

## Books of Special Interest

**A Modern Dictionary**  
**THE WINSTON SIMPLIFIED DICTIONARY.** Encyclopedic Edition. Edited by WILLIAM DODGE LEWIS, Henry Seidel Canby, and Thomas Kite Brown, Jr. Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Company. 1927. \$2.88.  
 Reviewed by GEORGE PHILIP KRAPP  
 Columbia University.

IT is said it takes about a hundred years to create an English lawn, ten generations to make a gentleman. How long has it taken to produce the modern dictionary of English? The publishers of "The Winston Simplified Dictionary," in their copyright notice, describe this as "an original work." Undoubtedly it is original enough, and more than original enough to satisfy the demands of the copyright law, but if one were looking for a critical term to apply to it, one would be more inclined to call this a traditional than an original work. In this it would not differ from other dictionaries. The modern English dictionary has such a distinguished ancestry that originality is not required of it. Not that dictionaries might not be improved by a little more originality. But the tone and method of the English dictionary, a composite of lawyer's, logicians, and philologist's ingenuity, has been so firmly established by tradition that only the most heroic effort could change them. What one looks for in a modern dictionary is industry, patience, orderliness, exactness, and these respectable virtues the "Winston Simplified Dictionary" exhibits in high degree.

The "simplicity" of a work like this has a beguiling appearance of ease, but even with the rich traditions of dictionary-making to aid them, the compilers of the book must have spent an appalling amount of effort before they secured the comprehensiveness of detail and the perfection in the handling of detail which they have attained. It has taken three hundred years of experiment and slow evolution to make a book like this possible. But even so "The Winston Simplified Dictionary" is certainly not the last English dictionary the world will see. Of the making of small dictionaries there will be no end, as there should not be. For these small dictionaries move

lightly and quickly, and thus keep pace with the times, whereas the composition or the revision of a large dictionary is an extremely slow, costly, and laborious undertaking.

Small and large are but relative terms, and "The Winston Simplified Dictionary" with its fifteen hundred or more pages is after all not so terribly small. However many or few the number of pages allowed him, the great achievement of the modern dictionary maker lies in the skill with which he packs an almost incredible amount of information between the covers of his book. Like Bacon, the modern dictionary takes all knowledge for its province. The dictionary is the modern *Cursor Mundi*. It tells us all we want to know about our world. Beside the thousand pages of the dictionary proper, "The Winston Simplified Dictionary" has some five hundred pages of supplements, containing information enough to satisfy the troubled moments of any man when he takes his pen in hand or merely wags his tongue. It also contains innumerable drawings, and charts and maps and plates in brilliant color. A particularly gorgeous plate which will take the children's eye is a picture of a knight on horseback and in the fullest possible armor.

Confronted with all this wealth of material the reader may well be led to ask in what respect this is a "simplified" dictionary. That it is not as long as some other dictionaries does not make it simple, for brevity and simplicity are unfortunately not inseparable companions. It is just in this direction of simplification that the modern small dictionary can most readily develop something original. To do so, however, dictionary makers must throw over a good deal of the traditional materials of dictionary making. As they work with fresh content, they do better, in the matter of definitions, for example, than when they are hampered by older traditional styles of defining. The definition of *airplane* in "The Winston Simplified Dictionary" is a model of clearness, conciseness, and exactness, but its chief virtue lies in the fact that it defines something perfectly familiar in a way that does not destroy its familiarity. On the other hand, though it may be scientific and logically well constructed, the defini-

tion of the word *cat*, a good old dictionary definition, misses all the simplicity of nature. Undoubtedly one is asking a great deal of a dictionary when one expects it to reflect the simplicities of nature, but certainly an earnest effort to simplify would relieve the dictionary of a very considerable burden of unnecessary technicality and formalism.

### Bird Life and Song

**THE CHARM OF BIRDS.** By VISCOUNT GREY of Fallodon. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company. 1927. \$3.

Reviewed by HERBERT RAVENEL SASS

"THE CHARM OF BIRDS" is a good title for this book, yet Viscount Grey is concerned, in most of his chapters, with solid subjects than the impalpable thing which we call charm. His book, he tells us in his preface, "will have no scientific value," but it is by no means certain that he is right. A great many facts, nearly all of them ascertained through personal observation, about British birds are put together here; there is some interesting speculation, closely and carefully reasoned, regarding certain ornithological problems; especially in the chapters on taming birds and on waterfowl one finds mention of avian traits and characteristics which, in all likelihood, have not been recorded before. The author has paid much attention to the songs of birds—indeed, bird-music may be said to be the principal theme of the book; and there is much value, which may well be considered "scientific," in his accounts of the songs of many of the species which he has observed. In fact, it may be doubted whether there is anywhere in British ornithological literature a more satisfactory study of these bird-songs.

In short "The Charm of Birds" is a solid book from which even the erudite ornithologist is pretty certain to increase his stock of knowledge. It is also a book for the unlearned man or woman who loves the country and country sights and sounds. Lord Grey writes very quietly and with that clearness for which he long ago became famous, at a time when the calmness and the clearness of his writing meant more to the British Empire than a fleet of dreadnoughts. But the reader has not gone far before he discovers how profound is the author's love of birds, how sensitive he is to their beauty and charm. There is a revealing little footnote on page 101 where Lord Grey has described the plumage of the corn-bunting as dull. "Dull," says this footnote, "is used comparatively. The nature of feathers is such that if considered closely, even the bird of dullest plumage is beautiful."

The book is largely a chronicle of the British year with special reference to the cycle of song. It begins with the period of early song, January; passes to the period of increasing song, February and March; thence to "The Return of the Warblers," April. The "Month of Full Song" is May; and after this climax there is a sudden decline, the next chapter being entitled "From Full to Least Song," and covering June and July. "The Decline of Summer" takes the reader through August and September, and this chapter is followed by one on winter birds, which completes the year. The remaining chapters deal with special subjects: courtship, mating and family life, nest and eggs, joy flights and joy sounds, the cuckoo and the sparrow, the taming of birds, and the habits of waterfowl as observed in the famous waterfowl collection at Fallodon.

Lord Grey's book, as just now remarked, is well named, although it is a more matter-of-fact book than its name might imply. The charm of birds permeates it; yet the enthusiasm in it is carefully restrained—too carefully, one sometimes thinks. In the statesman-naturalist of Fallodon we have a student and a writer who can, if he will, show us something of the soul of nature. Here, for the most part, he tells us of what he has seen. One dares hope that there will be another book some day in which he will tell us more of what he has felt.

A complete collection of reproductions of the papyri in the Turin Museum is to be issued by the publishing house of Fratelli Bocca at Turin. The work is to be brought out in parts under the editorship of G. Botti and Eric Peet. The first instalment has been published of the first volume which comprises the civil and religious register of the Necropolis of Thebes under the Twentieth Dynasty.

Alfred Neumann, whose "Der Teufel" is regarded as one of the best of last year's German novels, has just published another historical romance, "Rebellen" (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt) is the first of two volumes dealing with the Duchy of Tuscany between 1830 and 1848, with Guerra as hero.

## Great Britain and the Dominions

Lectures delivered at the University of Chicago under the Norman Wait Harris foundation during the summer of 1927.

The first, second and third institutes on the Harris Foundation dealt respectively with European, Far-Eastern and Mexican affairs. The fourth institute, whose lectures this book records, dealt with "Great Britain and the Dominions." The lectures were made by men eminent in their fields, and are authoritative and informing.

The internal structure and foreign policy of the Empire as a whole are covered by Sir Cecil J. B. Hurst; the Irish Free State by Timothy A. Smiddy; Canada by John W. Daffoe; Australia by Sir William Harrison Moore; New Zealand by J. B. Condliffe; and South Africa by Eric H. Louw and Angus S. Fletcher.

\$3.00

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS

*The best book on the Brontës*—ANDREW LANG

(In his "History of English Literature")

## The Brontë Sisters

by ERNEST DIMNET

"ONE will go far to find a truer reading of human beings and artists. It will prove a revelation in its combination of critical acumen with just and gentle appreciation of human strength and weakness." *N. Y. Times*.  
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## Jane Welsh and Jane Carlyle

by ELIZABETH DREW

THERE is "much that is full of interest in every page of Miss Drew's book for all those who have felt the rare charm of the mistress of the little brick house in peaceful Cheyne Row." *N. Y. Evening Post*. "It is a human picture, vivid, colorful and immensely real." *N. Y. Times*.

Illustrated, \$2.50

Harcourt, Brace and Company

## The Immortality of Man

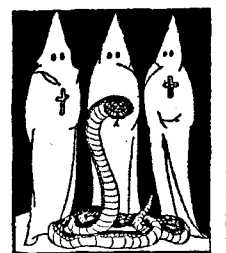
By GUSTAV KRÜGER

In this latest issue of the Ingersoll Lecture series, a noted German theologian examines the views on immortality held by "the men of the Enlightenment," that liberal group of eighteenth-century thinkers who are best remembered through the writings of Shaftesbury, Hume, Spinoza, and Kant. The book is not only a stimulating discussion of the question of immortality, but a convenient introduction to one of the most important philosophical movements of modern times, the results of which still have validity for our own century. \$1.00

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The Shadow from the Bogue



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## Books of Special Interest

### The Parent at the Bar

PARENTS ON PROBATION. By MIRIAM VAN WATERS. New York: The New Republic, Inc. 1927. \$1.

Reviewed by MARION C. DODD

ALAS the poor parent! His days of security and easily won self-satisfaction are over. He is without doubt under suspicion nowadays, from the social worker, the psychologist, and the teacher. Instead of finding in the original sin of the children the explanations for unfortunate symptoms of activity, the burden of defense now lies upon the parent—to prove that it is not his methods that have been at fault. And if he holds out stoutly for his old-fashioned misdeeds, he is finally confuted by the products of the newer methods tried and proved in what have come to be called the nursery schools—products which reveal none of the unfortunate symptoms aforementioned, or (still more convincing) are disconcertingly cured of them if habits are already formed. Yes—we parents, it seems, must look to our laurels. We are apparently discovered in our iniquities.

Well, those of us who are succumbing to the challenge and humbly seeking a little light for our regeneration find in recent literature much to interest us. In fact, so much that it is surprising to read the statement lying before me that this whole parent-education movement began not more than forty years ago, when Dr. Felix Adler suggested that, since "parenthood is a vocation requiring knowledge, applied intelligence, and the wisdom that results from the combination," groups of women should meet to discuss problems of child-rearing. From this simple but fertile suggestion striking results rapidly followed; nor were they stopped by early criticisms of the blasphemous idea that maternal instincts should need supplementing by scientific research. Such groups now are manifold all over the country, and the associations formed and the publications issued for their support and guidance are manifold, too.

Miriam Van Waters is among those who are contributing to an interesting subdivision of this literature—that written by social workers. They are apt, of course, to deal only with the delinquents or the near-delinquents, since these have come under their jurisdiction, but that merely serves to remind us that the identical types of emotional maladjustment which are discoverable in normal children may, if exaggerated or neglected, lead to the failure which is a synonym for delinquency. Dr. Van Waters writes out of the fulness of her experiences in the Juvenile Court of Los Angeles; her warm sympathy with children and parents makes her eager to analyze the tangles she has come to know of between them and to prevent others she does not know, but foresees. Her theories about the mistakes of parents spring directly out of the actual experiences which she records; a minor criticism of her book is that possibly in some instances her accounts of cases ramify more intricately than the layman will assimilate and properly apply, but as a rule her stories are clear and forceful as well as sympathetic and full of penetration of obscure human motives. The chapters on antagonisms between parents and children and on leadership among children and adolescents are among the most valuable in the book; they will be new and suggestive to many thoughtful but inexperienced readers. The subtle antagonism is a most difficult enemy to trace to its lair, and a most dangerous one if left to grow in strength and bitterness, and this study of causes and solutions of such antagonisms is very illuminating—as is also the analysis of qualities and possibilities of good and evil in natural leadership—a rare but dangerous possession.

At the bottom of the ladder of all these suggestions is found, in the modern concept, the nursery school, which is given its due here as an integral link in the chain of child-rearing with especial emphasis in this book on its function in the teaching of parents. Fathers and mothers who seek to take over the principles developed in these schools will find what not to do more formidable than they could have realized; the whole range of comedy and tragedy will be traversed in the course of parental education, as any will agree who, in seeking light, find that in addition to achieving the more familiar positive qualities they must form "inhibitions so perfect in function as to prohibit them from anticipating trouble, raising issues, arguing, demanding, showing anxiety, or otherwise making dramatic or interesting the conduct which they wish to erase from the child's behavior patterns."

*Touché!* . . . Any open-minded parent will groan, but admit the truth. It is a large order, but diligent pursuit of its fulfilment in early days will, so says the social worker, bring the richest rewards of balance and harmony in the still more difficult later years.

Not only parents, but any who are interested in changing conceptions of our family responsibilities will find this book both readable and suggestive, and for those who wish to go further there is a generous list of other reading upon the subject.

### A Famous Work

GENERAL ECONOMIC HISTORY. By MAX WEBER. Translated by Frank H. Knight. New York: Greenberg. 1927. \$3.50.

Reviewed by DONALD J. HENDERSON  
Rutgers University.

IT is fortunate for the student of economic history and the general reader that the late Max Weber's book has been translated from the German by Professor Knight. Since Gustav Schmoller, Max Weber's name has probably been the most outstanding one in the field of German social and economic thought.

Though some of the chapters concerning the institutions of antiquity and medieval times might be criticized in a technical and detailed sense by experts on these periods, the general method of analysis and the resulting conceptions would not be lessened in value. The author has fitted a scheme of analysis of economic life to the exposition of the preparation for, and the development of, capitalism.

Before the middle of the nineteenth century capitalism had made a good beginning; even in antiquity and in the medieval times there were certain isolated cases in which capitalistic accounting was used. But the factor which produced capitalism as we see it today in the occident, according to Weber, "is the rational permanent enterprising, rational accounting, rational technology, and rational law." Necessary complementary factors to this were "the rational spirit, the rationalization of the conduct of life in general, and a rationalistic ethic." The above factors were non-existent so long as traditionalism and superstition survived. Economic impulse could not overcome traditionalism. While it was customary and traditional for certain persons to follow certain occupations, impulse alone could not make them change either their occupation or their method of working. "In all times there has been but one means of breaking down the power of magic and establishing a rational conduct of life; this means is a great rational prophesy." Prophecies have released the world from magic and in so doing have created the basis for our modern science and technology and capitalism. All prophecies do not, of course, produce the power to destroy magic. Professor Weber points to India whose prophets have produced a religion of salvation that is a hindrance to rational technology and law. The two outstanding religions that have made the way clear for capitalism are Judaism and Christianity in Weber's view.

The important part played by various religions and forms of magic or superstition in the social and economic life of man is stressed throughout the book. The Marxian interpretation of history and associational forms or institutions does not find overmuch support from Professor Weber. To take one case, prostitution did not originate with monogamy and private property. He suggests that probably it has its beginnings in the form of sex rituals in the temples of the priestly class.

Today the religious root of modern economic humanity is dead. As long as the promise of eternal happiness was held out to the working class they were relatively content. But since the idea has given way to a more rationalistic view of life, the workers are rapidly becoming discontented with their present world. This view of the matter follows from Professor Weber's general thesis of the dominance of the rational over the traditional and its casual effectiveness in accounting for capitalism and its companion social forms.

Iréen Gulácsy Pálffy, who is accounted Hungary's foremost woman writer, has recently issued a three volume historical novel entitled "The Black Bridegrooms." It deals with the period of the Turkish invasion when the battle of Mohács was fought.



New Orleans Levee Scene from *OLD FATHER OF WATERS*

## The discovery of genius is the spice of publishing

—Doubleday, Doran

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