

The AMEN CORNER

Mr. Christopher Morley in his recent book about the Hoboken Experiment has quoted a French producer as writing his American playwright, "It was a fine play and all the critics praised it, but the public postponed coming." Unfortunate playwright? Unfortunate public! We shall never forgive ourself postponing until it was too late to see Eleanora Duse. And how it nettles us to think that we bought a stupid "best seller" which the \$3.00 then necessary for the purchase of the Nonsuch edition of the "Book of Ruth"—that lovely book now unobtainable for little less than \$100.00. A friend of ours knowing of the wealth of Johnsoniana at the Oxford Press, 114 Fifth Avenue, recently learned to his great sorrow that he had postponed too long his purchase of R. W. Chapman's admirable edition (and incidentally quite the best) of *Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland* now out of print, or "O.P.," as the publishers put it. O.P., it seems to us, stands for Optimist's Punishment. We unkindly told our friend so, and he forthwith purchased Mr. Chapman's newest contribution to Johnsoniana—*Johnson & Boswell Revised*—and the type facsimile of *Proposals for Printing Bibliotheca Harleiana*,² having long since gathered to his private shelves *Rasselas*³ and *Letters of Samuel Johnson*,⁴ *Lives of the English Poets*⁵ and *Johnsonian Miscellanies*.⁶

Two weeks ago the only complete edition of "the most charming book ever composed by a woman" (to quote the Manchester Guardian) went O.P. It was the *Letters of Dorothy Osborne*, limited to 1,000 copies for England and America. . . . It is our guess that the Merrymount Press edition of *Lady Louisa Stuart's Notes on George Selwyn and his Contemporaries*⁷ very soon will be unobtainable except at a high premium. In our opinion it is one of the most beautiful books of the year. And an edition of 500 copies printed by Mr. Updike will not linger on public shelves. . . . It will be a point of interest with us to watch the collectors' demand for Miss Spurgeon's *Keats's Shakespeare*,⁸ that fascinating analysis of Keats, when he annotated his copy of Shakespeare. . . . The first, limited edition of *The Diary of David Garrick*⁹ is so surprisingly cheap that only a few remain. It is well worth the perusal of the 18th century collector.

Those who have lingered in shops to caress the new Isham collection of "Private Papers of James Boswell From Malahide Castle" will find consolation in the forthcoming *Literary Career of James Boswell, Esq.*¹⁰ by F. A. Pottle (if they immediately add their names to the waiting list!). A good friend of Boswell's was Henry Mackenzie, whose *Anecdotes and Egotisms*¹¹ is compact with a variety of stories, character sketches, 18th century gossip, quaint customs, humor, etc. We cannot refrain from quoting a paragraph (as full of puns as this Corner is of collector's items).

Lord Kelly, a determined punster, and his brother Andrew were drinking tea with James Boswell. Boswell put his cup to his head, "Here's t'ye, my Lord."—At that moment Lord Kelly coughed.—"You have got a coughie," said his brother.—"Yes," said Lord Kelly, "I have been like to choak o' late."

The Type-facsimile Reprints¹² include both 18th century and 17th century titles and are joys that all collectors can have. They bear the flavor of their famous originals and prevent the bankruptcy that threatens the over-ambitious. . . . The J. B. Wharey edition of *Pilgrim's Progress*¹³ is the first really authentic text of the two parts of the Progress. It is made up of the editions extant during Bunyan's lifetime, and it includes facsimile title pages and an exhaustive bibliographical analysis of those editions. . . . But to return to Johnson (and what bookman can help returning frequently to Johnson?), we got the first whisper yesterday of Mr. Adam's *Catalogue of Johnsoniana*. He is the Mr. R. B. Adam of Buffalo, of course, whose collection of Johnsoniana is supreme. The edition will be limited to 500, will consist of three volumes and will cost about \$75.00. It is promised for September.

Those who like rare beauty of illustration combined with authoritative text will delight in Sir T. W. Arnold's *Painting in Islam*,¹⁴ it contains a fine set of plates of rich color and intricate pattern. Sir Aurel Stein's *Innermost Asia*¹⁵ is another prize for connoisseurs of art as well as students of oriental history. And the *Catalogue of Dutch Pictures*¹⁶ to be published in September is a veritable feast for art collectors.

—THE OXONIAN.
(1) \$2.50, (2) \$2.50, (3) \$1.00, (4) \$14.00, (5) \$12.00, (6) \$8.35, (7) \$12.00, (8) \$10.00, (9) \$8.50, (10) probably \$15.00, (11) \$8.50, (12) write for list; prices from \$1.20 to \$7.00, (13) \$7.50, (14) \$30.00, (15) incomplete set, \$185.00, (16) probably \$40.00.

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An Ideal Bibliography

TROLLOPE: A BIBLIOGRAPHY. An Analysis of the History and Structure of the Works of Anthony Trollope. By MICHAEL SADLEIR. London: Constable. 1928.

EVER since the appearance, several years ago, of his "Excursions in Victorian Bibliography," in which, for presumably the first time, the modern age met with a list of all the works of Anthony Trollope, Mr. Michael Sadleir has seemed the one person sufficiently gifted with sympathy and understanding to undertake the labor of a full-length, annotated bibliography of this particular author. Until about 1920, Trollope was associated in the popular mind with elderly clergymen of the Episcopal Church who were supposed to fall asleep over his Barchester novels in their studies late each afternoon when they might have been preparing lectures for Confirmation classes—after all, he wrote more abundantly about the English clergy than any other novelist, and even though his attitude towards the Church was High rather than Evangelical, he usually managed to convey the atmosphere of the Book of Common Prayer into his work with the utmost success. Then suddenly, almost over night, as a contemporary novelist was being proclaimed, somewhat impetuously, as "another Trollope," for the simple reason that he wrote about fox-hunting and the bad manners of rural squires, it was discovered that Justices of the Supreme Court and college presidents had known his Parliamentary novels intimately for years; that grandmothers had grown up on "Orley Farm," "The Claverings," and "Is He Popenjoy?"; and that a large group of living men and women had been shocked by his "Autobiography." With the passion for endpapers still in its infancy, there was only a mild flurry among collectors: John Masefield and Rupert Brooke were fashionable at that time, and no one yet had had the native brightness to discover the eighteenth century. But with the publication of Mr. Sadleir's list in the "Excursions," prices began to advance—at last there was something authoritative that could be quoted, a preliminary word on the proper color of the bindings, and a certain amount of information about titles and numbers of pages. Anthony Trollope had commenced his career as a collector's item.

"Bibliography," Mr. Sadleir points out in the preface to the present volume, "can be extended beyond a mere descriptive analysis of any one writer or period; it can be made to illustrate, not only the evolution of book-building, but also the history of book-handling and the effect of a gradually perfected book-craft on the aims and achievements of authorship. . . . Just as Trollope the man serves to illustrate the psychology of his period, so Trollope the maker of books may serve to illustrate the methods of book-writing" (as in "Doctor Thorne" and "Lotta Schmidt"), "book-producing" ("Phineas Finn" and "Ralph the Heir"), "and book-distributing" ("The Vicar of Bullhampton," "Castle Richmond," and "Sir Harry Hotspur") "which were in vogue between—roughly—1850 and 1880. What was true of his works will, in a bibliographical sense and subject to varieties of circumstance, be true also of the works of his contemporaries." With this as his expressed purpose, Mr. Sadleir begins his labor of reducing the seventy-one separate novels, histories, plays, and volumes of sketches to the form and shape of a definitive bibliography. That, given every opportunity to fail honorably, he succeeds to an extraordinary degree, must be granted him immediately—his enthusiasm, his industry, his ability to assemble facts and present them connectedly in the spirit of literature, have all combined to make his book into something more than the customary collection of transcriptions of title pages and library-card notes, with dates and publishers added as an extra touch.

Take, for example, his description of the issues in parts of "He Knew He Was

Right": in addition to the original thirty-two sixpenny numbers that appeared weekly from October 17, 1868, to May 22, 1869, there began early in November, 1868 (not 1869 as the book states), a parallel series of two shilling monthly parts, each containing the matter of four of the weekly numbers. This seems a simple affair until the question of advertisements arises—then unexpectedly the reader is faced with the problem of why, with number 21, the suiting of advertisement to number issues goes completely to pieces until number 27 is reached. "At this late hour correctness revives. . . . With number 30, Strahan took over publication, and although the front wrappers (being printed from a block) continued the name of *Virtue*" (the original publisher of the parts), "all inset publishers' advertising was dropped and the publishers' advertisements on the back-wrappers show Strahan's imprint. It is impossible to judge by very high standards of intelligence any activity of *Virtue's* advertisement manager. Quite apart from this mixing of material between various numbers of one novel, the 'copy' itself shows much carelessness. Books are described as 'published this day' over a period of months; a book is 'ready' one week and 'shortly' some weeks later. It is obvious that the advertising was initially prepared with haste and lack of logic. When, in addition, we remember that *Virtue*

himself was greatly worried from the beginning of 1869 onwards by the failure of his publishing ventures, we are prepared for slapdash furnishing of material and for the use of whatsoever came most easily to hand." The "attempted explanation" comes later: "During March and April [1869] *Virtue* was too flustered with commercial misfortune to prolong accurate advertising either in the parts of a novel or the numbers of a magazine; that, in consequence, he generalized in 'St. Paul's' to save trouble, and left his binders to fill up 'He Knew He Was Right' as was most convenient. But when the magazine was off his hands . . . he had peace of mind once again to suit advertisement pages to each weekly part." Few more honest attempts have been made to point out the relation between certain difficulties of bibliography and the known facts of publishing history. And it is Mr. Sadleir's special achievement to have brought out again this particular relation, and to have emphasized that the publisher, as well as the author, must be taken into consideration. His entire book, by its clarity, its extraordinary breadth of treatment, its own excellence, recommends itself with far greater justice and truth than can be discovered in any possible review of it.

G. M. T.

Auction Sales Calendar

American Art Association, April 29-30, May 1. Part 2 of the Americana Collection from the Library of George W. Paullin, of Evanston, Illinois. One of the most important and valuable collections of its kind that has been offered for sale in some time. The library includes: 107 items dealing with Indians; Charles Inglis's "True Interest of America Impartially Stated," Philadelphia, 1776, one of two known copies; Barthelmy Vimont's "Relation de Ce Qui S'est Passé en la Nouvelle France, és Années 1644 et 1645," Paris, 1646; several rare Kentucky items, including the Lexington imprint of "A Letter from George Nicholas, of Kentucky, to his Friend, in Virginia," 1798, and George W. Ogden's "Letters from the

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West," New Bedford, 1823; 178 Lincoln items, including a broadside "Life of Abraham Lincoln," printed soon after his acceptance of the nomination for President, the Ricardo pamphlet printed at Macomb, Illinois, in 1860—"The Presidential Campaign on the Battlefield of Illinois" and the John Locke Scripps "Life," Chicago, 1860; the very scarce "Address to the Electors of the County of Hancock, with the Resolutions adopted at the convention, held at Buckstown, September 15th, 1812," Castine, Maine, 1812; Cotton Mather's

"Magnalia Christi Americana," London, 1702, the original issue of the first collected edition; John Corroll's "Brief History of the Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints," St. Louis, 1839; the Liverpool, 1841, edition of "The Book of Mormon"; and a presentation copy of the London, 1852, edition from Brigham Young; N. Slater's "Fruits of Mormonism," 1851, original wrappers, the first book printed in Coloma, California; J. J. Strang's "Ancient and Modern Michilimackinac," 1854, the almost unknown original edition; "The New

England Primer," Boston, 1777; 45 items dealing with Ohio; John B. Wyeth "Oregon," Cambridge, 1833, together with 70 other Oregon items; an uncut copy of "An Act for Granting and Applying Certain Stamp Duties," New York, 1765, reprinted by H. Gaine; J. E. Field's "Three Years in Texas," Boston, 1836, called by the sale catalogue "the rarest Texas title in English"; J. H. Triggs's "A Reliable and Correct Guide to the Black Hills," Omaha, 1876; Charles W. Upham's suppressed "Life of Washington," Boston, 1840; and

Eleazor Wheelock's "Plain and Faithful Narrative of the Original Design . . . of the Indian Charity-School at Lebanon, in Connecticut," Boston, 1763. G. M. T.

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