



A new edition of
a great historical novel

The Romance of Leonardo da Vinci

By DMITRI MEREJKOWSKI

The glamour, the intrigue, and the fascination of the Italian Renaissance have never been pictured so vividly as by Merejkowski in his famous novel of Leonardo da Vinci. Bernard Guernsey's translation is the first complete and unabridged version in America. Random House presents it in a handsome new edition—illustrated with many sketches by da Vinci and a reproduction in color of his Head of Christ. A delightful book to read and to treasure.

AN IDEAL EASTER GIFT \$5.00

★

THE ROCKWELL KENT

Moby Dick

Herman Melville's great whaling saga illustrated with over 200 drawings by Rockwell Kent. \$3.50

★

A NONESUCH PRESS EDITION

Don Quixote

The Motteux translation illustrated by E. McKnight Kauffer. Bound in natural morocco. Two volumes. \$42.00

★

AMERICAN FIRST EDITIONS

The Random House Prose Quartos

Six stories by

CONRAD AIKEN · SHERWOOD ANDERSON
STEPHEN VINCENT BENET · LOUIS BROMFIELD
THEODORE DREISER · CARL VAN VECHTEN

Each story bound in a separate folio, the six folios boxed in a special slip case, \$10.00 the set.

★

THE SELECTED ESSAYS OF

William Hazlitt

Edited by Geoffrey Keynes.

Uniform with the Nonesuch "Blake" and "Donne." \$3.50

★

Other Random House Books announced for 1931

THE TIME MACHINE by H. C. Wells

Designed by W. A. Duggins. 1200 copies for England and America. \$12.50

WUTHERING HEIGHTS by Emily Bronte

With 12 wood engravings by Clare Leighton. 400 copies signed by Miss Leighton. \$15

THE RED BADGE OF COURAGE by Stephen Crane
Printed by the Grabhorn Press, and decorated in color by Valenti Angelo.
1000 copies. \$15

GEORGE GERSHWIN

A collection of 16 songs by George Gershwin with illustrations in color by Ralph Barton. 300 copies \$25

★

To your bookseller—To Random House, 20 East 57th Street, New York City

Please send me the current RANDOM HOUSE list and place my name on your mailing list to receive future announcements of Random House books.

Name _____

Address _____

Points of View

Book Reviewing

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

The article by Mr. James Truslow Adams on book reviewing in America indicates one important evil but omits another probably of equal significance. Those of us who have resigned ourselves to the honorarium that is our meager pay for a review have still another limitation to combat: the scant space that even the most liberal of editors is willing to give us. How is the reviewer to write a review that will be critical, informative, and exact when he is allowed only 500 to 800 words for a book? Is it any wonder that, when one is confined to 600 words in which to review, say, the collected poems of Edith Sitwell, one must either lapse into general statements that indicate an attitude for or against the poet without attempting to substantiate the position by concrete references; or become crabbed in the attempt to be specific by quoting stray lines that one hopes will indicate the critic's reasons for his judgment? In the reviewing of fiction, criticism, or biography the difficulties are similar. One almost never has space concretely to develop one's critical statements. The result is that most reviews consist of a brief summary and a terse statement that, if one had time, one would object to such and such a point, but "despite these minor deficiencies, the book is, on the whole, worth reading." Reviews that do not do even that, however, are more common, and consist of meaningless, because unsupported, adjectives; for these we have an undignified but very expressive term: the vulgar apocopation of the word *crapulous*.

Author, public, and reviewer are all harmed by this space limitation. The author receives nothing except flattery or blame: the flattery he may absorb, but the blame he usually cannot understand because the reviewer has not been exact in his criticism. The public that reads reviews is compelled to accept the general criticism of the reviewer without knowing upon what standards of scholarship or sensitivity his judgment is founded. And since even reviewers have been known to disagree, that part of the public that reads more than one review is often nonplussed by contradictory statements from various critics. Had the reviewer, however, had the space to develop his criticism by furnishing evidence for his opinion, the public might itself evaluate the evidence. At present the public is denied the privilege of forming its own standards because it seldom sees any critical canon in operation. As for the reviewer, he crams, compresses, counts syllables, and longs for the days of the British quarterlies, when the reviewer could advance his judgment with all the necessary support by quotation or reference and depend upon his readers to decide, if they desired or were capable, whether his argument was valid.

Incidentally, too, and with more definite pertinence to Mr. Adams, were the reviewer allowed more space, he would also receive higher pay.

New York. MORRIS U. SCHAPPES.

[Longing for the days of the British quarterlies is to long for the days of fewer books! We agree that in many instances the long review is the only just one, and try to arrange for such reviews whenever possible. However, we are unhappily impressed by the number of 800 word reviews that say in that space what with more careful writing could have been readily packed into 300 words.—The Editors.]

"The Bar Sinister"

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

Mr. W. S. Hall in *Points of View* of January 24, 1931, in discussing the inexactness of the expression "the bar sinister" says he has a vague recollection of the use of that term as the title of a novel. Can I assist him by mentioning that some twenty-five years ago there appeared a delightful dog story by Richard Harding Davis under the title of "The Bar Sinister?"

Louisville, Ky. R. E. GRINSTEAD.

Anonymous Authors

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

Re. *Reluctant Reviewers* in issue of 10 inst. "Who hath not owned—the magic of a name?" Due to this books and reviews are too often judged by the name appended to them. Why not anonymous authors as well as reviewers?

San Diego, Calif. E. K. CORMACK.

Anonymous Review

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

At least one of your readers was somewhat depressed by the implications contained in your recent editorial inviting approval of a policy of publishing book reviews anonymously.

Your conviction—based presumably on actual difficulties encountered in making up the *Saturday Review*—that only under the cloak of anonymity will competent critics in general submit their honest, mature opinions about the new books, is a shocking indictment of present-day intellectual America. If your estimate of the situation is correct, it means that there is no place in this country for a journal of literary criticism worthy of the name.

In these times when almost anyone can get a book published on any imaginable subject, and can depend on getting a favorable review somewhere, your magazine has seemed to me to perform a peculiarly valuable public service. Whether a reader is seeking diversion, or information, or orientation among current trends in fields apart from his own special preoccupation, he turns gratefully to a journal in which the commentaries on notable new books are signed by men and women whose competence—and whose bias—such reader has independent means of judging.

It is only to people possessing an intelligent interest in books, and, at least potentially, a critical appreciation of what contemporary writers are doing and trying to do, that a magazine of the caliber of the *Saturday Review of Literature* can appeal. To such readers a sequence of signed reviews expressing divergent opinions on certain aspects of important books is far more illuminating and stimulating than any number of editorially indorsed pronouncements written by depersonalized critics. (One cannot imagine following with rapt attention a spirited debate between Anonymous and Anonymous.)

I write not as one of the Inner Circle. But it is my firm belief that the intelligent portion of the American public is prone to suspect the intellectual integrity of a writer who is unwilling to assume responsibility by publishing his signature or some recognizable pen name. I find it difficult to regard as a trustworthy guide or faithful servant of truth any reviewer who is willing to publish deprecatory comments on a book provided his identity is withheld and not otherwise: whether his "timidity" be justified on the ground of soft-heartedness, or of stage-fright—not to mention other possibilities.

Conceivably, if they would mediate over a few of George Santayana's sentences (*Sat. Rev. of Lit.*, Vol. VII, No. 26, p. 534, the second column) your able but retiring critics might gain heart. If those reviewers whom you have in mind cannot even then resolve to allow us the benefit of their valuable opinions in *propria persona*, may one not hope that others equally gifted will come forward in time to relieve you of any lingering temptation to change the character of your magazine?

MARY ADA UNDERHILL.
Washington, D. C.

Why Not "Space and Time?"

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

To Mr. Ficke's unforgettable sonnet, "Ab-solution," in your issue of December 20, the pagan heart of man would say a fervent amen. But why, in the sixth line ("No guilt of yours with time and space conspired"), did he not use the words "time" and "space" in reverse order?

New York. DE WITT C. WING.

"The Pot of Caviar"

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

In your issue of today I find a letter from Mrs. Kermit Roosevelt, asking for help in locating a story of the Boxer Rebellion, in which an old scientist poisons his white guests at a banquet rather than have them fall into the hands of the Boxers.

This story occurs in one of two books by Arthur Conan Doyle, both of which made a vivid impression on me when I first read them, but are a little mixed in my mind now. It occurs in "Round the Fire Stories,"* which was published by Doubleday in 1908, and is now out of print. The name of the particular story in question is, I think, "The Pot of Caviar."

New York City. HERBERT MCANENY

*This story is contained in Helen Ferris's anthology, "Adventure Waits."

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.

Belles Lettres

EIGHT VICTORIAN POETS. By F. L. Lucas. Cambridge University Press (Macmillan). \$1.80.
SELECTIONS FROM THE BRIEF MENTION OF BASIL LAMNEAU GILDERSLEEVE. Edited by Charles William Emil Miller. Johns Hopkins Press. \$4.50.
COLLECTED ESSAYS, PAPERS, ETC. OF ROBERT BRIDGES V. George Darley. Oxford University Press. \$1.

Biography

J. C. PENNY. As told to Robert W. Bruese. Harpers. \$3.
WOMEN HAVE BEEN KIND. By Lou Tellegen. Vanguard. \$3.
REBECCA NURSE. By Charles Sutherland Tapley. Jones. \$1.50.
WILLIAM HENRY WELCH AT EIGHTY. Edited by Victor O. Freeburg. New York: Milbank Memorial Fund.
A SOLDIER'S DIARY. By Captain Will Judy. Chicago: Judy Publishing Co. \$2.
COW COUNTRY. By Will James. Scribners. \$1.75.
COWBOY NORTH AND SOUTH. By Will James. Scribners. \$1.75.
THE DRIFTING COWBOY. By Will James. Scribners. \$1.75.
ALBERT SCHWEITZER: the Man and His Work. By John Dickinson Regeater. Abingdon. \$1.50.
PIERRE CHARLES ROY. By Elliot H. Polinger. New York: Institute of French Studies.
PETER CARTRIGHT: Pioneer. By Helen Hardie Grant. Abingdon. \$2.

Fiction

MARTIN MAKE-BELIEVE. By GILBERT FRANKAU. Harper. 1931. \$2.50.

Mr. Gilbert Frankau is known for novels of strong passions, reckless hunting, and a background of upper-class life in England. In this book the fences are as high as ever, the horses as good, and the people as worldly, but Mr. Frankau has to strain himself badly for circumstances to justify the strong passions. He opens with one dilemma involving moral distinctions without differences that are so dear to certain novelists. His hero, while an officer in the trenches, finds out that his wife has given herself to his colonel, the discovery being made by means of an entirely unnecessary compromising letter. The hero then takes a pistol and prepares to shoot his faithless commander, but at the instant that his finger is squeezing the trigger, their dug-out is caved in by a shell, and the colonel is killed. Thenceforth he is tortured by the question of whether he actually fired and killed the other, or whether he was prevented by the shell from being a murderer in the detail of actual fact. The author then sets further obstacles in the course of true love by making the hero's father squander his fortune on women, and the hero's son, while a boy at Eton (curiously disguised as "Downchester"), drown in trying to rescue a girl from the river. This last incident, incredible as it seems, makes a confirmed woman-hater of the hero, and provides another problem.

On this basis is reared a story as improbable as one would suppose. The solution to the first difficulty is provided by involving the hero, quite innocently, in a fraudulent company, and sending him to jail for six months. He there decides that since he did not deserve this sentence, he will set it off against the chance that he succeeded in his intended murder, and will write off his guilt. The background, in the English hunting country, is well done, but the essentials of the story need only to be stated baldly to appear ridiculously artificial.

THE RAKE AND THE HUSSY. By ROBERT W. CHAMBERS. Appleton. 1930.

Give a good cook the most unsubstantial and commonplace materials, plenty of sugar and applesauce, and he can make an excellent dessert. Chambers is a skilful writer, who appears to have set himself the task of writing a book calculated to delight the hearts of flappers and the flapper-minded, and to minister to the same appetites that indulge in Eskimo pies and nut sundaes.

That "The Rake and the Hussy" is extremely well-written will escape those who will enjoy it most. They will call it a "swell" book. The hero, an American in the England of 1812, must have been a great joy to the Englishmen, even those he shot in his very English duels. The heroine is all "slenderness," "half-opened lips," "immature" but "firm bosomed," and all that sort of thing, together with a combination of imbecile trustfulness, childlike morality, passionate depth, courage, and shrewdness in a tight place which should make her a

psychological problem of great importance. The reader can foresee everything that is going to happen and is never disappointed, though to the hero and heroine all is surprising. Throughout, the most naive reader can never be worried.

Really the worst feature of the book is that it is so well written.

THE FIGHTING LIVINGSTONS. By LEONARD H. NASON. Doubleday, Doran. 1931. \$2.

Mr. Nason's new war novel—it is a shade inferior to several of his earlier performances—recounts the adventures at home and in France of two soldier brothers, Rupert and John Livingston, sons of a Yankee fighting line, who, when their country enters the world conflict, are students at a Vermont military college. As the elder, Rupert, deems it his duty (at the college he is senior honor man and cadet major) to at once join the colors, and enrolls at Plattsburg, while John is required to bide at home to help their widowed mother in managing her horse-breeding farm. But John's martial spirit rebels, and before the draft selects him, he enlists as a private in the regular army, soon after being sent over seas with an outfit destined for immediate service at the front. Meantime, at Plattsburg, Rupert is commissioned an artillery lieutenant, but thereafter for many months he is transferred from one national army training base to another until, in the closing months of the war, he finally embarks for France. Promoted to a captaincy, his thirst for action still unsatisfied, assigned to duty as a Remount officer far from the battle lines, Rupert takes advantage of ten days leave to assume the identity of a missing private and worm his way unchallenged to the front. His exploits in the crucial last days of the war, when he gathers up a flock of casualties and forms them into a platoon, with himself the self-appointed commander, provide the best passages of the story, but these, alas, are deferred until near the end of the book, and much which precedes them is over-familiar, rather tame, and obvious war stuff.

ALL SMOKE. By FERDINAND MCFADYEN. Richard R. Smith. 1930.

Mr. McFadyen writes with a fine, honest spirit; he has observed human nature unsentimentally and from enough of a distance to gain sound perspective. His novel might have been easier to read if it had a less complicated plot and if he had been content with fewer characters. But even as it stands, the novel is superior to the general run of fiction. The scene, industrial Scotland, is always genuine; the commonplace people are drawn sharply and convincingly, yet not without sympathy. We have the feeling, from beginning to end, that this is real life as it is lived by many, and we are grateful for the truth that we sense.

To indicate the course of the plot is to give an unjust and an unfavorable notion of the novel. Primarily, it is the story of George Wood, who, within a few months, loses mother, father, stepfather, and sweetheart; the point being that he does not also lose his fundamental courage or desire for life. Yet the novel is not merely the chronicle of George's tragic losses; it is also, for example, the story of his mother, an oddly self-centered woman, who, in Mr. McFadyen's hands, becomes an unforgettable character. It is also the story of poor, blundering Tewkes, the stepfather, a most appealing, though certainly a worthless, fellow. So it goes in "All Smoke": an overloaded narrative, yet a notably honest and persuasive novel. Mr. McFadyen has his roots in rich soil, and he can write.

THE CAST-IRON DUKE. By STEPHEN MCKENNA. Dodd, Mead. 1931. \$2.50.

This is a readable but not memorable novel. The title figure, one of the last surviving exponents of the grand manner, is a nobleman who keeps up a state which in some of its customs is mid-Victorian, in some dates from the Regency, and in some is early medieval. The duke himself is between eighty and ninety, but from his habits of speech he might have been born in the same year as Palmerston or Lord John Russell. The duke's conception of the proper mode of life for a gentleman includes a prodigious amount of debauchery, in the manner of "Life in London" or other books of the dissipated eighteenth thirties, and this leads to the first opposition he has ever encountered in his life; his granddaughter-in-law objects to his influence over his little great-

grandsons, and insists upon educating them according to her own views. The plot is provided by the clash of wills between the old man and the young woman, aided by the tutor she has procured for the boys, to whom she also turns for consolation for the dissipation of her husband. It may be remarked in passing that in Mr. McKenna's last two novels he has given us settings of conspicuous gentility, and heroes who are either conspicuously not gentlemen, or, if they involve themselves in their difficulties innocently, are hopeless fools. In "The Redemption of Morley Darville" one was not

quite sure what Mr. McKenna himself thought of his hero, but in "The Cast-Iron Duke" he seems to approve entirely of the tutor.

The characters are, if rather unreal, at least good, thorough-going melodramatic puppets. The background, for which the author has amassed an extraordinary number of picturesque observances that are, or were, maintained by great English families, is genuinely interesting. The book is competently written, and will pass an evening more pleasantly than most.

(Continued on next page)

NEW AND NOTABLE SCRIBNER BOOKS

Light-Horse Harry Lee

by Thomas Boyd

author of "Mad Anthony Wayne," etc.

A new biography of one of the most brilliant figures of the American Revolution: the dashing cavalry leader who helped free the South of Tarleton's redcoats: author of "first in war, first in peace...": father of Robert E. Lee: and, at last, a broken and penniless exile. Mr. Boyd writes of Lee's military exploits in the vivid style that distinguished his "Through the Wheat." More than that, he presents a dramatic study of a checkered career, and a realistic picture of the times.

Illustrated. \$3.50

Atlantic Circle

Around the Ocean with the Winds and Tides

by Leonard Outhwaite

Adventures on sea and land fill the pages of this story of the 14,000-mile voyage of a small schooner. There are struggles with wild storms, hairbreadth escapes from shipwreck, glowing pictures of sunny seas, and interesting descriptions of ports and places in four continents, including a thrilling account of a volcanic eruption viewed from perilously close quarters. Besides its narrative appeal this book will be of special value to the yachtsman and small-boat navigator.

Profusely illustrated from photographs. \$3.50

Men of Conviction

by Henry Bradford Washburn

Dean of the Episcopal Theological School, Cambridge

Six famous figures of the past whose spiritual experiences will help men and women to meet the baffling problems of life to-day. Dean Washburn discusses the lives, times, and purposes of Athanasius, Benedict, Hildebrand, St. Francis, Ignatius Loyola, and Pius IX. The book is an inspiring portrayal of men whose spiritual experiences changed not only their lives, but their world.

\$2.50

The Grass Roof

by Younghill Kang



The life story of a young Korean, notable for its charming description of boyhood days in a lovely Korean valley, the tragic drama of the fall of the Hermit Kingdom and Japanese domination, and the stirring depiction of a young man's tussle with reality—a story overflowing with poetic beauty, humor, and convincingly real pictures of Oriental life.

\$3.00

AT YOUR BOOKSTORE

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS, NEW YORK

THE DOGS

"Since our last session, the work of fiction I have found most agreeable to my taste is 'THE DOGS' by Ivan Nazhivin. This Nazhivin has a cracker-jack story to tell and it is a story of Russian life on the great estates before the war, during the war, and during the bloody downfall of the Czaristic régime and the early days of the revolution."—Burton Rascoe in *The Book Review*.

"A story as virile as Jack London's and far more sophisticated. Reveals how the war was regarded by the common Russian people."—Scribners. \$2.50

By
IVAN
NAZHIVIN

LIPPINCOTT
Washington Square, Philadelphia

