

## Present-Day American Stories

by

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CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

## Foreign Literature

### Lamps in the Sanctuary

LAMPADE NEL SACRARIO. By CLARICE TARTUFARI. Foligno, Italy: Franco Campitelli. 1929.

Reviewed by FREDERICKA BLANKNER

"At last," Italy congratulates herself, "we have a true Italian colonial novel." The book is Clarice Tartufari's eagerly-awaited "Lampade nel Sacrario," the first novel by an Italian to concern itself directly with the emigrant and his life on foreign soil.

Thus in her latest work Tartufari continues from a new point of view in the purpose, defined in her earlier novels, of revealing the Italians to themselves. For though this time she has chosen a foreign background, Tunis, through contrast the French-African setting (a particularly delicate one for Italian emigration) induces a sentiment more poignantly Italian than could a native locale.

Interest for readers on this side of the Atlantic is heightened by the fact that one of the protagonists is an American girl. The United States is represented also by a visiting Italo-American.

For characteristic nobility of theme, for beauty and strength of treatment, for psychological expertness and range, "Lampade

nel Sacrario" is a worthy successor to "Fungia," "Il Miracolo," "Eterne Leggi," "Il Dio Nero," "Il Mare e la Vela," "La Nave degli Eroi,"—those earlier novels that both in Italy and through wide translation abroad have progressively confirmed the author in her position as a major and representative Italian literary artist.

"Lampade nel Sacrario" compels through its intense vitality. Whether evolved through successive chapters or sketched in a few lines, the people live. We feel their breath, see the beating of their pulses. Tartufari's realism is always balanced, synthetic,—physical-emotional-spiritual,—neglecting neither the animal nor the angel in man, neither the actual nor the dream. Cleanly and completely, unfailingly sincere, her eye looks at life like the eye of the sun.

The narrative comprehends the torments both of love and mortgages, the exigencies of both ambition and digestion. The author presents these folk of the *borghesia*,—the class she is fondest of treating,—with a faithfulness that is devotional. No happiness of theirs is too homely, no nuance of spirit too slight for her attention. With equal lack of hesitation she strips to barren nudity the occasional petty meannesses of certain of the characters,—their piteous weaknesses and piteous little desires. But wholly

unobsessed by the predilection for drabness that taints so many modern realists, Tartufari does not falter in her description of intrusive moments that are sublime, such as Mario's luminous realization of his youth. And always any baseness is saved from sordidness by the author's humor,—the ordinary from insignificance by her idealism.

In the lives of these Italians, drifted like leaves from the mother-branch to the edge of Africa, persisting in spite of all difficulties in making their little homes (the little of the emigrants is monumental because created from nothing) Tartufari reveals heroism. She finds for us the poetry in the patience of the Sicilian women, in their faith, in their uncomplaining endurance and life-long unselfishness, epic in its elemental simplicity like desert or wind or sea.

The novel has a satisfying compactness. All details of background, situation, and characterization contribute to its essential unity, enforcing boldly or subtly the emigrant's sense of detachment, of bewilderment, of emptiness, of easeless lonesomeness for a country which he can never wholly leave,—to which, though separated from it by only the narrowest part of the Mediterranean, he can never wholly return.

### A Progressive Gospel

A MON GRÉ. By RENÉ GLOTZ. Paris: Au sans-Pareil. 1929.

Reviewed by ALBERT SCHINZ

WILL this be the book of the Messiah of post-war literature at last,—the book containing the gospel so long expected to come out of the confusion of recent years? It might almost seem so, judging from the concert of praises heaped on that "premier livre,"—praises not merely by some one critic, or by some coterie forming a mutual admiration club, but by hosts of men of various inclinations and reputed connoisseurs (such as Duhamel, Benjamin Crémieux, Pierre Bost). The little volume enters its fifth edition soon after the first, and it is launched by one of the firms *à la mode*, that with the shockingly bazaar-like name, "Au sans-Pareil."

One thing nobody can deny, namely, that the book has all the characteristics one expects to find in progressive literature. In the first place, as far as composition is concerned, it is duly chaotic; not the slightest indication of any plan, or order in the arrangement of the material; you can begin with a chapter in the middle, or with the last, indeed, most of the time in the midst of a chapter, without diminishing your enjoyment in any appreciable fashion. Then, it answers no description of any literary genre; it is not a novel, it is not a play, it is not a collection of essays, it is not criticism, it is not a book of travel, but at the same time it is all of these in turn. There are fanciful stories of the "Arabian Nights" type, others realistic, others of the psychological type (if they are not triangular, they may be multi-angular); there are pages on style that are reminiscent of Buffon's famous "Discourse on Style," but young authors are not supposed to know of great men having written before them; there are pages on Venice, on music, on death; and on love—which decidedly even modern literature does not succeed in avoiding.

What we pretty well knew ever since Mozart, Musset, and indeed many others, was that Don Juan is the impersonation of profound and pure love. Plausibility is the *dernier souci* of Mr. Glotz, it goes without saying: "Je me penche sur mon Orient intérieur, et j'entends au fond de moi-même d'étranges appels de trompette." The style is for the most part lucid (and this is rather original), although at times Proustian, and containing poetic passages with duly interspersed crude expressions ("En somme . . . la lecture est une chaude-pisse intellectuelle"; a little poodle crosses the street, and *must* "lever la patte"). Above all things, the author insists that he is driving at nothing; the title is "A Mon Gré." But although the author never talks but of himself, his conscious self abdicates entirely to the hands of the unconscious. Far from making an effort to create something in art, he carefully sees that his senses be put to sleep ("endormir les sens. . . Oublier un peu. . .") before using his pen. What he offers? "Mon âme est une eau dormante sous laquelle tremble du rêve." That soul is "la haletante messagère d'un message inconnu, qu'elle-même ne déchiffre pas."

If you wonder why, unable to decipher his own message, he still wants to deliver it—which is all the more surprising as his "extases" exasperate him . . . "comme de contempler certains yeux de femme"—well, he admits that simply, he could not help it: "Mais il me fallait crier sur mon tréteau."

## Are "the VIRTUOUS" really HAPPY? ... as Socrates claimed

WAS Epicurus nearer the truth when he called it Pleasure? Or has the modern Philosopher—with his scientific approach to the study of personalities—at last captured the secret of this elusive Ideal, which often escapes the highly favored of the earth, and yet dwells with humble men?

Drawing on twenty years of rich experience in human behavior, WALTER B. PITKIN reaches, in this new book, some breathless conclusions concerning happiness. In outspoken, iconoclastic investigations into interesting lives of yesterday and today, he strips the veils from a series of characters, and analyzes in the light of modern behavioristic psychology the unbalance behind their desperate

joylessness. Their moments of ecstasy are also broken up into their component elements. Garibaldi, D'Annunzio, Horace Greeley, Cardinal Newman, William Jennings Bryan, Vincent Van Gogh, Katherine Mansfield, Woodrow Wilson—these contrasting lives and many lesser ones chosen as types of our present civilization, provide a basis of astounding case histories for the first chapter in this longest story that will ever be told—the story of

the nature, not of Man, but of *men*,—the intimate record of the ascent by *homo sapiens* to the realms of joy.

WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE, Editor of the *Emporia Gazette*, says: "I don't know when I have read a serious book that has given me so many delightful moments."

GAMALIEL BRADFORD says: "The *Psychology of Happiness* strikes me as being powerfully and logically conceived and vigorously written."



WALTER B. PITKIN,  
Professor of Journalism at Columbia University, and author of *The Twilight of the American Mind*, has devoted twenty years to the collection of personal case histories, forming an unique basis for a new science of personality. The *Psychology of Happiness* is the first published selection from this prodigious life-work.

## The PSYCHOLOGY OF HAPPINESS By WALTER B. PITKIN

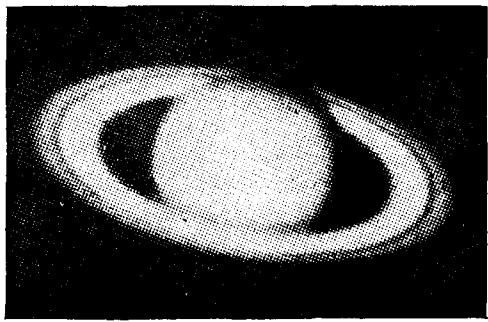
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# The Life Story of Our Amazing Universe



## THE UNIVERSE AROUND US

By Sir James Jeans

### • A Celestial Panorama •

The nearest star is 25,000,000,000,000 miles distant from the earth.

\* \* \*

The most distant nebulae which the human eye has so far seen in space is 140,000,000 light years from us. (Light travels at the rate of 186,000 miles per second.) For all but a 500th part of its long journey, the light by which we see this remotest of visible nebulae travelled toward an earth uninhabited by man.

\* \* \*

At a moderate computation, the total number of stars in the universe must be something like the total number of specks of dust in New York.

\* \* \*

Good news for celestial motorists: The stellar traffic is so little crowded that we would have to wait about a million million million years before a star ran into us.

\* \* \*

In the ordinary air which you are breathing each molecule collides with some other molecule about 3,000 million times every second, and travels an average distance of about 1/160,000 inches between successive collisions.

\* \* \*

When you heat a molecule it becomes very unhappy and dissatisfied with the place where it is, and goes away from there in a great hurry.

\* \* \*

The sun is losing weight at the rate of over 4 million tons a second, or about 250 million tons a minute—something like 650 times the rate at which water is streaming over Niagara.

\* \* \*

The earth solidified about 2,000 million years ago.

\* \* \*

A million million years from now mountains and seas will exist only as traditions handed down from a remote and almost incredible past.

\* \* \*

A setting for romance in 50,000,000,000 A. D.—Our moon is destined to contract its orbit until it is finally drawn too close to the earth and broken into fragments by gravitational pull. After this the earth will have no moon, but will be surrounded by rings like Saturn. (Illustration above.)

JULES VERNE'S fancy never invented anything more fascinating than the facts in this book. It opens up for you the vast mysteries of the universe and tells of the probings of science into the nature, origin, age and destined end of the world and all that lies about it.

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#### THE NATURE OF THE PHYSICAL WORLD

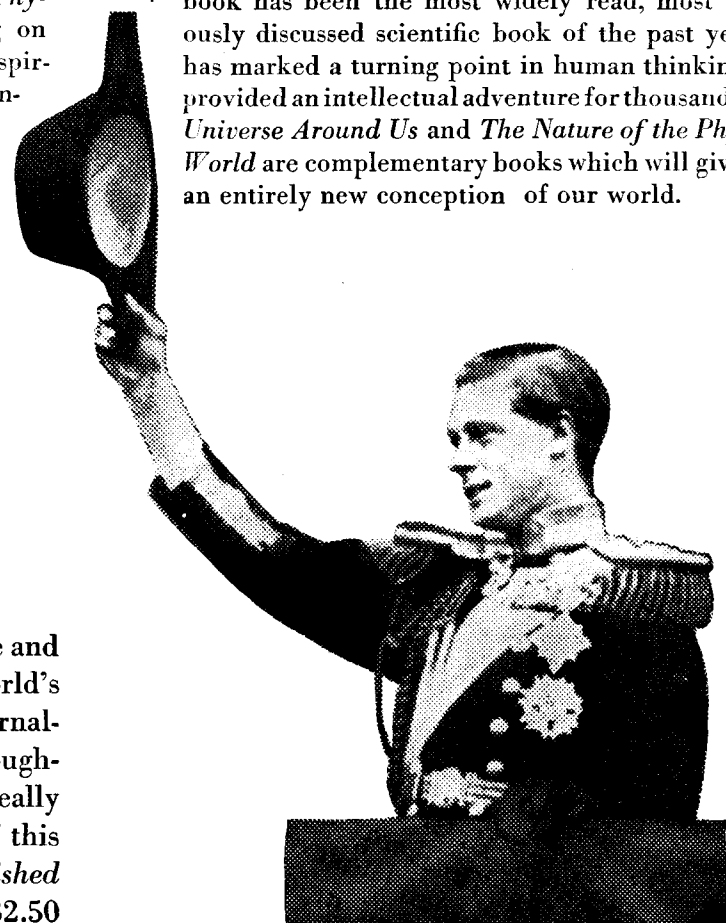
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Conducted by MARION PONSONBY

### The Gossip Shop

By RACHEL FIELD

NOW it's September the crickets are at it again. No, I do not mean *critics*, though of course they are too, I mean *crickets*. Already echoes of publishing activity even so far distant as Children's Book Week have come to us off here to the east of Mt. Desert, on our special perch along the shore of one of the smaller Cranberry Isles. Indeed the Island mailbag has brought us no less than four announcements, two juvenile department catalogues, and as many as three children's books, so in spite of September crickets and reddening apples and mountain-ash berries on the Ellsworth road, we must follow the wild-geese south,—at least we must set our minds in that direction.

From Miss Lucille Gulliver and Little, Brown & Company in Boston, comes the announcement that the prize-winner in the recent four thousand dollar competition for the best story based on the principles of Boy Scout Oath and Law, is now ready. It is called "Three Points of Honor," and is by Russell Gordan Carter, with pictures by Harrie Wood, price \$2. Cornelia Meigs, also one of the company's prize winners in the past, has another juvenile scheduled for publication September 21st,—"The Crooked Apple Tree." This time Miss Meigs has left her earlier field of historical romance to write of a group of present-day children on a hill above the Mississippi. There is also a new edition of an old favorite of ours, "The Boy Captive of Old Deerfield." This is a lively, well-written tale of the Indian raids in the Connecticut Valley, by an author living and loving the region of which she writes.

This seems to be a season for many song books for young musicians, which is unfortunate for us since we happen to be one of those people whose musical education was neglected. We can therefore make nothing of those little black dots on rail fences that we hear called notes and scales and clefs and so forth. They will always continue to be complete mysteries to us, so we can only say that "The Magic Music Shop" by Mary Graham Bonner, with music by Harry Meyer, pictures by Luxor Price, and published by the Macaulay Company, looks amusing, and is a very handsome affair with its fine orange and green covers. The idea seems to be to weave stories about the various instruments, piano, violin etc., with simple tunes thrown in. These, the publisher assures us on the inside jacket flap, Mr. Meyer has made easy enough for musical beginners. We trust this is true, but even so it leaves us far, far behind.

Another musical reproach to us is from E. P. Dutton & Company, "Fifteen Songs from 'Looking Out of Jimmie'." Not one of them can we even hum, but we gather, from those who can, that the music is better suited for parents' or teachers' playing than for children themselves. We are, however, already familiar with the verses by Helen Hartness Flanders. Many of these are spirited and gay, though others show a slight straining towards oversimplification. The Jimmie of the poems is the author's small son, and evidently intended by the publishers to be their American Christopher Robin. Speaking of that young gentleman, we see on another page of the Dutton Catalogue a songbook called "The Hums of Pooh." Perhaps we are beginning to feel less sorry about our musical education!

From Josiah Titzell, an erstwhile Island guest-of-the-month, we have news of Payson & Clarke's first venture in the juvenile book line. As has already been announced in these columns, this is Blaise Cendrars's "Little Black Stories for Little White Children," and the tales are written out of the same primitive background that made his "African Saga" so notable for older readers. Margery Williams Bianco has translated the text and there are to be numerous wood-cuts, and, we understand, full-page illustrations sent direct from France and tipped in. But we shall have to wait till the middle of next month to see.

Once last winter Helen Ferris kept us fascinated for hours describing a book she was working on, founded on letters she had received from girls all over the country telling her in confidence how they met and overcame their own special handicaps. These

answers have all been culled now and the result is a book that ought to do much to help other girls who are trying to find a way out of those difficult problems of the early teens that make so much trouble and go by so much more complicated names later on. Helen Ferris calls her book "This Happened to Me"; it is to be published by Dutton at \$2.

Just the other day we watched a group of girls and boys aged from thirteen to nine reading with chuckles and absorption the picturesque tale of "Abby in the Gobi," written and illustrated by Florence Choate and Elizabeth Curtis, and published by Robert M. McBride and Company at \$2. Abby is the last of the Dinosaurs, a more than difficult rôle for her to fill, but she certainly lived up to our expectations. Her efforts to care for the jungle-offspring make merry reading for young and old though the more humorous subtleties of the book will appeal specially to adults wearied with reading the usual type of "Animal Story" aloud. As for the pictures,—they are really splendid affairs, far and away the best work of these two artists.

And now we are going to cover the old Underwood to go cranberrying in our own particular jungle the other side of the Island.

### Reviews

TOMAHAWK RIGHTS. By HAL G. EVARTS. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1929. \$2.

Reviewed by FRANK G. APPLEGATE

THIS is a most entertaining story of the advancing American frontier at the closing of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, with the scenes laid in that great region which extends from the Ohio River on the east to the Mississippi on the west. It is well written in Mr. Everts's best manner and anyone starting to read it will be reluctant to lay it aside before he reaches the last line.

The leading character is Rodney Buckner, who, when a young boy, is captured by Indians and adopted by a Shawnee family and brought up as an Indian. Later he is ransomed by his uncle and taken back to Virginia where he becomes acquainted with the trappings of civilization. Afterwards he returns to the frontier where, with all the knowledge of the white man together with the cunning of the Indian, he becomes a super-frontiersman. There he becomes involved in Indian wars, individual battles with renegades and white outlaws, and conflicts with land-hungry pioneers who flocked in on the heels of the frontiersmen like locusts on an east wind. The love interest of the story is furnished by Buckner's falling in love with a white girl, but since "Tomahawk Rights" is an adventure story, the love element is made subordinate and is used only as a lure to draw the hero into further adventures.

The author gives us glimpses of all the famous frontier characters of that time—Daniel Boone, General George Rogers Clark, the Hern brothers and many others whose exploits had no chroniclers such as had those of the frontiersmen of the far west in later times.

### A Neat Pastime

CLIPPER SHIPS DONE IN CORK MODELS. By PETER ADAMS. Illustrated by MADELAINE KNOLL. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1929. \$1.25.

Reviewed by CAPTAIN DAVID BONE

LISTED as a book for children, ages eight to twelve years, this little book by the author of "Cork Ships and How to Make Them" has interest for even the most aged of grown-ups by reason of its informative and simple prose. Not that the children, as the parties principally aimed at, are deprived of one jot of their due in instruction as to the making of simple and beautiful toys, but Peter Adams hits two targets at one twang of his bow. Undoubtedly a seaman of ability, and possessing no casual knowledge of his subject, he includes in his text a reminiscence of the

(Continued on page 162)

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