

The PHOENIX NEST

By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

THE diary of our first man of letters, written by Washington Irving when he was only twenty years old, will be published this fall by the Oxford University Press. It is a record of a journey made more than a century and a quarter ago up the Hudson in a sailing vessel, through the wilderness between Albany and Oswegatchie, into Canada. Irving never forgot the experiences which he recounts in this diary: the killing of the deer in the Black River, the struggle of the wagons through the trails of the forest in the midst of a storm, and the encounter with a fugitive from the British garrison at Montreal. . . . The Maharajah of Pithapuram has been the first one to order the new edition of Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales," illustrated by Rockwell Kent, which Covici-Friede have announced for this autumn. He directed that the book be sent to his palace, "Gulaby," Adyar, Madras, India! . . . According to that famous ghost-story writer, Professor James, one of the best living writers of ghost-stories is Russell Wakefield, son of Bishop Wakefield and brother of Gilbert Wakefield, the playwright. He has already given us "They Return at Evening" and "Old Man's Beard," is a student of the occult, and now in September Doubleday, Doran will publish his "Hearken to the Evidence," an eerie psychological murder-story. . . . Frances Whiting has been appointed Associate Editor of *Cosmopolitan Magazine*, succeeding Kathryn Bourne, who was lately made Fiction Editor of *Harper's Bazaar*. Miss Whiting is a Vassar graduate, has been in newspaper work, on the staff of *Musical America*, and later connected with broadcasting. . . . Richard Aldington broke his knee-cap this summer in a motor accident in Austria. . . . The University of Pennsylvania Press recently completed arrangements to act as publishers for the American Philosophical Society, the oldest learned society in America, established by Benjamin Franklin. . . . Old Bill Woodward, who has debunked some of our national heroes, has been spending some time at Vichy, taking the waters, and also writing a book for Farrar & Rinehart. . . . Ruth Suckow is at the MacDowell Colony, Peterboro, New Hampshire; as are Carl Carmer, Frances Frost, Tess Slesinger, and various other writers. Farrar & Rinehart will publish Miss Suckow's new novel, "The Folks," on October first. . . . Max Miller, whose "I Cover the Waterfront" was a sensation, has just had a new book published by Dutton, "The Second House from the Corner." Harry Carr of the *Los Angeles Times* has remarked that Mr. Miller's "second house" is really the fourth. But "Authors," says he, "don't know much about arithmetic." Mr. Carr spent a week-end with Mr. Miller and said that during that time the author was a great deal more interested in "wading up and down moonlit beaches—making sudden nose dives after grunion that flash over the sand like silver streaks" than in his literary career. . . . Noel Pierce, who has had a play on Broadway with *Francine Larrimore* in it, has sold another for production this fall, and now has a Hollywood contract, has also disposed of her first short-story to the *Cosmopolitan*, and "Night Club Hostess" appears in the September issue. Her story was bought by the first magazine to which it was submitted. The heroine of the tale is a composite of *Sophie Tucker*, *Texas Guinan*, and *Mae West*. . . . Football lovers can get a complete pictorial and statistical review of the American game. It is edited by *Christy Walsh*, assisted by eighteen contributing editors some of whose names are famous for coaching. There are more than a thousand pictures in "Intercollegiate Football," which Doubleday, Doran have just published. There are also complete records of one hundred and twenty universities. It might be well to keep this book in mind for some son of the family around Christmas time! . . . Mrs. Vachel Lindsay calls my attention to a poem, "Thieves of Mercy," by E. Olan James, who teaches verse writing and the short story at Mills College, California. The poem was privately printed by Mills this last spring to honor the author's twentieth anniversary as a professor there. Mrs. Lindsay is in the process of acquiring a Ph.D. at Mills. *Edward Davison* lectured there this summer, as he did at other colleges in the West, on poetry. . . . *John Hervey* of Chicago has burst out to me in a letter concerning modern magazines, for

which he has very little use. There's a good deal to what he says. He also takes a crack at modern books. I am not prepared to agree with his whole-souled pessimism, but there's some excuse for it. . . . *Lilian C. B. McA. Mayer*, President of the Barnard Astronomical Society of Knoxville, Tennessee, sends me the following recollection of *Elinor Wylie*, when they once met in Washington.

Once we walked in Jackson Park,
Elinor and I;
White drifts from April boughs
And warm blue sky.

Let this be our theme, I said,—
Blossom-banked snows;
As one in a dream she turned—
"How cold the wind blows!"

White, unforgotten day,
Too rare to lose.
But I never wrote a thing. . . .
She wrote "Velvet Shoes."

Trade Winds

By P. E. G. QUERCUS

Split second exposure No. 4: Away from the rheumatic wheezes of the muffled trumpets, the gurgling deep-throated hi-di-hi's and ho-di-ho's—away from the coiling movements of the snake hip dances of Lenox Ave. a short, stocky Negro gentleman is pulling off a big time culture stunt in swinging The Bookshop of Augustus Granville Dill at 236 West 135th Street in the bull's-eye sector of Harlem. Cross the threshold of Augustus Granville Dill's tome parlor and you're in one of the niftiest retail book joints South of the Harlem River. Strictly a solo shop as far as Negro ownership is concerned in the vicinity, Mr. Dill has gathered about him a flock of Grade-A bookish Whites and Negroes whose exacting book demands are carefully serviced by this Negro Bookman. A small, but complete rental library department is run in connection with the bookshop and surprisingly few books by Negro authors are placed in this division. Mr. Dill explains why this is so: It is his belief that the better books written by members of his race should be bought and cherished; they should become part of one's library in every Negro home. Many white writers are popular with the reading choices of Mr. Dill's large Negro patronage. *Anthony Adverse* is going big. *Pearl Buck's Mother, Sons and The Good Earth* are much in demand. *Stribling* and *Sinclair Lewis* items are steady money-makers for the shop. However, the best sellers are among the Negro writers with *Langston Hughes's Ways of White Folks* heading the parade in the fiction column and *James Weldon Johnson's Making My Way* leading by plenty in the non-fiction brigade. For the records the Hughes book is the best selling title that Mr. Dill has had since the shop was born. *Booker T. Washington's Up From Slavery* is a slow but steady seller while *Uncle Tom's Cabin* crashes through about twice a year for a sale. *Dr. DuBois' Black Folks* is another of the steady pluggers. The bookshop of Augustus Dill is a small but complete one. A grand piano shares much of the floor space, for the gent is an accomplished piano-thumper and has appeared as accompanist with *Roland Hayes*. During the summer months Dill does the organ pumping at the Community Church. The walls are covered with a mass of photographs, paintings and diplomas. An A.B. and A.M. from Atlanta University and an A.B. from Harvard. Mr. Dill is a scholar of rare attainments. He has served as business manager of the *Crisis* for fifteen years and has contributed a load of stuff in the form of reviews to many periodicals. Mr. Dill's book buying act is a slow, deliberate one. If the book is by a Negro author it must be read first and approved before it is placed on sale. There is no question of censorship involved in this procedure, but it is this gentleman's sincere desire to bring to his people worthy works of literature. Thus the casual customer and the steady trade have no hesitancy in taking the recommendation of Mr. Dill. If you're Harlem bound some day and if you should hear the musical tones of Bach, Mozart or Beethoven smacking against your ears—give a look around—and see if it comes from the Bookshop of Augustus Granville Dill.

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