

The Reader's Guide

(Continued from page 57)

detective of "J. J. Connington," declares in "Mystery at Lynden Sands" (Little, Brown), that "plaster of paris gives a rotten result if you try to take casts of sand-impressions with it. Therefore we turn to melted wax or tallow, and by dropping it on very carefully in a thin layer at first, we get something that will serve our purpose." Now that I call technique, and I trust that no crime-tracker from now on will leave home without a number of plumber's candles and a blow-lamp. This novel also explains why a woman's footprint looks smaller than her shoe. This is sad news for me; I had clung to the hope that the tracks by which I trace myself home along the shore did me more than justice. And I hope that the Sheriff's Office has noted the recent cartoon in which H. T. Webster's Timid Soul, having shoed the very cat off a newly waxed floor, permits the plumber to parade it in hobnailed boots. By-the-way, Battley's "Single Fingerprints," lately published by the Yale University Press, is being distributed by the Bureau of Social Hygiene.

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THE ADVERTISING RATES FOR THIS classified page are as follows For twenty or more consecutive insertions of any copy minimum twelve words, 7 cents a word for one insertion; for any less number of insertions 10 cents a word for one insertion. Copy may be changed every week. The forms close Friday morning, eight days before publication date. Address Department GH. The Saturday Review of Literature, 25 West 45th Street, New York City, telephone BR yant 9-0896.

Trade Winds

By P. G. QUERCUS

POOR Old Quercus is supposed to be on vacation. But the conscientious Mermaids in the office (who have had theirs) bundled up all the mail on his desk and forwarded it to him. It is hard for him to deal with it, as his hands and feet are badly sunburned. And his mind feels like R. R. Donnelly's description of the Transport Building now being erected for the Chicago Fair. One of Donnelly's admirable publicity folders (superb examples of graphic salesmanship) says of this building, "the dome encloses the largest unobstructed area ever enclosed beneath a roof." That is just what Old Quercus's dome is like at this moment.

We have spoken before of the unwarranted habit of writing to authors and publishers appealing for free and autographed copies of books. When this is done in behalf of a needy or deserving charity it may occasionally be justified; otherwise it is mere mendicancy. One of the latest offenders in this respect is the University of Florida which has been writing to authors asking for donated copies of their books. Is this not beneath the dignity of a university?

And what shall we say of the Waterman Autograph Contest which has been a constant source of bedevilment to hard-working writers in recent months?

Old Quercus looks forward with particular interest to two books by Rainer Maria Rilke (author of the strange *Journal of My Other Self*) to be published in October by W. W. Norton. They are *Stories of God* and *The Tale of the Love and Death of Count Christopher Rilke*. They have been greatly successful in Germany and are sure to attract the attention of *Saturday Review* readers here. Mrs. W. W. Norton has done the translations, and the publisher has also been lucky enough to secure for the format of the volumes the services of Werner Helmer, distinguished German book-artist, who designed some of the original Rilke editions for the Insel-Verlag.

Mr. R. J. Bucholz, printer, of Cleveland, whose hobby is calligraphy and the making of exquisite little books by hand in individual copies, was a welcome visitor. He was speaking of what printers call *The Golden Proportion*, the relation between margin-widths supposed to create the perfect page. There is a definite—though somewhat complicated—rule of thumb by which the artist-typothete reaches this desired norm. But who will teach the writer to attain Golden Proportion in his text?

Mr. Bucholz, who had driven from Cleveland to New York with his family for a few days' vacation, said that people seen on Gotham pavements looked rather "on edge." Faces look much calmer in the rural districts, he thought. He remembered particularly one elderly man whom he had seen in a general store in Canandaigua, N. Y. This fortunate person had nothing more on his mind than to wait for a hawk, flying high in soaring arcs, to come down low enough for his shotgun. But is it not a parable of the Unknown Citizen and that lofty American eagle Taxation?

A client returns from California with high praise of Bullock's Book Shop in Los Angeles. He says it truly lives up to the statement printed on the paperjackets of "Bullock's Book Club"—"intelligently selects and presents books by contemporary authors as well as those books which are the recurring delight of each new generation."

Mermaid B. E. offers some more memoranda on the lectures on Bookselling she attended at the Columbia Summer School:

"From what the novice may judge, launching a ship is mere child's play compared with the difficulties of launching a bookshop in an exceedingly indifferent world. The uninitiated might think that one rented a shop, stocked it with books, decorated the windows and then stood discreetly inside the door, looking bookish and cooperative, waiting for customers. But no; not at all. Every shelf must have a satisfactory reason for being placed just where it is. Every table must have books alluringly displayed—not too many of one title, just the psychological sufficiency. There must be free aisle space so that the customer's hesitant feet may not meet with opposition

and wander from their purpose. The bookseller must know his psychology so well that he can place his most seductive new books where the eye of the customer is sure to fall on them at once.

"I admit that I was a bit startled when I heard the direction 'Always stand between your customer and the door.' It seemed to me that these were stern measures indeed. I was stunned into rigid attention as I waited for the words, 'Place the right hand firmly in the back of your victim's collar and hold him there until he has ordered a book.' It seems, however, that the real reason for this regulation is so that the bookseller may be able to see who comes in the shop and not allow his fine edition collector to slink around in the background for half an hour, unnoticed.

"But even when you have collected a few faithful customers and you are practicing all of the best principles of salesmanship, your new bookshop is not yet out of the woods. You must read the papers carefully each morning, both news and society columns. In the news section you may find some headline information which will form the central idea for a good window display. In the society section, there is a gold mine awaiting you—club activities, people sailing for Europe, the announcements of school or college graduating classes, benefits and other charities, any one of which may offer an excellent opportunity for giving your debutante bookshop a gentle push into the limelight.

"Then there is store advertising in the local papers. This must be timed exactly right and carried on over a long period of time. It will eventually break down the resistance of your prospective clientele, provided your advertising appropriation (which should, we are told, be only .02% of estimated sales) hasn't succumbed first."

George Blake, well known Scottish journalist and novelist, formerly of Faber and Faber in London and now editor of the *Glasgow Evening News* (the famous paper with which the late Neil Munro was long associated) is the fortunate father of two delightful sons. These are Michael, aged 8, and Christopher, aged 6.

These good lads are following in the footsteps of their sire. When Mr. and Mrs. Blake visited New York a year or so ago, the boys remained in Britain, but evidently they heard about the trip. Christopher wrote a little story, *The Adventures of an Old Man and His Wife*. Thirty copies have been printed by the Porpoise Press, and I have Christopher's permission to reprint this chapter in which the Old Man and His Wife visit New York. I do so not just because I am fond of Christopher Blake, but because it is perhaps the best brief description of New York ever written by one who has never been here. And here also is Michael Blake's idea of what the city looks like.

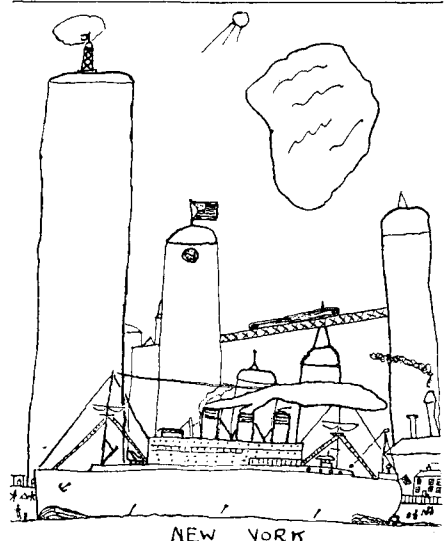
A VISIT TO AMERICA

By CHRISTOPHER BLAKE (aged 6)

But one day they went to America in the biggest ship in the world. And they saw the Empir State. And one day they went up to the top of the Woolworth Tower. And one day they (went) to the Museum and saw the bones of huge mammoths who lived long ago.

And one day they went to the circus and the clowns were very funny and there was a horse and a cow and a monkey.

And then they went home from America in the same ship as they came in.



G. Lowes Dickinson

We quote the following from the obituary of the late G. Lowes Dickinson in the *London Times*:

"Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson was born on August 6, 1862, the second son of Lowes Dickinson, a well-known portrait painter. He followed his elder brother, now Sir Arthur Lowes Dickinson, in 1876 to Charterhouse (Weekites), where he was junior and senior scholar. He was elected a classical scholar of King's College, Cambridge. He won the Chancellor's English medal with a poem on Savonarola, was elected a Fellow of King's in 1887, and was librarian from 1893 to 1896, when he was appointed to a lectureship in history.

"Dickinson devoted himself to his teaching, and still more to a kind of Socratic inquiry. He was always accessible to pupils and students, and lavished his delightful and stimulating talk on the humblest as well as the most brilliant of auditors. He did not, however, cling to his own particular fancies, but was always ready to discuss any subject, simple or abstruse, with any chance companion or acquaintance, and to do it with so subtle a sympathy and so self-effacing a modesty as to leave his interlocutor hardly aware of the benefits received, and only astonished at his own unexpected insight and eloquence. . . .

"Dickinson was a great don, and like all great dons he was a great idealist, but his ideals were never remote from life. Though he was passionately devoted to ideas for their own sake the chief preoccupations of his later years, like those of Plato, were essentially political. One of the earliest of his published works was a book on 'The Development of Parliament,' and his interest in political themes is illustrated by two other political treatises composed before the War—'Revolution and Reaction in Modern France,' and 'Justice and Liberty.' But it was the War which proved the turning point of his political thinking. To Dickinson it was an unspeakable calamity which filled his life with overwhelming grief; but it also inspired him with a mission to explain to the public the causes of the great world catastrophe, and to contribute, as only a man of letters can, to the foundation of a new international order which should make the recurrence of a great world war impossible."

PERSONALS

ADVERTISEMENTS will be accepted in this column for things wanted or unwanted; personal services to let or required; literary or publishing offers not easily classified elsewhere; miscellaneous items appealing to a select and intelligent clientele; exchange and barter of literary property or literary services; jobs wanted, houses or camps for rent, tutoring, travelling companions, ideas for sale; communications of a decorous nature; expressions of opinion (limited to fifty lines). Rates: 7 cents per word. Address Personal Dept. Saturday Review, 25 West 45th Street, New York City.

ATTENTION! Chance to earn big money! Thirty cents will be paid to the first person who announces the book and author responsible for "I felt that I could sniff forgeries as a dog follows a scent." Enough scent. George Frisbee.

THERE IS a young woman who delights in Thoreau, Bach, and Michelangelo, who prefers talking to contract bridge, golf, tennis, or eating, and who believes that New Englanders can be without complexes or inhibitions of a pernicious character. Will act as Goliath or Jonathan to David. Pamela, Sat. Review.

YOUNG MAN, lonely, seeks companionship of comely young woman. One who has not yet experienced cloying surfeit of pleasure, but should be able still to become vivacious and enthusiastic over things. Cognoscente, c/o Saturday Review of Literature.

HELP NEEDED to keep struggling artist afloat. Prefer New York. Three years Chicago Art Institute. One year American Academy. Free-lance experience. Designs, cartoons, illustrations, layouts. Zim, Saturday Review.

CAN ANYONE direct young woman toward New York employment? College graduate. Social service experience. Art school. Commercial dress designing. Literary interests. Impecunious, Saturday Review.

M. G. R., ABONNEE—Many thanks for toasts. A little dry, but irrigation available. Interest: 2nd hand bookstores, gooseberry jam, sand dunes, frying bacon in open air, Voltaire's fairy tales, bifocal view of existence. HULLO HANDSOME, c/o Saturday Review.

POOH WINNIE—Every time I pass De Camp Bus Terminal, 6th Ave. and 36, I think of you. Let's DeCamp! Bring warm under-vest. GOLDEN NORTH.

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and liked

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SEPT 24

The issue of the *Saturday Review* for September twenty-fourth will contain an exclusive story of first rate importance. Be sure not to miss it.

The nature of this feature must be withheld for the present, not to provoke our subscribers but to observe a release date which has been fixed by high authorities.

The Saturday Review
25 West 45th Street, New York, N. Y.

The PHOENIX NEST

MORITURI te salutamus. We are dead before we have come to life, for even as these words go into print the *Phœnician* is returned and our brief day over. Alas, alas, and we are fairly bursting with news about books and authors. Well, we'll waste no time on preambles lest we lose our single chance to disburden ourselves of some of it. . . .

We've discovered the joy in forgetting. Now a proper person, to whom geography is as fresh as it was in his schooldays, could never find the fascination that we did when we perused some months since a carbon copy of the manuscript of Hendrik Van Loon's "Political Geography," which Simon & Schuster are to bring out next month embellished with a lavish array of illustrations by the author. There's a book; the tropic of Capricorn and Greenwich Observatory time, and the gold fields of Africa and the fastnesses of the Ural—everything rolled into a panoramic presentation of man and his world. It's not that Mr. Van Loon is discovering fresh fields, or presenting new commentary, but that with great adroitness and with vivacity of manner he has written over for adults what all of us are supposed to know about the world we live in and what most of us have forgotten except in disjointed fragments. Perhaps his book is elementary—we've heard it said so—, but unfortunately for most of us—or fortunately for us if we pick up the "Political Geography"—the great number of us have forgotten so much of what is taken for granted in every educated person's knowledge that a book like Mr. Van Loon's is of fascinating interest. The Book-of-the-Month Club thinks so, too, for it's going to send it out in September. . . .

Speaking of the Book-of-the-Month Club reminds us that we went the other night to the dinner given by Mr. Richard Walsh of the John Day Company for Mrs. Pearl Buck, author of "The Good Earth," which is a past selection of the Book Club. It was a grand occasion, with a table of celebrities at which Kipling's "and never the twain shall meet" was completely disproved by the Chinese guests seated between the American, and at which publishing and literary New York proved either its devotion to labor, or the force of the depression, by the number of its representatives who were in town to appear. We found ourselves at table between Mr. John Macy, who smiled tolerantly over the aberrations of criticism, and Mr. Alfred Harcourt, who regaled us with incidents of publishing and entertaining general anecdotes. Mr. Harcourt wanted to know whether we had seen the biography of General Sherman by Lloyd Lewis, which he is to publish before long. We responded with enthusiasm, since we think it one of the most interesting books we've come across recently. Especially did the first part with its—at least to us—fresh and new material about the Middle West of Sherman's parents and Senator Ewing, who was to become his foster father and eventually father-in-law, hold our attention. But the entire book is full of vivid and significant matter, enlivened by occasional dramatic pages. . . .

There's another biography shortly to appear that we've been reading with ardent attention. That's Allan Nevins's "Grover Cleveland" which Dodd, Mead is to issue, and which we have no doubt will prove the authoritative work on its subject for many a year to come. Mr. Nevins has been indefatigable in his research, and has amassed an amount of information which illuminates not only the career of Cleveland but the period of his activities. He has the journalist's ease of expression and ability to make facts live and effective, and under his pen, Cleveland, that curious dual personality—half stalwart statesman, half roystering blade—stands out with heroic stature. . . .

We beg to make our annual acknowledgment to the *London Observer* and *John o' London's Weekly* for the nice, juicy morsels we cull from their columns and slide into our own throughout the year in the form of fillers, with just enough change to ease our conscience and never enough to fool their original editors, should they happen upon them, as to the source of their derivation. We've

gathered from our most recent perusal of the pages of these journals that J. B. Priestley's grand mystery story, "The Old Dark House" (who that read it will ever forget the storm with which it opens?), is to appear upon the screen, that Bernard Shaw is engaged upon a short new work which will probably be called "The Adventures of the Black Girl in Her Search for God," that Compton Mackenzie is writing a short biography of the Young Pretender, that a volume of the letters of Lytton Strachey will be prepared for publication before long, and that the best seller in fiction in England at present is Priestley's "Far Away," followed by Lady Eleanor Smith's "Ballerina," James Laver's "Nymph Errant," and Maurice Walsh's "Black Cock's Feather," all of which books have been brought out over here. Well, we just can't see "Nymph Errant." We read it in galley proof some time ago, but we don't think it's that that prejudiced us against it. It just seems to us that a succession of amorous adventures leading nowhere except to self-satisfaction, with nothing brilliant in the telling and only the titillation of the reader's latent love of sensationalism for object isn't worth while. . . .

In the interval of reading the new books we've been eating our way through the publishers' lists. Literally, not figuratively, we mean. That is to say, yesterday at lunch as we ate cold salmon and drank ourselves awake for the night with iced coffee, we imbibed information from Mr. W. W. Norton, gay with good humor and a vivid colored tie, as to his forthcoming list. It's a highly promising one which we've since been sampling, having spent some hours of a solitary Saturday afternoon in the office reading parts of Bertrand Russell's "Education and the New World" and Ortega y Gasset's "The Revolt of the Masses," both of them stimulating works. And we're keeping our own eye out for Pakington's "The Roving Eye" which Mr. Norton and George Stevens tell us is coming and is delightful.

Just the day before we ate through Mr. Norton's list we had lunched off Dutton's, having spent an interesting hour with Florence Bowers at the Algonquin allaying the pangs of physical hunger while we got up an appetite for the Dickens letters which she told us were coming. We wish they'd hurry along, for we want to read them, and those other Dickens letters which Putnam is going to publish and which Lynn Carrick dangled before us a week or two ago when over the lunch table we talked about books in the intervals of waxing enthusiastic over White Mountain climbing. . . .

Then there's the Morrow list which Frances Phillips served to us at the Algonquin and which contains among the volumes which she particularly mentioned two novels with arresting titles, "The Cat Who Saw God," by Anna Gordon Keown, and "The Bright Temptation," by Austin Clarke. We have them both in our possession in page proof at the moment, but as yet we've only had time to dip into the first—just far enough to see that we like the way it begins. . . .

Well, with all these lists, it's plain to see why we grow fat on literature. As it happens we don't drink books, but nevertheless we manage to squeeze in an occasional draught over a tomato juice cocktail or alongside a glass of beer. It was over the first at Thayer Hobson's the other night that we decided with Herschel Brickell (whose spirits were more vigorous than ours) that we like the new novel by Rosamund Lehmann which Holt is shortly to bring out, and that we were eagerly awaiting the book by Isabel Paterson which Morrow is to publish and which the Literary Guild has chosen. . . .

The bottom of our column is just below, and we haven't had a chance to speak of all sorts of things, of the Coward-McCann birthday party last week, of Marxist criticism, of the way the Putnam bookstore constantly takes on new attractions, of books like Leroy MacCleod's "Years of Peace" about to be released, and E. M. Delafield's "A Good Man's Love," published in England as "Thank God Fasting," of the new Faulkner novel, "Light in August," which Smith and Bob Haas have in proof, and of a host of other matters. But type is adamant; we must cease. . . .

Ave atque Vale.

THE SUBSTITUTE PHOENICIAN.

Christopher Morley's book about books is opening the eyes of hundreds of readers



WE announced *Ex Libris Carissimis* as a delightful little volume for all who seek in literature "the lighter air of the mountain peaks of human life." Since publication we have received most enthusiastic comment from critics . . . friends in the trade . . . booklovers. Four printings have been required already.

The *NEW YORK Times* calls it "Charming . . . characteristically whimsical . . . a book which will reawaken the reader's memories of old favorites and point his way to new discoveries."

An important dealer in rare books wrote us: "I consider it a most valuable contribution to books on bibliography. It is just the transitory step necessary to help the general reader and book buyer toward that most fascinating Bookcollecting Game."

The *CHICAGO Post*, however, reminds us, "This is not a treatise on book collecting, but a generous sharing of memories, an intimation of the in-

evitable interweaving of life and literature, and a pointing out of the little known trails in literature along which, he suggests, is rare delight."

"A beautifully manufactured volume," comments the *PHILADELPHIA Public Ledger*—"hidden within its pages are nuggets of book lore, strange incidents and anecdotes connected with publishing and authorship, shy confessions of personal experience and much sage wisdom."

The appendix contains a list of "Golden Florins"—85 books that have given the author the greatest pleasure in his years of wide reading. \$2.00

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