



The LAST SEPTEMBER

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ELIZABETH BOWEN

author of
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The April, 1928, Book-of-the-Month

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The New Books

Fiction

(Continued from preceding page)

enough, and the love stories which are woven in are unfortunately hackneyed, but running beneath the plot there lies a shaft of penetrating sympathy which one rarely meets in modern fiction. And one is further grateful for the fact that each of the central characters is, in her own way, a truly fine person, and not merely a futile shadow.

Poetry

WEST-RUNNING BROOK. By Robert Frost. Holt. \$2.50.

SELECTED POEMS. By Robert Frost. Holt. \$2.50.

SILVER SCUTCHEON. By Mabel Postgate. Vinal. \$2.

POEMS. By Jan Kochanowski. University of California Press.

THE COMPLETE POEMS OF ERNEST DOWSON. Medusa Head.

SAPLINGS. Third Series. 1928. Scholastic Publishing Company.

DOLOROUS CARNIVAL. By John Rollin Stuart. Vinal.

SOUL SALUTES. By John Edward Wilson.

THE BALLAD OF YUKON JAKE. By Edward E. Paramore, Jr. Coward-McCann.

THIS MAN'S ARMY. By John Allan Wyeth. Vinal. \$2.

THE KINGDOM OF TOWERS. By Allan Dowling. Vinal. \$1.50.

THE METAMORPHOSIS OF AIAI. Edited by Peter Warlock and Jack Lindsay. London: Fandrico Press (McKee).

ORION. By R. H. Horne. London: Scholastic Press (McKee).

BLAKE'S POETICAL SKETCHES. London: Scholastic Press (McKee).

THE ISLES OF KHALEDAN. By Alfred Antoine Furman. New York: Lathrop C. Harper, 8 West 40th Street.

MY TRUST AND OTHER VERSE. By Caroline Salome Woodruff. Rutland, Vt.: Tuttle.

JEPHETHAH. By John Christopherson. University of Delaware Press. \$2.

HARP STRINGS. By Isabel Tracy Gaily. Vinal.

CANDLELIGHT DREAMS. By Anne Blair. Vinal.

POEMS. By Emma Eugenie Goodwin. Vinal.

THIS UNCHANGING MASK. By Francis Claiborne Mason. Yale University Press. \$1.25.

THE ANGEL OF THE BATTLEFIELD. By Anne Kellady Gilbert. Vinal. \$2.

THE FLIGHT OF GUINEVERE. By George V. A. McCloskey. Authors and Publishers Association. \$2.

THE OXFORD BOOK OF REGENCY VERSE. Chosen by H. S. Milford. Oxford University Press.

WHITE PEAKS AND GREEN. By Ethel Romig Fuller. Willett, Clark & Colby. \$2.

LISTEN TO THE MOCKING-BIRD. By Stoddard King. Doubleday, Doran. \$1.50 net.

COLLECTED POEMS OF Margaret Widdemer. Harcourt, Brace. \$2.50.

CHRIST IN THE POETRY OF TODAY. Compiled and reassembled by Elvira Flack from an Anthology by Martha Foote Crow. Woman's Press.

THE BALLAD OF READING GAOL. By Oscar Wilde. Illustrated by Lynd Ward. Macy-Masius-Vanguard. \$4.

SEA SHELLS. By Burdette K. Marvin. Vinal.

VOICE AND VISION. By Jessie A. Ross. Vinal. \$1.50.

COLLECTED POEMS. By Richard Aldington. Covici-Friede. \$3.

CAWDOR. By Robinson Jeffers. Liveright. \$2.50.

THOUGHTS OF ARABEL. By Elizabeth B. Jenkins. Stratford. 50 cents.

MORNING MOODS. By Lorna Greene. Century. \$1.75.

AN ANTHOLOGY OF WORLD POETRY. Edited by Mark Van Doren. A. & C. Boni. \$5.

THE BLACK ROCK. By John Gould Fletcher. Macmillan.

HAPPY DAYS. By Ruth Lewinson. Vinal.

THE BEST POEMS OF 1928. Selected by Thomas Moulton. Harcourt, Brace. \$2.50.

WINTER WORDS. By Thomas Hardy. Macmillan. \$2.

Philosophy

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE ADOLESCENT. By LETA S. HOLLINGWORTH. Appleton. 1928. \$2.50.

This book offers an inadequate treatment of an important topic. It is written on the presumption that recent inquiries are more significant than fundamental ones. It dismisses the important work of Stanley Hall with a mere mention; his book on Adolescence remains far more informative than any casual sketch of all sorts of piecemeal details bearing on the problems of the adolescent. As these newer statements have been repeated a hundred times, there is little purpose in insisting that few persons understand them. It is a pity that an able writer has succeeded only in contributing an additional volume and nothing more, which, though clear and sensible, advances the subject hardly at all.

PLATONISM. By John Burnet. University of California Press.

WHAT IS THE MIND? By George T. W. Patrick. Macmillan. \$2.50.

THE THEORY OF MORALS. By E. F. Carrill. Oxford University Press. \$1.50.

(Continued on page 612)

The Wits' Weekly

Conducted by EDWARD DAVISON

Competition No. 51. A prize of fifteen dollars is offered for the most engaging original Valentine for 1929 addressed to the ingenious Editor of this page. (Ent New York)

Competiti

rhymed poem called "STILL LIFE." (Entries should reach the Saturday Review office not later than the morning of January 28.)

Attention is called to the rules printed below. Competitors are specially reminded that they should keep copies of their entries as MS cannot be returned.

THE FORTY-NINTH COMPETITION

The fifteen dollars prize for the best rendering into modern American prose vernacular of Mark Antony's oration from "Julius Caesar" has been awarded to Homer M. Parsons of San Bernardino, Calif.

THE PRIZE RENDERING Mark Antony

JUST a minute, there—pipe down, you guys, I wanna put you wise to sump'n! Brutus told me to go ahead and jaw, so I'll spill it. I tell you, we gotta ditch this here stiff, and do it damn' pronto, what I mean. And I'm here to see it's done right.

This fellow Cæsar here's been croaked—and I don't hold no brief for him neither. You heard Brutus tell as how Cæsar was up to some political skullduggery, buyin' nigger delegates, and like o' that. Well, if he did, he's shore cured now. Course, I ain't got no crow to pick with Brutus, for he's on the square, see? But what I mean, this guy Cæsar was white! Why, him and me used to go to school together. Many's the time—

First Citizen

Look, Mark's bawlin'.

Second Citizen

Mebby Cæsar did get a kinda raw deal.

Mark Antony

Pardon me, folks, I didn't mean to break down thattaway. But fact is, I just come f'm the courthouse, and I read Cæsar's will. Now Brutus is on the square, and all that, and I don't want you to do nothin' hasty, but if I had the gift o' gab like him I could give you an earfull 'd make you itch to string him up. You know Cæsar's big house? He's left that for a free hospital. And there's \$25 cash for every man, woman, and child in the county. Do you call that skullduggery?

All

No!

First Citizen

That's what I call doggone white!

Second Citizen

I'll say!

Third Citizen

Where's Brutus at? We ought to lynch him.

Fourth Citizen

Come on, men; let's get Brutus.

Mark Antony

Wait a minute, fellows. Mebby I hadn't ought to mention this, but come up and look. See anything funny about them bullet holes? They's only one kinda gun'll make them holes, and that's Rooshian. Now I ain't sayin' that Brutus and Cassius is Communists nor nothin', but you gotta admit them ain't decent names fra white man.

First Citizen

Seems like I heard they was fur-riners.

Second Citizen

They're all Reds. Lynch 'em!

Third Citizen

On the square, hell! Tar and feathers!

All

Git a rail! String 'em up! Fetch a rope! Fill 'em full o' buckshot! Head 'em off afore they hit the tracks! (Exeunt).

Mark Antony

It shore worked slick, what I mean. That last trick done it. Cæsar, old man, they's hell a-poppin', and I don't mean mebbv! Then buzz-bards'll stretch hemp afore sundown.

HOMER M. PARSONS.

Let me offer belated thanks and good wishes to the many competitors,

both new and old, whose entries during the past few weeks have borne Christmas and New Year greetings. These acknowledgements are not so late as they seem. I write in the first week of January although this will not be read until the middle of the month.

Most of the week's entries merely burlesqued the vernacular. I came to the judgment seat fortified and prepared by an enjoyable rereading of H. L. Mencken's "The American Language"; but even Mr. Mencken might have been shocked by the extremes to which several competitors went. "You heard Brutus shooting off about Cæsar being a grind, and going in for salve, and wanting to be top key-man, and being a plugger and a whiz. Well, if he was, then yap's the name for him and he's a stiff and a wart."

Perhaps I'm wrong: it may be that they do talk like this on the Arkansas campus whence the entry came. But during three years in America I have never encountered such concentration of the new tongue outside of magazine covers or the vaudeville theatre, excepting perhaps in one or two recent plays in New York. Nevertheless it seemed only fair to consult the opinion of one or two American friends. The result is that Homer Parsons gets the prize instead of David Heathstone, Arjeh, or Marshall M. Brice. Let him thank my wife for her casting vote.

Even the Arkansas contribution, however, was more in the spirit of the contest than a surprising number of translations made in the stiffest kind of high collar English. "Please understand I have not come here to pronounce a eulogy over Cæsar . . . now ambition may be a very desirable thing, etc." R. H. Rowe's entry would have fallen into this class but for his happy thought in making Anthony say—"You saw me at the Fourth of July barbecue when I offered him the nomination three times. Every time he replied 'I do not choose to run. Was that ambition?' Theodore Pratt, who wrote 'in the manner of a Broadwayite,' rendered the same passage—"I propositioned him three times to stick his name up in lights but he always turned it down." Burns Graham was among the best of several competitors who translated character, occasion, and scene as well as language. His were not the only gunmen of the week. Diamond Tony's speech for his friend, Cæsar Ferraro, began "As youse all know, the bright lights and racketeering lead to Hearst, but the straight and narrow leads to the grave with no sorrowing public."

That same competition was set in the English *Saturday Review* some months ago. The winner did better than ours. But I gather that he was an American.

RULES

Competitors failing to comply with the following rules will be disqualified. Envelopes should be addressed to Edward Davison, *The Saturday Review of Literature*, 25 West 45th Street, New York City. All MSS. must be legible—typewritten if possible—and should bear the name or pseudonym of the author. Competitors may offer more than one entry. MSS. cannot be returned. The Editor's decision is final and *The Saturday Review* reserves the right to print the whole or part of any entry.

The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the selection of books and questions of like nature should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review*.

L. M. J., St. Louis, Mo., says that in my "Adventures in Reading" (Stokes) in the chapter on the delights of raiding the dictionary, I mention Christopher Morley as

ON page 566 of the collected "Essays" of Christopher Morley (Doubleday, Doran), in "The Club of Abandoned Men," there is a dialogue between Ajax and Socrates as to founding an establishment to be, in the quaint British phrase, "a home from home" to housebroken husbands with wives in the country;—

SOCRATES: The really crowning touch, I think, would lie in the ice-box raids. A large ice-box would be kept well stocked with remainders of apple pie, macaroni, stewed prunes, and chocolate pudding. Any husband, making a cautious inroad upon these about midnight, would surely have the authentic emotion of being in his own home.

AJAX: an occasional request to empty the ice-box pan would also be an artful echo of domesticity.

E. M., Fairmount, Indiana, adds to the stories of country-school life "Jean Mitchell's School," by Angelina W. Wray, published by Bloomington, Ill., Public School Pub. Co., 1908. He says, "All school-teachers of Indiana of some twenty years ago are familiar with this book, as it was one of the state institute books for teachers."

L. C., no address, asks for books for "a discouraged woman."

I HAVE more than once refused quite brilliant offers to appear in print as something in the way of a consulting specialist in "mental therapeutic" literature, the while I continue to give by personal letter and, more infrequently, through these columns, advice of this general nature. One reason why I prefer to keep out of print on this subject, even before the friendly audience following this department, is that my recommendations, set down in cold type, often sound not only unconventional but even at times quite frivolous.

For example, in this matter of discouragement, so advanced that an actual breakdown seems impending, it is more than likely that the inquirer, like many who will read this reply, looks forward to receiving a list of inspiring, uplifting, energizing books, such as come at once to the mind of many a grateful reader. But to most people discouragement means that physical and nervous forces have become so depleted that there is all but nothing left in that reservoir of energy from which courage is drawn at need. Let the reservoir alone, and within a reasonable time enough generally gathers to go on with. But a thoroughly discouraged person cannot let it alone: he, and particularly she, worries and thus keeps active a steady and dangerous leakage. It seems reasonable to suggest that the discouraged one first of all "get out of himself" long enough for some energy to trickle in. Almost anything in the reading line sufficiently absorbing to do this—without on the other hand shaking his nervous system apart with shocks and suspense, will be beneficial. A really good detective story will do it, if you like them: "The Prisoner in the Opal," by A. E. W. Mason (Doubleday, Doran) for instance—this is a regular *oner*—or the new

one by Austin Freeman, "The Eye of Osiris" (Dodd, Mead), which at last exploits some of the endless fiction material available in and about the British Museum, even frequent the depths of unfortunately many wretched stories; there is, and deliberate humor,

books that mean to make you laugh or what about it? Here we all have our favorites; Robert Benchley is mine, whether in "Love Conquers All," or "Of All Things," or the new "Ten Thousand Leagues under the Sea or David Copperfield" (Holt), and I won't mention this book again no matter who needs it until some condensation of title makes it possible for this typewriter. Pelham Wodehouse is another man for my money; one of the advantages of living in London is that you get the new Wodehouse some weeks ahead. I read "Money for Nothing" (Doubleday, Doran) last summer, when the weather was perfect and life just grand—it almost seemed too lavish to have it then, with all those months of fog and rain ahead. Stephen Leacock's books undoubtedly helped to win the War. But does it not sound undignified to tell a "discouraged woman" to lay hold upon a Wodehouse, a Benchley, a copy of Tarkington's "Penrod and Sam," or a thumping good detective yarn? The only excuse I can offer for doing so is that it often turns the trick.

At least, the first trick. Then, if I were this client, I would use the energy thus collected to read a few books, preferably by women, about the struggles of people who had a hard time, were thoroughly discouraged—and came through. Mme. Schumann-Heink, for one, reached such a point not only of discouragement but of actual desperation, that she gathered her young family about her one day and set off to take them all with her into the hereafter. If you will read the chapter in which this occurs, in Mary Lawton's "Schumann-Heink, the Last of the Titans" (Macmillan), past the moment when the little daughter looks up into her mother's face and asks the question that saves the family's lives, you will see that it is possible to get pretty far down and yet climb up again. The whole book is invigorating. I wish girls would read it who feel put upon because they do not play leads the first season out of dramatic school. Though I admit that the circumstances under which the opera-singer occupied an upper berth on an ocean voyage, here set down, raised in me such a righteous rage as will, I doubt not, be shared by many American women.

Or take the life of Mrs. Thomas Whiffen, as recorded in her autobiography, "Keeping off the Shelf" (Dutton). If discouragement comes from the calendar—which may be a dampener now and again—this book may shame one into a better temper. In general, the memoirs of actresses are good against superannuation. How the profession does develop not only durability of body but agility of mind!

Committed as I am to the policy of telling the truth in a biography or letting it alone, I yet rather resent the later lives of Stevenson, even that of Mr. Steuart (Little, Brown), which have elbowed aside the family portrait produced for the family by Mr. Balfour. For this book has been for me for years a sort of spring-board out of

depression; Stevenson certainly knew the trick of keeping the banner flying. Nothing that has since "come out" has changed the fact that he did, but in the Balfour life one realizes it more sharply. In like manner, though, Ralph Straus's new biography, "Charles Dickens," is immensely interesting and an invaluable supplement to Forster's, its very virtues make it less bouncing than Chesterton's story of Dickens's life. For that matter, one of the best books for boosting the spirit into action is Dickens's own "Christmas Carol," especially the appearance of the ghosts chained to the strong-boxes.

There is, however, one easily obtainable work that comes near to being the ideal literary treatment for discouragement; this is the Psalms. A large proportion of them are apparently the result of profound and justifiable discouragement, out of which the author gloriously sings himself as the poem progresses. If in the process he sometimes uses strong language about his enemies, there are times when this affords a reader release from some of his linguistic inhibitions. But the deeper reason for their value in cases like this is in the lift of the spirit out of itself into the eternal. When all torches burnt black for Emile Verhaeren, and one of the worst nervous breakdowns in literature was writing itself out in poetry, he marked the moment when he touched bottom and began the upward climb with the realization that

*A Coward was I; I hid my head
Beneath a huge and futile Me.*

Anything is good for discouragement that can pry the spirit out from under this weight. Once out, there is a chance that it may be caught up, if for an instant only, into something greater than itself. After that, it is even possible that the patient may come to realize that, in the words of the authority above-quoted, "a joyful and pleasant thing it is to be thankful." Gratitude is so delightful and so invigorating a sensation that it is worth cultivating. But I would never expect a worn-out nervous system to reach this point at one jump. For this reason I suggest, with all imaginable diffidence and humility, some of the preliminary exercises here tentatively indicated.

H. P. Cooper, A. and M. College, Mississippi, sends this information to the club (and the school) making a special study of China.

"YOUR ladies in New Jersey, if they are interested in China, will be missing the treat of their lives unless they 'read after' (as our local Senegambian idiom has it) Bland and Backhouse—especially 'China under the Empress Dowager' and 'Annals and Memoirs of the Court of Peking,' published in London by Heinemann and in this country by I-don't-know-who, just before the war. The former was 'compiled from State papers and the private diary of the Comptroller of her household,' and the latter, dealing with more ancient as well as recent events, especially the Boxer troubles, is also filled with translations of Chinese diaries and letters. Aside from the unforgettable and tinglingly edifying impression they give of the Old Buddha, the insight they give into the workings of the Chinese mind make them memorable. And really, it is to obtain even a faint hint of that insight that one reads about China, rather than to find out how things are over there now. I always think that to learn how, for instance, one behaves to a mother-in-law, or interviews an official, or pays a call, is far more valuable (and Lord knows how much more entertaining!) than to try to learn somewhat about conditions that are notoriously chaotic—so much so that not even our omniscient Mr. Wells has yet undertaken their elucidation.

"There are also Homer Lea's books—but these are perhaps not 'new titles.' And unless the ladies are a band of Really Serious Thinkers, such fiction as 'The Inconstancy of Madame Chuan,' translated by E. B. Howell from a well-known twentieth-century collection (Stokes); or Ernest Bramah's delectable tales of Kai Lung; or even the novels of Georges Soulié de Morant, or Judith Gautier's play, 'La Fille du Ciel.'

"By the way, I think you would be vastly entertained by a book in the World's Manuals Series of the Oxford University Press, 'Sound and Symbol in Chinese,' translated from the Swedish of B. Karlgren. It discusses unpedantically, with a wealth of illustrations, the picturesqueness (in every sense) of the Chinese language. If the learned ladies read Spanish, a new novel by Luis Orteza, 'Diablo Blanco,' on the Chinese Civil War, is what my Freshmen would call a 'whizz.' It is rather Grand Guignol, in other words."

"Read it to compose
your mind at night
and to arouse it in
the morning,"

says

JOHN DEWEY,
Columbia University



"BEFORE a work of art one is likely to be dumb or to indulge only in ejaculations; and when asked why one likes it, to reply, 'Go and see for yourself.' That is the way I feel about this genial and witty book. I would say to the reader, 'Taste it, try it for yourself. Browse about in it; read it consecutively. Keep it on a bedside table.' And in answer to the question 'Why?' the best reply I can make is 'Try it and see.' For the book is compact with the wisdom gathered in years of observation of himself and of others."



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SCHUMANN - HEINK

The Last of the Titans

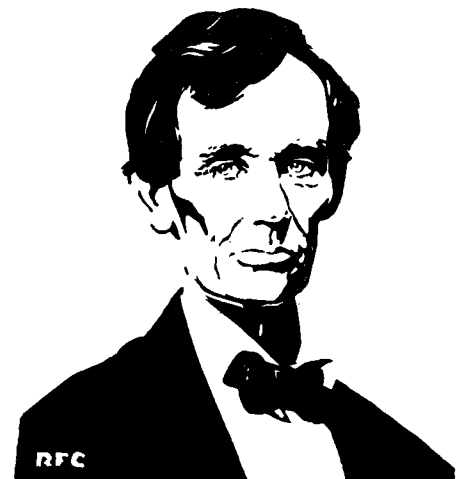
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