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# BOOKS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

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The Dear, Dead Pastiche MY FLESH AND BLOOD. A Lyric Autobiography. By George Sylvester VIERECK. New York: Horace Liveright.

Reviewed by Louis Untermeyer

THIS, we are assured, is a specific the indiscre-The author not only admits the indiscretions, he parades them, sends them down the highway with banners, tigers (somewhat moth-eaten), and a (somewhat mechanical) calliope.

Besides his persuasive title-page there is a preluding "Caveat lector" (with an exclamation mark) and an eight-page "Confessional" before Mr. Viereck allows the breathless reader to share the not too private privacy of his poems. Thus the "Caveat lector," in part:

I admonish the reader to peruse my poems before, guided by my annotations, he ventures with me into the labyrinth of my soul. He who enters here does so at his peril. Let the reader beware!

There follows the "Confessional," in which Mr. Viereck seems to be the ghost of Oscar Wilde telling his troubles to Dr. Sigmund Freud. At the outset he confides:

Pausing to look over my accumulated verse, I am surprised at its freshness. In one of my prefaces, I said: "Seated by the roadside I shall wait for America to catch up."... I may linger with Apollo, or discuss with Æsculapius the mystery of the endocrine glands. But, prodded by my libido, I ever pursue in my zigzag course a goal for which only psycho-analysis can find a name, attempting to reconcile Lilith and Eve, Jesus and Jack the Ripper.

The poems follow-some three hundred overwrought pages of them-grouped under such fin de siècle captions as: "Roses of Priapus," "Eros Crucified," "Phallic Litany," "Spawn of Strange Nights," "Wanderers through All Time," "Ave Triumphatrix," "Rebel Harvest," "Daughters of Lilith and Eve." This array should be sufficient for anyone who craves-no, yearns is the proper Bunthornian verb-for the pale purple patchwork of the 1890's. But Mr. Viereck leaves no one in doubt. The "indiscreet annotations" are even more self-conscious - and self-satisfied-than the poems. The superfluous examples are too humorous to mention; one instance must serve for all. "Tubal," explains Mr. Viereck, fearing we may not have heard the name, "was the inventor of music. He must also have been the first great lover. Song among men, as in the animal kingdom, derives its impetus from the phallus."

The poems, themselves, are what one might expect. They celebrate "the splendor and the madness and the sin," the leading bisexual heroes from great Cæsar to Shakespeare (with a passing nod at poor Ludwig II), all the glamorous names that have ever been mishandled in thickly breathing verse, New York, Nineveh ("when 'Nineveh' first appeared it almost set the Hudson on fire"), and all the exploited standbys of the much mortified decadents-Pierrot in Golgatha, the hermaphroditic Sphinx, singing Vampires, Saint Vitus, "the belly and the phallus and the grave."

Part Two is wholly in prose. Its reticent pages contain sections on Mr. Viereck's translators, appreciations by his friends, prefaces to his various forgotten volumes, a list of poems originally written in German, a complete bibliography including the Little Boy Blue Books introducing (significantly enough) to Mr. Haldeman-Julius's millions the works of Oscar Wilde, Lord Alfred Douglas, C. A. Swinburne, and D. G. Rossetti. There is also, for good or bad measure, an Appendix devoted to "Mr. Viereck and His Critics."

It would be unfair to conclude without one excerpt in verse and one in prose. This stanza—a typical one—is the finale of "The Candle and the Flame":

Nay, sweet, smile not to know at last That thou and I, or knave, or fool Are but the involitient tool Of some world purpose vague and vast. No bar to passion's fury set, With monstrous poppies spice the wine: For only drunk are we divine, And only mad shall we forget!

Climactic enough, the mouth-filling verse deserves a climax in prose. The following quotation is one which Mr. Viereck is pleased to quote about himself: "When a reporter of the Philadelphia North American asked me if Emperor William I was my grandfather or my uncle, I replied, 'That is of no importance. It is far more important that I am the spiritual grandson of Edgar Allan Poe.'"

#### The Marvellous Boy

A LIFE OF THOMAS CHATTERTON. By E. H. W. MEYERSTEIN. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1930. \$7.50.

Reviewed by THOMAS OLLIVE MABBOTT

SOMETHING more than a century and a half ago a precocious young man of seventeen killed himself in a London garret. That act gave sentimentalists a hero, moralists a theme for sermons, and provoked a great scholarly controversy. And English poetry suffered the gravest of its four great losses by early death. For the young man was Thomas Chatterton, sometime Bristol apprentice, a dealer in dreams and documents of a medieval history and poetry chronicling worthies no less real for never having lived on land or sea. Walpole called him a forger, Jacob Bryant a great discoverer; Dr. Johnson, agreeing with Walpole to a degree, spoke of him as "the most remarkable young man that had come to his attention." John Keats called him the most English of the poets since Chaucer. One might add the most objective since Shakespeare, without daring to guess what he might have done had he lived. Keats had placed himself among the English poets at twenty-three; who but Milton at seven-

A vast amount has been printed about Chatterton. But no real survey of the field had been made for many years until the present large volume of Mr. Meyerstein, who is to be congratulated on a fine scholarly performance in the face of peculiar difficulties, of which only the special student may be fully conscious. Taking literally the Horatian precept, Mr. Meyerstein devoted nine years to his task. There are many editions of Chatterton's works, most of which add something new, though none since Southey's (1803) has attempted completeness. There are several biographies, and numberless articles in periodicals and minor pamphlets-a huge amount dealing with the Rowley controversy alone, though Skeat put the last touches on the proof of Chatterton's identity as the author of the socalled antique poems, which Tyrwhitt and the wiser eighteenth century critics perceived, and Chatterton's sister once admitted. Mr. Meyerstein handles the old material well-his treatment of slightly varying testimony is masterly-and his own wide reading in the MSS and magazines of the period has enabled him to make a good many discoveries himself.

The result is a remarkable book, though the prose is at times a little marred by the author's love of seventeenth century models. And in some places he addresses himself frankly to the But, with judicious skipping, it is a work every lover of English romantic poetry will want to read; and the specialist is often most grateful for a thorough discussion of minor points. Perhaps the cleverest thing is the recognition of the significance of Chatterton's letter in sesquipedalian words to William Smith. Formerly thought a mere jumble, it proves in plain language a half jocular avowal of the poet's despair. I think the reference to making smegma (or soap) a symbolic reference to his abortive plan to become a ship's surgeon, a kind of barber. The motive for Chatterton's suicide seems to have been a desperate habit of mind long persisted in. He told a friendly apothecary of a painful disease, but this may have been a mere excuse to buy poison. Some problems remain unsettled. The MS of "Ella" is unlocated, and the true title in doubt. And the final word on the authenticity of the "Last Verses" hesitatingly rejected by Mr. Meyerstein, has not been said.

It is a terrible indictment of the eighteenth century that it found no place open for the "marvellous boy," though that he was a difficult person Mr. Meyerstein admits. But it is an error of our criticism, I think, that with greater understanding of his personality, we have paid little attention of late years to his poems. To these Mr. Meyerstein devotes many sympathetic pages. His "modern" verse is vigorous enough, but it is only in the Rowley poems that we find his best work. They are amazing stuff, to be read not philologically, but as pure poetry. For while supplying notes on the meanings of the strange words he used, Chatterton expected the reader to find unintelligible passages, as in any really old poem. Yet his freedom of phrase allowed him to create a new melodic magic.

Virgynne and hallie Seyncte, who sitte yn

Or give the mittee will, or give the gode man power

is as untranslatable as Burns, and the late date of the poem from which it comes confounds those who think the poet had written himself out. He had a turn for drama, too. And where Macpherson (who must have had some influence on him) saw Ossian like a ghost in the mist, Chatterton, with the eyes of a child, saw Canynge and Rowley in the rich sunlight that streamed through the stained windows of St. Mary Redcliffe, long despoiled, but glowing again in his imagination. He restored, too, those forgotten or despised subtleties of verse form and cadence in which the cavaliers had revelled. The result is a foretaste of "Kubla Khan," but with a severity that makes "The Eve of St. Mark" unique even in Keats. His was "the hand dare seize the fire" with which Blake and Coleridge kindled English lyric poetry anew.

#### Italian Players

ITALIAN ACTORS OF THE RENAIS-SANCE. By Winifred Smith. New York: Coward-McCann, 1930. \$3.50.

PROFESSOR SMITH here pursues a bypath in a field which she has already made her own. She follows the fortunes of the professional troupes who acted the Commedia dell' Arte between 1570 and 1700. The book is timely, in view of the interest in the Italian comedies manifest today among both stage historians and play producers; it should attract the general reader whom the author addresses in the preface, for she translates and arranges into a vivid story a body of material not readily accessible, and known least of all, as Sheldon Cheney remarks, to English readers.

Here, portrayed often through their own letters, are players like the virtuous Isabella Andreini, "crowned in effigy between Tasso and Petrarch," and Drusiano Martinelli, husband of the notorious Angelica, who acted with his troupe in London in 1577-8. Ser Maphio's fraternal company—a foretaste of our Actors' Equity Associationagrees to observe "without hate or rancor, but with love" its laws, such as one providing a common sickness fund (to be safeguarded by three keys held by three different members).

The six chapters trace the efforts of these actors to organize and establish their companies and to place their careers on a par with poets and painters, their trials and triumphs under great patrons, often generous, sometimes wrangling among themselves for the honor of the actors' services, now and then capriciously deserting them; their feuds, as when Gasparo Inpriale plots to slash Angelica's face by order of the actress Margarita, which "saddens Angelica," and moves her husband Drusiano to implore the Duke in Mantua to steal Margarita's letters; their genuine contribution to dramatic history, shown in the chapter on Giambattista Andreini and his theatrical innovations; their heyday and decline.

The unpretentious, spirited narrative presenting these very human documents is made even more readable by the pleasant page, and by a number of appropriate illustra-

The death has occurred of Frank Frankfort Moore, the novelist and dramatist. He published over eighty novels, plays, and books of verse. He was in his seventy-sixth

#### Cattle Ranching

THE CATTLE KING: A Dramatized Biography. By Edward F. TREADWELL. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1931. \$3.

Reviewed by EDWIN L. SABIN

FEW motorists, even Californians, tooling along outside miles of tight fence displaying the legend "Miller & Lux Ranch," really appreciate the full signifi-cance of the title. The accompanying dictum, "No Hunting. Trespassers Will Be Prosecuted," however, is generally accepted

The far-flung system of Miller & Lux ranches has been more familiarly known to those ankle-tourists, the hoboes, as the "Dirty Plate Route." By Henry Miller's orders to all his foremen every hobo who applied was to be given one night's lodging in the barn and one meal, second table, off the plates of the ranch hands. The hoboes recognized noblesse oblige; the Miller & Lux ranch gates were not left open, the ranch women were not molested, the ranch stacks and barns were not burned-and Henry Miller deemed that he had saved on insurance premiums.

In 1847, Heinrich Alfred Kreiser, a German butcher-apprentice boy of nineteen, seeking "a country where I will have room to move and do something," and at the same time fleeing from militarism, landed in New York, steerage, with a bundle of clothes slung over his shoulder and five dollars in his pocket. When, as Henry Miller, he died in San Francisco in 1916 at the age of eighty-nine, his ranch acres and his cattle had reached the million figure in number; his Miller & Lux brands grazed, under fence throughout southern Oregon, northern Nevada, and the length of California; his properties of water rights, reservoirs, irrigating canals, abattoirs, and city real estate were a power on the Pacific slope; and his resources in money were incalculable save by himself.

A thrifty German immigrant boy, who commandeered Fortune. The Godsend of a non-transferable steamship ticket made out to a friend, Henry Miller, and purchased cut-rate, brought him from New York to San Francisco, in 1850, via the Panama Isthmus. Owing to a butcher-shop venture in Panama, while waiting for the California packet, and a spell of fever, he was down to six dollars. The California gold craze affected him not at all. This horde of people had to eat, and had to have meat. He dug up a job in a butcher shop and speedily branched out on his own, as butcher and cattle buyer, ranch buyer and cattle raiser.

He prospered. In 1857, Charles Lux, also a German-American, of San Francisco, became his partner. When in 1887 Lux died, the Lux heirs in Germany brought suit against Miller for an accounting and to establish claims. In this suit, involving large issues and lasting through more than a decade, a leading attorney for the plaintiffs was the "silver-tongued" Delphine M. Delmas who so brilliantly defended Harry

Henry Miller was not caught short. He never was. And eventually he acquired all the Lux interests. "He became in law, as he for a long time had been in fact, Miller & Lux."

His vast operations, his energy and his methods, directed always along the ramifications of what may be termed, by and large, "good business," with an eye to the main chance, are most humanly set forth in this story by Mr. Treadwell, a San Francisco attorney thoroughly acquainted with the theme. No matter, however small, was beneath the attention of Henry Miller, Did he not forward two cats to clean the mice out of a ranch granary—and, when the mice were reported as disposed of, remind the foreman that one cat was now sufficient; the other should be placed elsewhere! Nonetheless, in line of efficiency, he was as prompt to pay \$100,000 cash to increase his assets in live-stock holdings as he was to decrease his liabilities in cats.

The Newdigate Prize, which for the last four years has been won by women undergraduates, has this year been awarded to Michael Balkwill, of Oriel College, A woman was, however, next in order of merit. The subject was "Vanity Fair."

## Books of Special Interest

A Royalist's Journal

THE DIARY OF FREDERICK MACKENZIE, Giving a Daily Narrative of His Military Service as An Officer of the Royal Welch Fusileers during the Years 1775-1781 in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New York. Harvard University Press. 1930. 2 vols. \$10.

Reviewed by Allen French

THE historical student knows well the barrenness of the average soldier's diary, and how little it tells us except the weather and the barest outlines of the soldier's day. To be sure, out of the negative evidence of a group of such diaries, the late Samuel F. Batchelder was able to marshall one line of evidence to prove that Washington never took command of the continental army under the elm that so long bore his name. But army diaries are dull reading on the whole, and tell little either of events or states of mind. Only rarely does one appear that gives a close glimpse into great events, shows the politics of army life, and lets one watch the cumulation of a campaign to a crisis and its solution. Among these few outstanding diaries, that of Frederick Mackenzie may claim to take a place in the history of our Revolutionary War.

When Mackenzie came to America in 1773, he was a lieutenant of some years' standing in the Royal Welch Fusiliers, a title of the twenty-third regiment which he always writes out in full, as if he had no connection with the corps. Ordered to Boston in the autumn of 1774, in the excitement following the Powder Alarm, Mackenzie saw much that went on in the winter preceding the outbreak of war, and wrote one of the best accounts of Joseph Warren's famous oration in the Old South. When the expedition to Concord marched out, Mackenzie did not go; but as a member of the force which was sent to its relief, he took part in the retreat from Lexington. His cool and detailed narrative, the only part of the diary which was known to historians until lately, is the outstanding story from the British side. During the war the diarist rose to be aide-de-camp and deputy adjutant general, being evidently of the methodical turn of mind which would fit him for accurate work. He was not afraid of his pen, and thus the entries in his diary are often long, and are occasionally illuminated by diagrams and accompanied by returns otherwise hard to dig from the fragmentary War Office papers. In his old age, Mackenzie copied all his American diary into a score or more of volumes, of which unfortunately all have been lost but eight.

The entries for the Boston period were published in 1926 by the Harvard University Press ("A British Fusilier in Revolutionary Boston"); but the book is now out of print, and the whole diary has just been issued in two volumes. The original eight volumes form eight sections, and in spite of their lack of continuity give a valuable view of the campaigns of Boston, Long Island, and Rhode Island, and conditions in New York in 1776 and 1781. Mackenzie was for a time aide to General Francis Smith, whose dilatoriness in entering New York was exactly of a piece with his conduct of the expedition to Concord. One long entry describes the fire in New York, and a short one tells of the capture and execution of the spy "Nathaniel Hales," whose last words Mackenzie gives differently from the text-books of history. The inconclusive Rhode Island campaign is here given in much detail, and Barton's capture of Prescott is diagrammed and explained with great completeness. The longest consecutive part of the book covers the late period in New York, where Mackenzie, now high on the staff, knows all that is going on, and develops the capture of Cornwallis as seen from headquarters. The section begins with British hopefulness at the mutiny of the Pennsylvania continentals, goes on through Arnold's successful raids in Virginia, and Rawdon's and Cornwallis's repulses of Greene. Greene's dogged persistence, the gradual withdrawal of Cornwallis to Yorktown, the great part played by the fleets, and the mystification of Clinton as to Washington's real plans, develop clearly, until at last it is plain that Cornwallis is in such danger that only the fleet can save him, that the British delays are fatal, and that the

headquarters papers can give such a summary of fact, conjecture, and comment, as Mackenzie adds to the story of the Cornwallis campaign.

The great value of the diary lies in these pictures of British conditions. Appearing in these days when American historians and American readers are looking at the Revolution from the British angle, when Mr.

The great value of the diary lies in these pictures of British conditions. Appearing in these days when American historians and American readers are looking at the Revolution from the British angle, when Mr. Clements is buying his Gage and Germain and Clinton papers, when the manuscripts of the Royal Institution have come to America, the diary is a timely and lively addition to much dry fact. From it the historian can draw material for the neglected Rhode Island campaign, and he can find new reasons for British strategy. One can only regret that so many volumes of the diary have been lost.

French admiral is able to frustrate the half-

hearted Graves. Not even a close study of

#### S. Pepys, Esq.

PEPYS: HIS LIFE AND CHARACTER.

By John Drinkwater. New York:
Doubleday, Doran & Company. 1930. \$3.

Reviewed by Charles David Abbott
University of Colorado

THIS book effectively puts Mr. Drink-water among the Pepysians, and not by any means as a mere dabbler in the "engaging indelicacies" of the Diary, but as a true, an omnivorous Pepysian, who accepts that amazing record of ten years with joy and thanksgiving, and yet leaves no cranny unexplored that can yield information concerning the other sixty years. Of no man can we know more than of Pepys during that period from 1659 to 1669 when he so glibly immortalized himself in his private journal. Clear and explicit and copious as that record is, it leaves us convinced, against our knowledge of the facts, that it chronicles an entire life, and that in it we have seen the whole of the amiable man who adored music, fought petty battles with his wife, and wondered why a prety woman had such power over him. We forget that this man, whom we are likely to regard as a lovable trifler, had a distinguished career of more than thirty years after he gave up his daily practice of recording his actions creditable and discreditable. Mr. Drinkwater is at pains to remedy this injustice. He gives us, for the first time, a history of the complete Pepys, in whom the diarist and the important man of affairs are amalgamated. The Secretary for the Admiralty, the Master of Trinity House, and of the Clothworkers' Company, is here permitted to show himself, without being dwarfed by the bon-vivant and the Lothario.

Mr. Drinkwater deserves no slight praise for the skill with which he has handled his difficult subject. It would have been easy to draw upon the Diary for all sorts of episodes and opinions, to have served up anew the fellow who is already so familiar and so attractive. And probably no one would have quarrelled with such a repetition of well-known delights. But Mr. Drinkwater has carefully avoided any such réchauffage. Instead, without neglecting the Diary, he has used all the extensive and hitherto undigested researches of Dr. Tanner and Mr. Wheatley, and has thus shown that, thanks to the diligence of these gentlemen and others, we can now know very nearly as much about the later Pepys as we formerly knew about the Pepys of the first ten years of the Restoration. Letters, official documents, parish registers, all have surrendered their secrets, and in Mr. Drinkwater's deft hands they amplify our knowledge of the individual who has long been a kind of epitome of all humanity.

And what a Pepys it is that emerges from these pages—the same fellow, of who struts through the unmatched Diary, but with a new seriousness, a new importance, a new dignity. The old weaknesses are perfectly apparent, but they seem to receive less emphasis. The young man who rose rapidly in the world through the patronage of his Montagu kinsman had need of the questionable perquisites that found their way into the hands of the Clerk of the Acts, and we all remember what tricks were resorted to that the right hand might not know the acquisitiveness of the left; but the eminently respectable Secretary for the Admiralty, the complete English gentleman, could afford to disdain such favors, at least on occasion. Always he prided himself on his attachment to the arts, and in one he was something more than a connoisseur. To the collector in him the Library at Magdalene is a lasting memorial, as will soon be Professor Rollins's edition of the Pepysian ballads. If, in the later man, that eye for feminine charms was less active, it was perhaps because public affairs were too absorbing, or more probably because age will tell even in a Pepys.

Of his career as a civil servant too much good cannot be said. In that age of inattention to public business he was the model official. He took his job with a seriousness that cannot but command respect. At first he knew nothing about the Navy; when deprived of office by the fall of James, he was the most navally learned man in England; and in the meantime his country had profited enormously from his knowledge and his assiduity. This earnestness, this devotion to his work, is what we must understand in order to appreciate the Pepys of the Diary, and it is particularly on that that Mr. Drinkwater dwells. Pepys was not a man of great intellect, though he did argue and correspond with Sir Isaac Newton, but he knew his abilities for what they were, and he made the most of them. For this he deserves something more than the affectionate disrespect which has often been his reward, thanks to his own powers of selfportraiture. Whoever wants to know the whole Pepys cannot afford to neglect the new picture which Mr. Drinkwater has drawn.

#### Essays on Biology

THE NATURE OF LIVING MATTER.

By Lancelot Hogben, New York: Alfred Knopf. 1931. \$5.

Reviewed by G. E. HUTCHINSON
Yale University

Yale University T the present time we are being more Athan well supplied with scientific philosophies. Among these some few outstanding books will, without question, survive, growing to maturity through successive editions; we greatly hope that the book before one will be one to live. The author is a distinguished investigator in the field of comparative physiology and Professor of Social Biology in the University of London. The present volume shows him in both of these capacities and also as what is supposed to be rare among men of science, a lucid and frequently entertaining writer. The work is essentially a series of connected essays intended as a corrective to the unsatisfactory position accorded to biology in contemporary scientific philosophies.

While the physicists are able to define their external world with considerable exactitude, that of the biologist has been obscured by a rich growth of shrubbery planted and left to die by several generations of vitalistic philosophers. Professor Hogben is primarily a critic in his role as philosopher, and has cleared away this vitalistic undergrowth very thoroughly. Such a clearance gives us a vision of the field of biology, even in the far distance of social biology, as a part of the same landscape as that of the physical sciences. This landscape of communicable knowledge which can properly be made the subject of discourse and argument, Professor Hogben calls the public world and his standpoint the publicist standpoint. The private world is the world of the observer's own feelings and values, matters on which reasoning can carry no final conviction; "an expert social hostess recognizes this when she wisely refrains from asking Mr. A., who is interested in art, to meet Mr. B., who is interested in art."

The first part of the book is devoted to a study of the place of biology in the public world, that is to say, to a general discussion of the nature of living matter. "The significant issue is not the completeness of the mechanistic solution, but whether there exists any definable method of arriving at a more complete solution than the mechanistic outlook permits." This empirical attitude has some relation to that developed from a much more "privacist" viewpoint by Dr. J. Needham in his recent "Sceptical Biologist." Since a good deal of loose thinking has been imported into biological theory by ardent evolutionists who have failed to respect the ethical neutrality of their science, the second group of essays is devoted to a consideration of the methodology of evolutionists and the bearing of modern genetical theory on the problems of the origin of the species. This section is of considerable interest to biologists as being one of the few intelligent and outspoken expositions of a very fertile though provocative modern point of view. It is, however, so simply developed as to be easily grasped by non-biological readers.

We are finally given a third part on the relations of the public and private worlds in sociology and education. Every educationalist should read this third section, everyone interested in the place of science in modern thought, who, familiar with the names of Einstein and Millikan, has never heard of the equally significant names of Pavlov and T. H. Morgan, should buy the book and read the whole of it. The title of the work may be deceptive to those who look for a text-book on the physical chemistry of protoplasm.

Sometime this summer you'll want to read a witty, entertaining novel. Remember these two titles for yourself and for your friends.

### **WORLD CHAMPIONS**

#### by Paul Morand

Author of "Open All Night"

A tale of four Columbia University youths who feel the blood of conquerors in their veins. Under Mr. Morand's brilliant, epigrammatic pen, their careers spin out through twenty years following their graduation in a series of tragic and comic adventures. Shot through with the irony, wit, and keen observation of this famous Gallic raconteur, WORLD CHAMPIONS is a thoroughly different sort of edifying entertainment. Dorothy Canfield writes, "This is a fine, sound, well-balanced and interesting comment on some Americans by a Frenchman with a very good head on his shoulders."

## MISS MOLE

by E. H. Young

Author of "William"

The Vassar Bookshop nominated MISS MOLE for the Hall of Fame with the following reasons: "because we could not have weathered the winter without her (Bless her heart!); because she is a guaranteed antidote for depression and general-run-down condition; and finally because we believe she will take her place in history with Evelina and Emma." \$2.00

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