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By John Cowper Powys

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ALREADY THE MEANING OF CULTURE is finding its way to best-seller lists; and the hundreds of thousands who have read THE STORY OF PHILOSOPHY will find in this book, to which Will Durant pays so ringing a tribute, the gateway to a new vision of life.

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*Books that Live*

## Points of View

Mrs. Eddy

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:  
Sir:

A recent book review by Ernest Sutherland Bates, published in your issue of September 7, is apparently intended to create the impression that the author of an alleged biography of Mrs. Eddy had honestly tried to set forth without bias or prejudice the essential facts in her life history. However, such an impression would be wholly incorrect and misleading.

The book is a gross misrepresentation of the Christian Science religion and travesties the life of its discoverer and founder, Mary Baker Eddy. It is based primarily upon fantastic newspaper yarns and upon an attack on Mrs. Eddy instigated by known enemies which appeared serially in a popular magazine about twenty years ago.

These articles have long since been discredited because of their manifest bias and because of the evidently interested motive on the part of those who prepared them. In the archives of the Mother Church there is abundant legal evidence to disprove the allegations they contain. Although these same articles were later published in book form, the book proved a "dud"; its publication was discontinued, and the plates sold as junk.

It is a principle of jurisprudence that no case can honestly be decided upon biased testimony and prejudiced evidence.

At no time during the preparation of this alleged biography did the author confer with or seek information from a single authorized representative of the Christian Science Church; and the publishers, when asked to have the book checked back for reliability of its sources and accuracy of its data, refused.

There are living in various parts of the United States today a considerable number of Mrs. Eddy's own students who sat in her classes and knew her personally. There are also loyal Christian Scientists still living who resided in Mrs. Eddy's home and came in daily contact with her. These individuals are known and easily accessible. If the author of this alleged personal history of Mrs. Eddy had really been concerned with facts, he would at least have interviewed some of these individuals, but this he did not do. He has merely followed the tendency of the lesser writers of today who attempt to decry and belittle those who are great.

ORWELL BRADLEY TOWNE,  
Christian Science Committee on Publication.

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:  
SIR:

Mr. Orville Bradley Towne, without doing me the honor of mentioning me or my book by name, has sought to discredit both in a form letter which he has sent to every editor in New York who published a review of "Mrs. Eddy: the Biography of a Virginal Mind." This form letter is identical with the one which you have given me the opportunity to answer.

I therefore appreciate an opportunity to point out to your readers that while I have utmost respect for the intense devotion of Christian Scientists like Mr. Towne to their viewpoint, this very consideration rendered it quite impossible for me to place myself in their hands or under their guidance while engaged in a task I sought to pursue in a detached and unbiassed mood. A similar consideration impelled my publishers to ignore certain "suggestions" that they submit the book to the censorship of the Boston Directors before its publication.

To the disinterested student it must seem obvious that no biographer who wished to make his work unbiassed and judicial, and yet bring it to successful publication, could possibly adopt any other policy, in view of the swift darkness which has overtaken various accounts of Mrs. Eddy which did not receive official censorship in advance. The Dickey Memoirs—written by a devout but engagingly frank Scientist—are only one illustration. That my course was well considered is now proved by the extraordinary and amazing efforts Mr. Towne's brethren are making to effect suppression of my book. Dealers all over the country who expose it for sale are being threatened with boycott, with warnings to cease selling and to return their copies to the publisher.

There appears to be no economic or social pressure which Mr. Towne's organization is not attempting to apply in order to prevent the circulation of my work. Christian Scientists in towns in every state wait upon and harass the local book dealers by constant visitations. And if the book dealer has signed any mortgages or notes held by a Christian Scientist, if his land-

lord is a Christian Scientist, if he is in any way indebted to a Christian Scientist, his lot is being made a hard one. Such amazing tactics would be unbelievable, were it not for the evidence contained in the letters my publishers are receiving daily.

My previous awareness of such fanatical tendencies on the part of Mrs. Eddy's following well explains the procedure that was forced upon me in my sympathetic attempts to arrive at the truth concerning Mrs. Eddy's career. The present leaders in her organization have so far committed themselves to their orthodox point of view that their interests can apparently never be those of the biographer engaged in an impersonal quest for data. It is their belief that the public is not entitled to know the real facts. In proof of my statement I should like to quote a letter which I now have before me—a letter sent out by the Board of Directors at the time they were suppressing the Dickey Memoirs, which were published by Mrs. Dickey after her husband's death for distribution among his students. The Board of Directors said:

"Our astonishment was great beyond expression when we read the book, 'Memoirs of Mary Baker Eddy,' and found it contained so much that would be harmful to make public. . . . It was imperative that the book should be recalled, if possible, before it might fall into the hands of those who were hostile or reach minds too immature to absorb it unscathed. . . . A New Hampshire man, after reading the book, has said that 'it upholds the contention of Mrs. Eddy's son in the trial at Concord that she was obsessed with a fear of malicious animal magnetism and was therefore not competent'. . . . Mrs. Eddy's request that Mr. Dickey write a 'history of his experiences' would have been fully complied with had he deposited his writings relating to her for preservation in the files of The Mother Church, as others of her household have considerably done. . . . 'The human history needs to be revised, and the material record expunged.'"

This wholly remarkable letter, never intended for the public eye, would make any impartial biographer loath to "confer with" any "authorized representative" of the Christian Science Church. Incidentally, the Dickey revelations are all incorporated in my own volume, with due credit. This seems sufficient reply to Mr. Towne's declaration that my book is based primarily upon "fantastic newspaper yarns" and a "popular magazine" attack. Mr. Dickey died as a director of the Christian Science Church. The material from the New York *World* investigations which is incorporated in my pages is far less sensational than Mr. Dickey's own loyal statements. As for the material which I have been able to preserve from Georgine Milmine's heroic work, this is in complete accord with all the other facts in the equation; it is based to a large extent upon sworn affidavits; it is entirely factual matter and in no sense a question of interpretation or opinion. In persuading its publishers to abandon the sale of this work, the same tactics were used as in the present attempts to have my own book suppressed. Unfortunately Miss Milmine did not have in her contract a clause which would prevent the sale of her copyright and of the publisher's plates. In consequence her book met the fate which Mr. Towne correctly describes; it was bought up by a Christian Scientist, and the publishers were doubtless thankful to be relieved of a situation similar to that which the Messrs. Scribner have recently described as "unprecedented in our eighty-five years' history of publishing."

I should like to make it plain that in my volume the Christian Science point of view is anything but ignored, in direct contradiction of Mr. Towne's declarations. My biography includes an extensive consideration of Mrs. Eddy's own memoirs, as well as an analytical study of her writings, from which frequent quotations are used to establish points in my text. In particular, frequent allusion will be found in "Mrs. Eddy" to the authorized biography by Sibyl Wilbur, which is now published by the Christian Science interests, and to which I referred as often as its obvious limitations would permit. If Mr. Towne or his associates have any further data concerning Mrs. Eddy which they are willing to reveal for the consideration of writers and scholars, then this material should be incorporated in their official biography without delay.

In conclusion, permit me to say that in my bibliography I have taken pains to point out where and how my sources may be consulted, including all rare and suppressed editions, so that interested scholars may check my judgments on every point.

EDWIN FRANDEN DAKIN.

## EIGHT OUTSTANDING BOOKS OF 1929

**MAN AND WOMEN**

by HAVELOCK ELLIS

When this book first appeared thirty-five years ago, it was at once recognized as the foundation of all further researches. Now, in final and revised form, it is indispensable for the student, and fascinating for anyone interested in the problems of sex. \$5.00

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This intimate biography of the most famous of British Ambassadors includes over twenty-five thousand words of unpublished Roosevelt letters. "He combined a genius for friendship with a gift of writing letters that make history live and will live in literature." London Times. 2 vols., illus. \$10.00

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**LAUGHING BOY**

by OLIVER LA FARGE

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**IN THE EVENING OF MY THOUGHT**

by GEORGES CLEMENCEAU

"I approach the portals of death and I see before me the Angel Gabriel with his trumpet. He says to me, 'Have you anything to say before you pass these portals?' And I turn to him and reply, 'I should think I had something to say, and I say it here in this book.'"

From an Interview. 2 vols., \$12.50

**THE TRAGIC ERA**

by CLAUDE G. BOWERS

"As interesting as any romance by Dumas or Stevenson, and containing some of the most lurid and poignant pages of American history yet penned. The hectic and melodramatic phases of the Reconstruction have never been described with such striking detail and such ability to recreate the past." The Atlantic, illus., \$5.00

**THE LIFE OF AN ORDINARY WOMAN**

by ANNE ELLIS

"Scattered throughout the book in one salty anecdote after another is the most veracious and beautiful portrait of the American pioneer woman I have read." Alice Beal Parsons in the N. Y. Herald Tribune. \$3.50

**WINDLESTRAWS**

by PHYLLIS BOTTOME

"With exquisite skill Phyllis Bottome reveals the frenzied world at Windlestraws. It is a sweepingly beautiful book. Its beauty is far more than mere excellence of style. This master craftsman, Phyllis Bottome, expertly unfolds the lives of four people." Philadelphia Record. \$2.50

— H O U G H T O N M I F F L I N C O M P A N Y —



## The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

### New MACMILLAN Books

#### John Masefield's new novel **THE HAWBUCKS**

THE countryside which inspired REYNARD THE FOX is also the background for this racy new Masefield story. John Masefield depicts with poetic charm the mode of life and thought of a generation which lived according to the ancient code of country gentlemen. You will find a rare flavor in the coterie of gay young blades who hunt foxes, race thoroughbreds and pursue the ineffably fair daughter of Squire Harriewood with equal recklessness. Readers of *Reynard the Fox* will like this rustic, picturesque, and merrie England. \$2.50

#### William Stearns Davis **THE WHIRLWIND**

A Romance of the French Revolution  
By the author of *A Friend of Caesar*  
SECOND LARGE PRINTING

A master of historical romance tells a magnificent, quick-paced story of the stirring days of the French Revolution. An authentic historical background is peopled with living characters whose daily existence in those turbulent times is shot through with love, hatred, danger, intrigue and disaster. The story will hold you through its suspense and its truth. \$2.50

#### Joseph Gollomb's new mystery **THE SUBTLE TRAIL**

By the author of *The Portrait Invisible*  
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#### A Timely New Book **PALESTINE TODAY AND TOMORROW**

By John Haynes Holmes

This is a gentile's survey of Zionism, Dr. Stephen S. Wise says: "It is the most understanding book that has been written about Palestine." You will understand the recent bloodshed and rioting better after reading this vivid and accurate description of conditions there. Out Nov. 6 \$2.50

#### Second Large Printing **The Universe Around Us**

By Sir James Jeans

"He has managed to give an amazingly complete picture of the universe as it appears to the astronomer, without in any way straining his reader's attention... The book moves forward like a story and it is an exciting story that Jeans has to tell."—*The New Republic* \$4.50

#### **This World of Nations**

By Pitman B. Potter

A clear, readable, interesting exposition of world organization today, written for the busy reader who wants a complete, compact survey. \$4.00

#### **Berkeley Square**

By John L. Balderston

The London dramatic hit in which Leslie Howard is now starring in America. This is the revised version of the play and it makes diverting reading. \$2.00

#### Vachel Lindsay's New Poems **Every Soul is a Circus**

America has come to expect something different from Mr. Lindsay. His new collection of poems fills that expectation. The author also contributes many illustrations to the general decorative designs, done by George M. Richards. \$2.75

#### **THE LETTERS OF THOMAS SERGEANT PERRY**

Edited by Edwin Arlington Robinson

The culture and charm of a bygone era are revealed in this collection of letters of Thomas Sergeant Perry, a Boston gentleman of the old school. \$3.00

At All Booksellers Now

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY : : NEW YORK

PETER THE GREAT. By STEPHEN GRAHAM. Simon & Schuster. 1929. \$3.

#### Biography

Very justly, Mr. Stephen Graham has, in the past, gained an enviable reputation for his delightful and excellent studies of the Russian people, the Russian mind, and the Russian religion. A charming style and a sympathetic, yet penetrating, insight into his subject have always made his books delightful and instructive reading. This latest work, however, will, undoubtedly, be a disappointment to some of his admirers. Evidently Mr. Graham, too, has fallen victim to the general demand for "full-length biographies that give vivid and authentic portraits." In fact, there is too much portrait and too little background. The narrative itself is thin and evasive, and the average reader will experience difficulty in following the course of events. There is an unhappy tendency to introduce important characters into the narrative with too little preparation.

In style, too, the book is poorly done, and stands out in great contrast to other works of Mr. Graham. It is choppy and disjointed. Even, alas, there are places where the author must be suspected of attempting to popularize his story. And, as is so often the case in such attempts, the results are positively vulgar. It is almost shocking, for example, to read from the pen of Mr. Graham this line: "Peter forgot his promises to his mother and took many joy-rides to Solombola and Hohnagra."

In brief, this latest biography of Peter approaches, in no way, either in content or in quality, other recent works of biography that treat of this period. Nor does it fulfil the awful advance description sent out by the publishers. Incidentally, it may not be out of place to remind them that, contrary to their advance description, "that repacious Livonian laundress and lover" who finally married Peter was not "known later as Catherine the Great."

#### Fiction

PAPER HOUSES. By WILLIAM PLOMER. Coward-McCann. 1929. \$2.50.

We fail to learn as much about Japan from Mr. Plomer's book as he expects us to. He has high hopes for the success of his method: a series of short narratives that shall, by implication and suggestion, expound for us much that is of particular interest in the Japanese temperament. But Mr. Plomer is not sufficiently explicit; he seems too close to his material to remember that we (average untraveled Westerners) have no experience that can help us appreciate his elusive commentary. He makes the mistake of not writing as a Westerner interpreting the East. He resolutely excludes not only all glamour, but all sense of exoticism and novelty as well. At the risk of causing Mr. Plomer acute pain, we must say that a more plausible insight into Japanese character may be gained from M. Raucault's hilarious extravaganza, "The Honorable Picnic," than from all of Mr. Plomer's purposeful solemnity. "Paper Houses" does not live up to its pretensions.

In twelve pages of sprightly "Prefatory Notes" Mr. Plomer airs his views on the Japanese people, on Japanese life, and on Lafcadio Hearn. The latter is *persona non grata* to Mr. Plomer; we are told that Hearn was intellectually myopic, that he

lacked "proper background and backbone," that he was "no scholar," and (by implication) that he indulged in "indiscriminate japanegyrics." The rest of the Notes are less obviously controversial, but they are nevertheless characterized by an asperity and a mild sort of cocksureness.

The body of the volume is eight narratives of varying lengths. The only narrative that is estimable and at the same time redolent of Japan is "The Portrait of an Emperor"; this is good reading. The two satires at the end of the volume are irritating because of their apparent pointlessness. As literature "Paper Houses" is flimsy; as exposition of Japanese society and character it is spotty.

MOSAIC. By JOHN PRESLAND. Appleton. 1929. \$2.

"Fragments for a mosaic—it is all the knowledge we ever have of each other's lives." So speaks one of the characters of this novel, and the author is constantly aware of the thesis in telling the story of Nadine, a woman almost too bizarre and mysterious, but withal naïve and simple. One fragment comes from Smith, the little archaeologist, for whom T. E. Lawrence seems to have served as model. From him we learn that Nadine was a woman without parents, without a country, without ties. She was beautiful, possessed a queenly manner, and had lived a life of varied experiences, including starvation and snake-charming.

The second fragment comes from Professor Lavallière, who had loved Nadine in his youth when he was diplomatic attaché at Vienna. There she was mistress to the wealthiest man in Europe, a Greek who promoted massacres and rebellions and cornered the European wheat market. Lavallière loved her unrequited, and lost his job in the scandal which involved the failure of Agorapoulos, his trial for murdering his secretary, and the departure of Nadine when she learned the way he got his wealth.

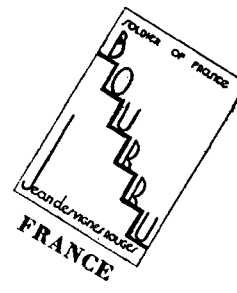
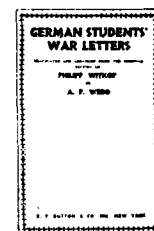
The third fragment comes from Richard Hardress, English gentleman, whose brother, Sir Martin Hardress, had married Nadine after finding her about to be murdered as a witch in the slums of Cairo. Richard hated Nadine because she ruined his brother's life through her inability to comprehend the English sense of honor, family, virtue, and tradition.

The method of presentation is, of course, a literary trick, a trick of merit, but in this case made ineffective by the situation, which involves the meeting of the three narrators with the doctor who apparently does the writing and who has just met Nadine as an old woman in rags selling chestnuts on the streets of Paris. The story smacks too much of the exotic, and supplies too much material which the movie magnates would love. The author writes an adequate prose, but the final impression is that of a good idea which did not turn out to be a very good book.

ALEXANDER BOTTS: EARTHWORM TRACTORS. By WILLIAM HAZLETT UPSON. Farrar & Rinehart. 1929. \$2.

These twelve amusing short narratives tell of the efforts—usually successful and always spectacular—of Alexander Botts to unload Earthworm Tractors on to an almost unwilling public. Botts meets with a good deal of what current business jargon aptly calls

(Continued on page 378)



#### GERMANY **THE WET FLANDERS PLAIN**

By HENRY WILLIAMSON

This contains none of the commonplace din of the average war book, but is on the contrary quietly and sensitively written by the man to whom Arnold Bennett, Walter de La Mare and John Galsworthy paid such high tribute. \$2.00.

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By JEAN DES VIGNES ROUGES

In some respects the author is more brutally frank than anyone who has yet written of the war. The central character is Bourru, a splendidly individualized 'Everyman' of the French Army. \$2.50

E. P. DUTTON & CO., INC.