

The Clearing House

Conducted by AMY LOVEMAN

Inquiries in regard to the choice of books should be addressed to MISS LOVEMAN, c/o *The Saturday Review*. A stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed for reply.

EPOCHS OF AMERICAN HISTORY

A. S. K. of New Orleans, La., is anxious to refresh his knowledge of America's past, and asks for suggestions for one volume studies of the various periods in our history.

If he wants to stick to one volume works A. S. K. will find just what he is looking for in the EPOCHS OF AMERICAN HISTORY (Longmans, Green) series, edited by Albert Bushnell Hart. This consists of four volumes, the first, THE COLONIES, by R. G. Thwaites, the second, THE FORMATION OF THE UNION, by Hart himself, the third, DIVISION AND REUNION, by Woodrow Wilson, revised by E. S. Corwin, and the fourth, EXPANSION AND REFORM, by J. S. Bassett. The bibliographies which these volumes contain will assist A. S. K. to pursue his studies further if he so desires. There is an excellent work on the settlement of America which he could read, THE COLONIZATION OF NORTH AMERICA (Macmillan) by Herbert E. Bolton and Thomas W. Marshall, which takes into its survey Mexico, Canada, and the West Indies, as well as the future United States and, if he's willing somewhat to broaden the scope of his investigations, he will find in Herbert L. Osgood's AMERICAN COLONIES IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY (Columbia University Press), the outstanding work in its field. Sir George Otto Trevelyan's history of the Revolution, (Longmans, Green, 3 vols.) covering the founding of the American republic, would no doubt delight A. S. K. as it has many another, for it is brilliantly written and full of fascinating material. George Fort Milton's THE EVE OF CONFLICT (Houghton Mifflin) which has just made its appearance, is an excellent work on Stephen A. Douglas and the events leading up to the Civil War, and for the immediately post Civil War period there is Claude G. Bowers's THE TRAGIC ERA. The various volumes of Mark Sullivan's OUR TIMES (Scribners) present a lively and many-sided picture of the epochs they cover. If before taking up individual periods A. S. K. feels that it would be well to get a bird's-eye view of general American developments he would find reading James Truslow Adams's THE EMERGENCE OF AMERICA (Little, Brown) both enlightening and entertaining. THE RISE OF AMERICAN CIVILIZATION (Macmillan, 2 vols.) by Charles and Mary Beard, and the several volumes of Rhodes's HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES (Macmillan) and Oberholtzer's HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES SINCE THE CIVIL WAR (Macmillan) are, of course, works of more extensive character than A. S. K. designates but he would find them excellent reading.

FASCISM AND DEMOCRACY

K. V. B. of Meriden, Conn., who is taking a course on the culture and civilization of the world today, has chosen as the subject for a paper she has to submit "Mussolini: His Challenge to Democracy," and wants to know where to find material on this theme.

First of all, if she wants to get a background for her study, she might read Mussolini's MY AUTOBIOGRAPHY (Scribners) to see what Il Duce himself has to say about his theories and ideals, and she might also try to get hold of the little pamphlet which the Italian Historical Society, 113 West 42nd Street, New York City, puts out for only five cents entitled MUSSOLINI TELLS WHY HE PREFERS FASCISM TO PARLIAMENTARIANISM. This is by Willis J. Abbot. Having thus secured the point of view of Italian fascism she can get that of an enemy to it in Francesco S. Nitti's

ESCAPE (Putnam), and an analysis of it in P. Einzig's ECONOMIC FOUNDATIONS OF FASCISM (Macmillan). Perhaps the most brilliant book she can find on the challenge which the fascist doctrine presents to democracy is John Strachey's THE MENACE OF FASCISM (Covici-Friede), a work which had an enthusiastic press when it appeared a year or two ago.

MILITARY LEADERS

H. T. of Pittsfield, N. H., wishes to make a study of the great soldiers and military leaders of history, and asks for books on them.

Works of the sort, in the form of individual biographies, are legion of course. If H. T. wants a list of such studies I'll be glad to draw one up; in the meanwhile I've selected titles of a few volumes which contain sketches of several personalities. First and foremost, of course, comes Plutarch's LIVES, which include portraits of some of the great military heroes of ancient Greece and Rome. These, to be sure, are important rather as character sketches than as elaborate history, but nevertheless they belong in any category such as H. T. desires. Omnibus volumes, which present soldiers of a later day, are L. H. Thornton's CAMPAIGNERS—GRAVE AND GAY (Macmillan), T. A. Dodge's GREAT CAPTAINS (Houghton Mifflin), F. J. Hudleston's WARRIORS IN UNDRESS (Little, Brown), R. M. Johnston's LEADING AMERICAN SOLDIERS (Holt), and B. H. Liddell Hart's studies of figures of the Great War, GREAT CAPTAINS UNVEILED (Little, Brown) and REPUTATIONS TEN YEARS AFTER (Little, Brown). The nature of the last-named volume can be judged from the titles of some of its essays: Joffre, the Modern Delphic Oracle; Eric von Falkenhayn, the Extravagance of Prudence; Marshall Gallieni, the Real Victor of the Marne; Ludendorff, the Robot Napoleon; Black Jack Pershing, the 100 per cent American. Captain Liddell Hart is by many accounted the best living military critic and his estimates of the leaders of the World War are of importance and interest.

THE FUTURE OF SCIENCE

M. P. C. of Sheffield, Ala., has had a paper assigned to her on the subject, What Surprises Are Ahead? and wants references to some books that will be helpful in preparing it. The surprises, or at least those her paper is to take cognizance of are to be confined to the field of science.

THE BOOK OF THE FUTURE (London), by Ritchie Calder, should be the very thing she wants. Mr. Calder addresses himself to the task of explaining how science is getting on, at what it is aiming, and what methods it is employing to attain its goal. He attempts to set forth a picture of society as it will be in the future when the machine and mechanical devices have multiplied, when all food will come from cans, when speed will be a sine qua non of travel, when the tides shall have been harnessed to men's purposes, etc. Those who have read Aldous Huxley's BRAVE NEW WORLD (Doubleday, Doran) will recall how he depicts the civilization of the future when humanity is to be conditioned even before birth to social theories. Though of course fiction and not science, this book should afford M. P. C. some points for her paper. More serious and scientific considerations, however, are to be had in Bertrand Russell's THE SCIENTIFIC OUTLOOK (Norton), and in the little volumes of the To-day and To-morrow series published by Dutton. Still another work is SCIENCE FOR A NEW WORLD (Harpers), edited by J. G. Crowther.

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Girls Will Be Girls

TESTIMONY to the fact that collectors do read is frequently provided in their discovery of "items" (hateful word, and this department is always open to candidates for a better) that do not appear superficially to have anything to do with the subjects in which they are interested. An absorber of any and all material concerned with the origin, development, and integration of the American language was recently skimming idly through a copy of "Titcomb's Letters to Young People, Single and Married" (New York, 1858). Timothy Titcomb was Josiah Gilbert Holland, newspaper and magazine editor and popular moralist, and his "Letters," immensely successful, were a sort of mid-century composite of Emily Post and Walter B. Pitkin. Our collector's eye roved apathetically across the chapter headings—"Getting the Right Start," "Female Society—the Woman for a Wife," "Social Duties and Privileges," "Dress—Its Proprieties and Abuses"—and sparkled with the zealot's flame when it came to "The Prudent and Proper Use of Language" in the section devoted to young women. He began to read, and came soon to a cluster of jewels that made the book essential to his collection. Timothy Titcomb, after inveighing against excess of wit and hyperbole, trained his fireworks on slang, offered instances from his own experience as one whose ears were perpetually open, and composed a paragraph of it himself by way of exploding a set piece of horrible examples.

If you wish to be an "A No. 1" woman, you have got to "toe the mark," and be less "hifalutin." "You may bet your head on that." You may sing "slightly" "like a martingale," you may "spin street yarns" at the rate of ten knots an hour, you may "talk like a book," you may dance as if you were on "a regular break-down," you may "turn up your nose at common folks," and play the piano "mighty fine," but "I-tell-you," you "can't come to tea." "You may be handsome, but you can't come in."

Query

Only one of the two-score proved or indicated forgeries dissected in John Carter's and Graham Pollard's epochal "Enquiry into the Nature of Certain Nineteenth Century Pamphlets" bears an American imprint. It has another claim to uniqueness in that it is also the only unit in the sinister assemblage to have been originally bound in cloth. It is Tennyson's "Lucretius," printed, ostensibly, at Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1868 "for private circulation." Messrs. Carter and Pollard unhesitatingly pronounce this production a fabrication. The details of the proof need not be recited here, but it is interesting to note that an additional bit of evidence (following definite establishment of their case) was provided in the fact that "the binding is lettered up the spine, which is the usual practice in this country [England]. In U. S. A. such lettering is almost invariably set running downwards."

One lives and learns, and your correspondent is broad enough to acknowledge that he never knew this before. Inquiry among collectors and booksellers, English and American, however, proved that he was almost alone in his ignorance, and investigation of such books in his own library as were thin enough to require sideways lettering proved the case empirically. There are, as Messrs. Carter and Pollard concede, occasional exceptions, but the general rule holds.

This department is now eager to learn how the division first occurred, who began it, how quickly it was accepted—to assemble, in fact, any available data bearing on the history of the practice.

The Other Side

Lloyd Emerson Siberell's bibliography of the first editions of John Cowper Powys, recently issued by the Ailanthus Press of Cincinnati in an edition of 350 copies (\$3.50), is indubitably a labor of love. It is a serviceably printed volume,

and, what is not too common in labors of love, the text is competently organized and presented.

Not every consultant of his manual will altogether approve of one of Mr. Siberell's innovations. His description of each unit begins with a summary of the binding, followed by a transcription of the title-page. His defense of this plan must inevitably be that the externals of a book greet the eye first, and ought, therefore, to be described first. But the title-page is to such a large degree the core, the essence, the very identity of the book as a physical entity that the conservative scheme of detailing it first in a bibliographical presentation is greatly to be preferred.

The shortcoming is of purely technical importance (though technicalities are hardly to be ignored in so exact a science as bibliography), and it is offset by one admirable bit of consistency in Mr. Siberell's management of his task. In collating, for example, Mr. Powys's "Samphire" (New York, 1922) he assigns it not "pp. 53" but "pp. 53 of text," which is accurate, and which will delight Elmer Adler of the Colophon, who has been preaching the gospel of foliated precision for years. A book of 53, or 3, or 659 pages is impossible. To every leaf, as to every question, there are two sides. But a book can, obviously, have 53 pages of text, which statement, equally obviously, postulates the existence of a page 54 without text. A book of 53 text pages should therefore be collated "pp. 1-53, text; p. (54) blank." Mr. Siberell calls page (54) "page following 53," an awkward bit of phrasing which can readily be forgiven him for his accuracy in the recital of his statistics.

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