \$3.

Reviewed by CHARLES J. FINGER

THE general appearance of the exterior, as well as the title of Maurice Soulié's book, suggests a novel so strongly that ninety-nine persons out of a hundred would jump to the conclusion that it was a work of fiction. The specialized student, or the man knowing his northern Mexico would recognize the Wolf Cub as Count Gaston de Raousset-Boulbon, a man who tried to do a big thing in the filibustering way but failed because he lacked executive ability and all that comes in its train, meaning money and men. For Gaston was one of the world's romantic rascals who dreamed better than he wrought and talked better than he fought. Like Cambiaso who tried to make himself king of Patagonia in the 1850's, he could be very eloquent and very dramatic, even solemn and pompous on occasion, but he sorely lacked flexibility of mind. To make a book out of his adventures is a daring thing because Gaston's historical record sadly lacks body, while the minor characters that revolved about him are still slimmer.

The docket gives Gaston's birthplace as Avignon, his year of birth as 1817; his schooling was Jesuit and his record that of one given to selfish pleasures and rough combativeness; then Paris, where he lived a life of ease and wrote an unimportant novel; then the *mal de siècle* attacked him and he ran for office only to be defeated; then emigration to California with expectation of finding tons of gold, but a reality as a sort of longshoreman; then a dip into Mexican politics at a dangerous time when the masterly Santa Anna was aiming at dictatorship, and so death by execution in his thirty-sixth year. And the Mexican invasion has almost an *opéra bouffe* air because of the crudity of Gaston's attempt. The adventure was shot through and through with silly intrigue, blundering, incompetence; for the man was void of all the qualities that go to make a successful chief. Indeed it is not a matter of certainty

intended to do. "To establish in Sonora a sort of military, agricultural, and industrial company, able to cope with the Apaches and to make the mines accessible," was how he announced his aim, but he certainly did not envisage things, certainly did not foresee related lines of activity bearing on the project, certainly was incapable of stimulating others as successful military adventurers have stimulated their followers. In short, he seems to have been a bundle of ill-assorted enthusiasms with only the vaguest idea of the political and social problems that were necessarily involved in his nebulous scheme. Yet he went to Mexico City, interviewed President Arista who was as poor an executive as the Frenchman, and, after shady transactions in the way of bribes, considered himself supported by government and public sentiment but did not take the trouble to inform himself about possible opponents, financial and military and political. However, he recruited a band of some two hundred men at San Francisco and sailed for Guaymas where he dawdled for almost a half year during which time opposing interests, both Mexican and English were busy, they having in mind exploitation on their own account. In October Gaston moved on Hermosillo and took the town. By November he had evacuated it and was on his way to San Francisco, sick with dysentery, and so ended the first invasion. Nor was the second attempt a wiser or better planned one. From beginning to end there were delay and uncertainty, with Gaston sometimes intense, sometimes doubtful and hesitating. So mistakes and incompetence had their natural result and the man who would be emperor met the same fate as Walker of Nicaragua, his sometime model.

Certainly it is idle to speculate upon what might have happened if something that did not happen had happened; nevertheless, we get a hint of desire for power and personal aggrandizement from a letter that he wrote, which ran, in part: "Property in half the lands, mines, and placers where I plant my flag is secured to me . . . The extent of these concessions is unlimited and will be bounded only by the progress of my company . . . I can hope for fortune and fame." So, had he been the strong, ambitious man, had he possessed skill in management, had he been gifted with that masterfulness which pioneering demands, had he been one to stimulate and control, what would have been the result? Obviously not order, but social and political disturbance—burning, bombarding, shooting, destroying, and subjugating the weak. Industrial slavery was the man's paramount aim and talk of French domination was probably nothing but a pretence to cover the nakedness of bare spoliation.

But the author does not see his hero in that light. Quite the contrary. Indeed, M. Maurice Soulié seems to write with the stout-hearted conviction that Gaston's career should, by rights, pass as heroic—that his deeds were sufficiently brilliant to merit world notice—that the affair of a third-rate adventurer was a tragic idyll, so to speak. But then M. Soulié has in him a strain of romanticism. His men of the west, as he conceives them to be, have all the impossible attributes of a conglomeration of the heroes of Captain Mayne Reid, and of Archibald Claverling Gunter, and of those inexpressibly diverting gentlemen who wrote Parisian wild-west stories forty years ago. His western plainsmen do things like this. Close searching is not necessary to find stage pictures, many of which would seem to be inevitable consequence of close study of Messrs. Tom Mix, Douglas Fairbanks, and Hart, for whom, I am told, the French have affection. Perhaps it is a little too sweeping to say that close study of screen pictures is responsible for many of M. Soulié's emotional climaxes, but you have only to compare such pictures with the scenes depicted by straight-seeing, matter-of-fact men who lived and wrote in the days of Gaston to realize the melodramatic falsity of them. There were, in those days, murder and rape and theft, just as they exist today wherever there is a rush for gold or for oil, but there was mighty little staginess, or cumulative dramatic effect, or heroics of the heavily conventional kind. I contend that almost all such dramatic pictures are quite as false as the idyllic picture of life that Izaak Walton made; quite as untrue to human nature as those exaggerated pictures of men with criminal propensities which the dramatist John Webster made; quite as impossible as some of the situations that Poe conjured up for his tales of terror. But they make mighty good reading, all of them. And so does M. Soulié make mighty good reading.

Two Women Poets

HAPPY ENDING: The Collected Lyrics of LOUISE IMOGEN GUINEY. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1927. \$2.

LITTLE HENRIETTA. By LIZETTE WOODWORTH REESE. New York: George H. Doran. 1927. \$1.50.

Reviewed by JESSIE B. RITTENHOUSE

THOSE who were certain during the lifetime of Louise Imogen Guiney that her work would come to be recognized as among the rare and distinctive contributions to American literature, could scarcely have been prepared for the speediness with which this recognition has come about. It is now seven years since Miss Guiney's death and in that period a substantial body of criticism has grown up, devoted both to her work and her personality. The exhaustive "Life" by E. M. Tenison, the more intimate biographical study by Alice Brown, the two volume edition of her Letters, many articles both in the English and American reviews, and lastly her "Collected Lyrics," issued as an enlarged edition of her own selected poems, "Happy Ending."

She, who in her life was known only to the elect, is already a legend, and her Celtic beauty, her wit, her profound, but lightly worn, learning, her romantic adherence to Carolinian and Cavalier,—have invested her in the public mind with something of that charm which she wore so preëminently for those who came within the radius of her personality. There is even a danger that the personal side may obscure the creative, a possibility to be deplored, since Miss Guiney was a poet who belonged to the high fellowships, a poet of a passionate preoccupation with all that was beautiful and enduring, who gave herself as a vicarious offering to the reclaiming of forgotten names, but who always invested them with a personal poignancy which made them live in her art. How well I recall after her death coming upon the lines which she had written at the grave of Hazlitt and being moved by them as if they had been her own epitaph:

Therefore sleep safe, thou dear and battling spirit,
Safe also on our earth, begetting ever
Some one love worth the ages and the nations!

Falleth no thing that seemed to thee eternal.
Sleep safe in dark Soho: the stars are shining,
Titian and Wordsworth live; the People marches.

Not that Hazlitt belongs with the forgotten names, but that she brought to these names, which so lived to her, the same passion which she felt for a nearer idol like Hazlitt. One of the most moving incidents in her Letters is that in which she refuses to write the Life of Hazlitt for the English Men of Letters series, when importuned by Clement Shorter, because she felt that after the work of Birrell she had no new contribution to make. "It is not the first time that I have come to the winning post when the race was over," she says in a letter to Mr. Shorter, and again, "Don't ask me into jousts for all my lances are broken."

This reactionary mood was unhabitual, wholly the opposite, in fact, from that which carried her through a period in which she was alien, but twice in her life it was wrung from her when she saw the thing which she had most longed to do slip from her hand because she could not turn from the practical necessities to accomplish it. The other and more acute pang was in learning that Professor Saintsbury was at work on an exhaustive study of the minor Carolinian poets, the identical work upon which she had wrought but which, from temporal handicaps, she could not bring to fruition.

She had spent years in the "enchanted Bodleian" delving, often in the manuscript department, to rescue the memory of some poet. Nothing fine escaped her and one recalls her delight in the passage by Christopher Smart where he speaks of "the quick, peculiar quince." "Isn't it by those light, homely touches, so biting true, that we detect poets?" She preserved in all her studies that ecstasy which slips away from the professional scholar and time was all too short for her to spend, though without reward, upon the work to which her inclination called her. She had a prose style so keen and pungent and a sense of values so unerring that she might have become the critical arbiter of her day, had she been of that day; but she was of an earlier time, a time that seemed to her nearer the source of beauty.

When, in 1909, in one of her infrequent visits to America, she chose from her complete poetic

work what she termed the "less faulty half" and issued the volume as "Happy Ending,"—the finality of the title brought forth surprise and protest. As she was still under fifty and in the prime of her powers and had published within a twelvemonth her superb "Beati Mortui," one of the great mystical poems of English literature, it seemed unlikely that she would abandon an art in which she was just coming to her fullest expression. It is true, however, that although she lived for ten years more, she published, in that period, practically no verse, the conditions of her life precluding her from devoting herself to what would bring but a spiritual return.

Not many poets relieve time of his office as a winnow, and it may well be that Miss Guiney's taste has been too exigent, but it is certain that what she has allowed to remain will carry her name to the future for a quality unique and distinguished, something as individual as that which set Emily Dickinson apart, if less isolated and introspective. The two women necessarily bring each other to mind for a certain sparse economy of method, but Miss Guiney's work is warmer, from the strain of the Celt, and richer from its seventeenth-century background. The one is of England in its chivalrous and romantic period, the other of New England in its yet bleak and repressed puritanism. The fostering of the two was wholly unlike, for Louise Guiney escaped as soon as possible even from the later and more tolerant New England into which she was born. She belonged to the reign of the Stuarts and there was no use in trying to convince her that she had an obligation to the twentieth century.

She was born for an epic day, born to consort with heroes and martyrs. Her imagination played constantly about the valiant, the high-souled, who knew no expediency, who fell in the wars or went to the block, equally confident and unperturbed. Her romantic learning centered about personalities to whose valor she dipped her plumes, but she could feel equally the struggle of an austere nature like Matthew Arnold, out of touch with an age slipping too fast from its spiritual moorings, or the impetuous temper of Hazlitt, impatient of any compromise with half-things or with the Philistine.

She had the passion for perfection which took no account of the arduous means, the long and painful consecration to an art whose winning of adherents must be far hence, and the mystical passion, the surrender of the temporal to the eternal, which, without dogmatic implication, makes the very essence of her poetry. Although like Shelley she could never quite get her bearings in Time, she moved in a clear light in her own little world of Eternity, and no matter what frustrations life brought to her, the whole message of her art is to trust it and cooperate with it. She could write lines like ringing hoof-beats or lines with the nostalgic ache of one who comprehended so well what beauty is and how dearly it is compassed. She knew those who had compassed it in the past and many poems in "Happy Ending" are in tribute to them. Her own style, so taut and virile, borrowed nothing from those whom she celebrated. Although she had such wide learning, she was the least derivative of poets, and the sharp pungency, the tang of her packed and pregnant lines, can be traced to no progenitor.

Miss Lizette Woodworth Reese presents the phenomenon of a lyric poet whose impulse, far from being spent with the years, goes on taking to itself new vitality. In fact, Miss Reese has not only been more productive in the past five or ten years, but there has entered into her work in that period a new note, something more sharp and incisive, a bit, perhaps, of the disillusion that is abroad in the air in these days. Yet this note is not tinged with the cynicism, the too-sophisticated awareness, which has bred a smart school of poets, who can startle, but neither charm nor waylay. Miss Reese cannot choose but do both of these things, the gift is inherent.

Recently she has added to her volumes one small and intimate, but which holds within its compass some of the truest and most exquisite work which she has done, the elegy of a little child, which would more happily have been issued under the designation often used in the book of the "Small Beloved," but which bears the more specific title of "Little Henrietta."

It is not too much to say that Miss Reese's elegy should take its place with the enduring poems which celebrate some radiant little life. All of the quali-