

Murder Will Out

(Continued from preceding page)

yarn again cross the trail of the lovely but amoral Jeanne de Marplay, who figured in "Dusty Death," an earlier Robbins opus. In the new book she is "Helen Williams," guest of an English county family which lives near a nobleman who is marked for death by the gang of which Miss Williams is a member, and which is headed by the mysterious Mr. Cross—"the man without a face." Mr. Cross and Helen Williams maneuver a murder very nicely, and do their best to remove Mr. Harrison from this mortal scene also, but he and Henry are too much for them.

H. Ashbrook (the name is Harriet and why she should let it go to H. I don't know) has written a new and absorbing adventure of Spike Tracy, the debonair female-proof young detective. This time he runs afoul of a pathological case and a criminal who takes advantage of it. Much action, good dialogue, air-tight construction, and a devilish twist at the very end. Good stuff.

The phlegmatic M. Maigret again comes to the fore in "The Cross Road Murders," by Georges Simenon (Covici-Friede, \$2). Few cross roads have seen more dirty work than this particular intersection of the Paris and Lyons highways, not many miles out of the former city. Murder, robbery, dope-smuggling, and other nefarious actions enliven the tale. The story is better than the detective.

Frank H. Shaw writes a seagoing murder story in "Atlantic Murder" (McBride, \$2). The narrator is the skipper of a trans-Atlantic liner on which occur a trio of mysterious killings. He is his own detective. The ocean atmosphere is the best part of the piece, which utilizes a lot of murder story "props" that are rather antiquated and, in poorer hands, would make the tale rather dull.

"The Mystery of Vauluse," by J. H. Wallis (Dutton, \$2), tells of two murders in a college for grown-ups—entrance age forty or over—that is an adjunct of Yale. It happens in the future, which covers a multitude of sins. The corpses are found stabbed to death, with no stabber around,

but a small puddle of water beside each cadaver. The explanation is ingenious—if a bit unbelievable—but the story is much too long drawn out. Anthony Wynne did much better with a variant of the same murder method two seasons back.

"The Circle of Death," by Charles J. Dutton (Dodd, Mead, \$2), records three crimes in one family—a father and two sons. The father and one son die from a slow poison, the other son is transfixed by an arrow. Hartley Manners, hero of other Dutton stories, helps his friend Police Chief Regan to find an extremely elusive and scientific criminal, whose poisoning method is most original, but who makes his appearance much too late in the story.

International intrigue in Central Asia, concluding with another World War that starts in one chapter and ends victoriously in the next—such is the theme of "Eye for an Eye," by Graham Seton (Farrar & Rinehart, \$2). Rating the author's works alphabetically starting with his first and best known book, "The W Plan," this one drops to "Z," pretty close to absolute Z.

Everywhere the fair Elsie, opera singer heroine of Virgil Markham's "Red Warning" (Farrar & Rinehart, \$2), turned she found a sinister, encarnadined reminder that her death was not far off. Baron Gluck, a very odd sort of detective, tried to help her. Jack Bishop, expatriate and Elsie's boyhood lover, becomes her protector and twice saves her from hanging. A crippled American millionaire—glad to say he is not the criminal—his strange half-mad mother, a suave secretary, and the "Fox"—who never sleeps—these fill out the picture. The story is a bit distorted, but it thrills to the last drop.

And here are two omnibuses—"The Father Brown Omnibus," by Gilbert K. Chesterton (Dodd, Mead, \$3), and three Complete Novels of Mystery ("The Lodger," "The Story of Ivy," and "What Really Happened"), by Mrs. Belloc-Lowndes (Longmans, Green, \$2.50). One need not say much about them. There are forty-two Father Brown stories in the Chesterton volume—every one worth reading, or reading again. The Belloc-Lowndes book contains the best of her work.

(From *The Malton Gazette*)

THATCHAM-BIGHAM, February 18.—Miss Dolly Thatcham, daughter of Mrs. Henriette (Scatter-brained Hettie) Thatcham, was reluctantly married today to the Hon. Owen Bigham, the most harmless dillard in the Diplomatic Service. The bride, wrapped in many yards of tulle and a faint odor of Jamaica rum, was swayed to the altar on the bony arm of her uncle, Canon Dakin. The groom wore a family member of the ubiquitous friends. The only face missing was that of Mr. Joseph Patton, an old "friend" of the bride, who is anticipating a dull summer. The Foreign Office, having reached the end of its endurance, is dispatching the groom to a South American post as a temporary relief measure.

● With delicious gaiety, Julia Strachey, niece of Lytton Strachey, points her subtle pen at one of those upper-middle-class weddings we've all attended. This brilliant novelette is receiving in America as enthusiastic a welcome as England accorded it. At all book stores \$1.50.

"... gorgeous skill, intensely human and completely real—uproarious good fun—a masterpiece of sharp burlesque."—CHRISTOPHER MORLEY in *The Book-of-the-Month-Club News*. "A book full of the funniness of painful situations... Astonishing literary skill... She has not only achieved a success but also shown that an important new writer has come amongst us."—DAVID GARNETT. "Impudently hard, brilliant."—J. B. PRIESTLEY in *The Evening Standard*.

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The conduct of the Personals column is confided to a Mermaid of proved discretion; copy should be received by Saturday noon for insertion in the following week's issue; remittance at 7c per word must accompany. An occasional freak is bound to creep in, but in general these Petites Annonces provide a valuable medium of exchange for both birthrights and pottages.

M. P. D. Personals Dept.,

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The Colophon

PART twelve of this quarterly journal—the final number of the third volume—has just appeared. In contents and typography it follows the general pattern set from the first; on the whole the typography is rather above the average of some of the previous issues, while the contents include several well-known names and interesting articles.

Mr. E. Douglas Branch tells the story of Mrs. Bloomer and her temperance magazine, *The Lily*—a now withered flower of the 'forties and 'fifties. That eminent Johnsonian, Mr. R. W. Chapman, contributes notes on "Johnsonian Bibliography." Mr. Alexander Gardiner tells the story of Oscar Wilde's visit to the United States, of the bunco game into which he was lured and out of which he emerged with a quickness of action which seems almost American. Mr. Frank Monaghan writes of Benjamin Harris, who published at Boston on September 25, 1690, the first newspaper in America—*Publick Occurrences*; appended is a check-list of Harris imprints and a reproduction of the newspaper. Mr. Seymour de Ricci contributes "Notes on the Bibliography of Encyclopedias." Probably the most important article in this number is Mr. Lawrence Wroth's "Juan Ortiz and the Beginnings of Wood Engraving in America," with reproductions; it is also the most attractively printed section of this issue (by the Southworth Press). Mrs. Buck gives the story of how she wrote "East Wind; West Wind," and Mr. Fairfax Downey writes of Rebecca Harding Davis. There is an intimate account of Rupert Brooke by Mr. R. H. Hathaway, with some good illustrations by Jack Beber. Mrs. Bertha Jean Cunningham gently revenges herself by writing the "Meditations of a Collector's Wife." A wood block in color, by Gustave Baumann, and the index to volume III complete the number.

Typographically there is more restraint—a more bookish look about this issue, which is welcome. Some of the previous issues have tended to confuse printing with "publicity" in the design of the printed page, and it is good to see a return to sanity. The twelve numbers of the *Colophon* comprise a remarkable variety of literary (and some not-so-literary) material together with typographical effects which give a pretty good view of today's printing in America. There is nothing quite like the *Colophon*, and it deserves support.

R.

Cooked Books

WHAT is one to do who owns a First Folio Shakespeare, or even a Fourth, and is stricken with measles or whooping cough? Happily, most collectors will have already hurdled the age barrier behind which such perils are customarily sequestered. But there are other communicable diseases which are no respecters of adulthood, and rare books are sometimes exposed to them, and what shall the collector do then, poor thing?

Well, there is one counsel of despair which he ought not to adopt, and that is to put the exposed books in an autoclave. The word has a hybrid theological-inquisitorial air about it, as if it were compounded of *auto da fé* and *conclave*, and this derivation, while etymologically defective, is at least sentimentally sound. For an autoclave is a kind of high-hat double boiler in which streptococci et id genus omne have the living daylight stewed out of them.

But what an autoclave can do to a book! Listen to Dr. H. E. Smiley of the staff of the Charles V. Chapin Hospital at Providence, whose paper "Books—Shall They Be Sterilized?" has just been reprinted from the January number of the *Rhode Island Medical Journal* in a pamphlet that is bound to produce bibliophilic shudders:

It is impractical to sterilize books in the autoclave. To demonstrate this fact a new book [What book, doctor?] was wrapped in several thicknesses of newspaper and sterilized in the autoclave at 15 pounds pressure for 15 minutes. On removal, the book was found to have its covers warped and its binding loosened; its whole appearance was considerably altered.

And it was probably screaming "Uncle!" all over the laboratory. Can you endure more of this sadistic chronicle? You have heard the worst—we are done forever with the autoclave:

Another experiment was tried. Sterile strips of filter paper were saturated with a live broth culture of (a) streptococcus hemolyticus, isolated from a case of scarlet fever and (b) staphylococcus albus, isolated from a boil. These strips were then placed (1) on the outside of a book and (2) between the leaves. The books were then subjected to the various treatments listed below, and at spaced intervals a small piece of each strip was cut off and cultured in broth.

The detailed results of the treatments to which Dr. Smiley refers are presented in a table which need not be reproduced here. Suffice it to say that the strip test was applied to books kept at various temperatures (one was even stowed in an ice-box) for from one to forty-one days, at the end of which time only one unregenerate cluster of staphylococci refused to be dispossessed. Dr. Smiley's general conclusions are:

1. Hemolytic streptococci, when present on the surface of a book, are no longer viable after three weeks exposure to room temperature, and at higher temperatures are no longer viable after shorter periods of time. Staphylococci are apparently a little more hardy, for they live after exposure to room temperature for a longer time than do the streptococci.

2. Hemolytic streptococci and also staphylococci, upon the leaves of a book, are no longer viable after four days, provided the temperature is 65° C.

3. A safe general rule appears to be that books, not grossly contaminated, if left untouched in a warm room for a few months, are not capable of transmitting infection.

4. Spore-bearing contaminants [anthrax, for example] are not included in this experiment.

These conclusions check with the practice of the Department of Health of New York City as quoted on this page some months ago from "The Care and Repair of Books," by Harry Miller Lydenberg and John Archer of the New York Public Library.

Dr. Smiley's findings are important and reassuring. It is good to know that the collector of Mrs. Gaskell can undergo a quarantinable illness and emerge from it with the conviction that his copy of her first novel has not been metamorphosed into "Typhoid Mary Barton."

J. T. W.

Tea with Miss Repplier

TO THINK OF TEA! By AGNES REPPLIER.
Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1932. \$2.50.

NO writer could better do a book on tea than Miss Repplier, and the volume before me will prove as pleasant and refreshing as any "dish of tea" ever brewed. The history, art, and practice of tea drinking, from The Coming of Tea to England to On the Drinking of Tea Today receives full and agreeable consideration. Anecdotes and quotations from the poets intersperse the narrative, which is discursive enough, as befits a tea-party. The book is sufficiently well printed, though a bit more imagination might have been spent on the decorations and the bindings.

R.

In his will the late George Moore approved that Charles Morgan, author of "The Fountain," should write his "Life." Among his papers are two unfinished manuscripts, a novel and an autobiographical work.

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News from the States

What the SATURDAY REVIEW most desires for this department is the pithy paragraph upon some significant matter, whether in relation to author's activities, bookselling activities and problems, the trend of reading in a particular territory, or allied matters. Booksellers' anecdotes will be welcomed. It is our aim to furnish a bird's-eye view of reading and writing America which will prove valuable both to our subscribers and to the book world at large. We hope that our subscribers will submit items from time to time.

IOWA

Mrs. L. Worthington Smith writes from the "Hawkeye" state:—

Ferner Nuhn and his wife, Ruth Suckow, have taken an apartment in Des Moines. Miss Suckow, author of many Iowa novels, was evasive when asked whether she was gathering material for a Des Moines background. She answered that she was writing as usual. Ferner Nuhn, also Iowa born, is one of the most discriminating reviewers who contribute to the *Des Moines Register Sunday Book Page*. He is the author of frequent magazine articles.

The Chicago Branch Alumni association of Iowa State college bestowed the merit award for 1932 upon Carrie Chapman Catt. Mrs. Catt was graduated from the college at Ames in 1880 and has been a national figure for many years. A recent poll in a national magazine named her as one of the ten greatest American women of all time. She is most widely known for her leadership in the equal suffrage movement but has recently gained international eminence through her work as chairman of the conference on the Cause and Cure of War.

James Depew Edmundson, scholar-capitalist of Des Moines, Iowa, is one rich man who need not worry over the difficulties attendant upon acquiring entrance to heaven.—The January issue of *The Palimpsest*, the magazine that is published monthly by the Iowa Historical Society for the purpose of the dissemination of Iowa History, is devoted to him, quite honor enough to satisfy the most ambitious subject.

Forrest Spaulding, Des Moines Librarian, estimates that his library patrons read more than a quarter of a million dollars worth of books in November. 1,077 new borrowers were added during the month. 76,175 subscribers took out 115,252 books in November, an increase of 8,013 over the same month last year.

Louie Hyman, bookstore proprietor, says that the depression has been a good thing for libraries and bookstores. "First people read to find out what its all about. Pretty soon they read for cheaper pleasure. Reading isn't as expensive as an evening at the movies. It is cheaper than gasoline for the family car. After a while people read because they like the quiet evening at home. Now many want better homes and a family. Good thing for the people."

KENTUCKY

A new and welcome correspondent, Frances Jewell McVey, sends us the following items from Lexington:—

William H. Townsend, Lexington lawyer, author of "Abraham Lincoln in His Wife's Home Town," "Lincoln the Litigant," and a collector of Lincolniana, is co-author with William E. Barton of "Abraham Lincoln, the President," which was issued February 1. Mr. Barton having died before his book was finished, Mr. Townsend was designated to complete the work.

In the contest sponsored by the University of Kentucky campus theatre, the prize play was written by Virginia Boyd and Parry Kraatz, both graduates of the University of Kentucky, and both skilled in acting and producing plays at the campus playhouse. "Alas! Poor Yorick," a satire on the campus theatre, will be produced in March. Other plays given this year on the University of Kentucky campus have included "Once in a Lifetime," "Journey's End," Sheridan's "The Critic," and "The Circle."

The University of Kentucky Library is rejoicing in a new building dedicated in October 1931, with Mr. John Finley of the *New York Times* as the principal speaker. Since 1917 when the University Library contained only 22,000 books, the library has grown until there are 130,000 books, exclusive of letters, pamphlets, and other such items. In the new fire-proof building many Kentuckians are finding a repository for their valuable letters, diaries, and documents. Copies of unique family papers of interest to historians are being preserved by means of the photostatic machine in the library.

J. T. Cotton Noe, Professor of History

of Education at the University of Kentucky, elected "poet laureate of Kentucky" by the Kentucky Legislature, has been giving a series of radio talks on poetry on Thursdays at 1:15 o'clock over the *Courier Journal* and *Louisville Times* (WHAS) remote control station at the University of Kentucky. Mr. Noe is a native of Springfield, Kentucky, which also produced Elizabeth Madox Roberts.

Grant Knight, Professor of English of the University of Kentucky, is working on a definitive biography of James Lane Allen. Allen lived near Lexington at "Scarlet Gate" and walked three miles to teach his classes at Transylvania College, the first college west of the Alleghenies, founded in the "County of Kentucky" in 1790 by an act of the Virginia Legislature. John Fox, Jr., was a student at Transylvania as was Jefferson Davis. Henry Clay was a member of the board of trustees of the institution.

Paul Morton, City Manager of Lexington, is a brother of David Morton, Professor of English at Amherst, poet and critic. Both were born in Louisville, Kentucky, home of Cale Young Rice, Alice Hegan Rice, George Madden Martin, Eleanor Mercein Kelly, to name perhaps the most renowned of the Louisville writers. Mr. Rice has completed a new book of poems which will appear in March.

OHIO

We extend all sympathy to one of our contributors, Katharine Garford Thomas, who recently lost her father, Arthur L. Garford. Mr. Garford was a distinguished citizen of Elyria, Ohio, serving his community in the fields of industry and politics, in local and national philanthropy, and in the realm of education.

Recently Mrs. Thomas had sent us the following notes:—

The Korner and Wood Company of Cleveland is one of those attractive book stores which one enjoys visiting whenever possible. The occasion of my recent errand there was to secure if possible the loan of some of the latest books as it is not easy to find them in the public libraries these days and few of the type that I wished could be found in the circulating libraries. Mr. Korner told me upon this occasion that various clubs in Cleveland were sponsoring some programs that were being given in their store and attracting many people. The lectures are upon literary subjects, sometimes book reviews, and are given by Cleveland lecturers, among them being Charles Stephens Brooks, author of a dozen volumes, speaking on *Reminiscences*, from "English Spring" his latest book, which contains seventy-five sketches by his wife, Mary Seymour Brooks. All of these lectures are free to the public.

Before leaving the Halle Book Shop in Cleveland a few days ago we were interested to learn about Miss Veronica Hutchinson's seventh book, "The Circus." Miss Hutchinson is a native of Cleveland. After attending the Carnegie Library School where she specialized in work for children she returned to Cleveland and became associated with the children's division of the Public Library where she remained until assuming charge of the Halle Book Shop in 1918. In her anthologies she has demonstrated her theory that successful children's books must be sorted to fit the special age for which they are intended. Since her connection with the Halle Book Shop Miss Hutchinson has initiated the guest-author plan whereby popular authors visit this shop to lecture, to meet their readers, and to autograph their books.

OKLAHOMA

The following comes from Elizabeth Williams Cosgrave:—

John Joseph Auslander, author of "Wah' Kon-Tah," is a member of the Osage tribe of Indians and with the exception of three years and a half in England where he was a student at Oxford University, a brief residence in Los Angeles and a period of service in aviation during the World War, has spent his life on the Osage Reservation near Pawhuska, Oklahoma. (Obviously this writer is not to be confused with the more renowned Joseph Auslander, the poet.—Ed.)

SOUTH CAROLINA

For the subjoined we are indebted to Hannah Hemphill Coleman:—

The quaint sea-coast towns of this State are attracting writers seeking rest and relaxation as well as inspirational background. Dr. Henry Bellaman, New York, author, musical critic, and reviewer started the fashion and does some of his best work at Pawley's Island. Welbourne Kelly of Montgomery, author of "Inchin' Along," and Henry Lesesne, novelist of Sumter, S. C., are spending the winter at the Weston's cottage at Pawley's, each having a book under construction.

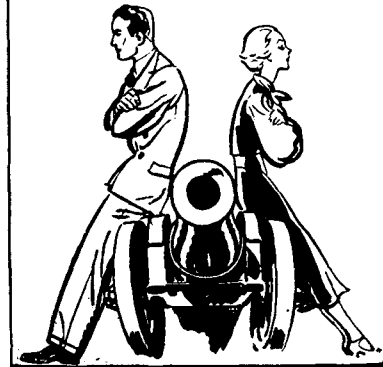
The *Charleston Record*, a down-state weekly, is being edited by Major Peter Gething. Major Gething is the son of a British General, and himself a veteran of Gallipoli, brings to an already rich local field additional interest in his articles and editorials. Reprints of stories and poems by himself appear in the literary sections of the paper.

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THE PHOENICIAN SAYS: "... about once a year we get sick unto death of the ... tributes poured out by ... publishers to celebrate the inestimably wonderful works ... they present to the public." In view of this berling outburst dare we suggest that you read (purchase?) THE CASE FOR TRAGEDY by Mark Harris, despite the fact that this critical essay has been favorably received by Allardyce Nicoll, Joseph Wood Krutch, the *Herald Tribune*, *Cincinnati Enquirer*, *Los Angeles Record*, and *The Christian Century*. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

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