



ANNIE NELLES, BOOK AGENT

*Is part of the plan,
And Sin presupposes
Existence of Man.*

ANOTHER VERSION

The question curst
And sure to baffle
Is, which came first
In the endless raffle?
The cotton boll
Or the hungry weevil?
The human soul
Or the itch of Evil?

ROYAT (PUY-DE-DÔME)

It is characteristic of humanity
Observed the travel agent
That every summer come renewed in-
quiries
For the name of the town in France
Which is said to have a climate so bracing
That a season spent there caused a Bishop
To bite a Barmaid in the neck.

REQUISITION

I saw crates of bees
Unloaded from a train Upstate
To fertilize fruit orchards.
No one has enough bees in his own bonnet
To pollinate the flowers of his mind.

Import me a few hives of strange notions—
Mine are too sluggish.

I OWE grateful thanks to Charlotte Moody and Storrs Lee who were kind enough to hunt out the good old Lake Champlain steamboat *Vermont*—now tied up in Shelburne Bay—and send me her photo. I first travelled in her in 1902, and then many times until 1910. When I first knew her she seemed as big as the *Normandie*.

Annie the Agent

STR:—You asked me to do a note on that weird work *Annie Nelles, or the Life of a Book Agent*, an autobiography published by its author in Cincinnati, 1868. Why, I don't know—but suspect you only wanted an excuse to print Annie's portrait.

"I never nursed a dear gazelle," etc., is the sombre theme that pervades the book. In consonance with this is the sheer melo-

drama typical of the minor writing of the period. Misfortune follows misfortune until the authoress is forced to book canvassing as a means of livelihood.

Her initial effort was as agent for *Tried and True*, or *Love and Loyalty*. Later she took over, *Home Circle*, *Memorial to Mr. Lincoln*, *The Lost Cause* (Pollard), *The General History of Freemasonry in Europe* (Rebold), and *The History of Morgan's Cavalry*. With the exception of the first all were dehydrated pap to feed the youthful Middle West. It isn't strange that *Tried and True* was her best seller. Despite such a list book selling proved fairly lucrative. It wasn't unusual for her to make fifty dollars or more a week. But aside from the remuneration, and equally important, the work gave her pleasure. "Even if I were endowed by boundless wealth I wouldn't give up being a book agent." Her later life repudiated that statement, but the sentiment does her credit.

Her enterprising spirit was commendable and her psychology quite modern. She advertised her books in the local papers of small towns and then followed up by canvassing. Attempts at selling the book on Freemasonry were made only after she received membership lists and a recommendation from the head of the local organization. She learned as much as possible about each person whom she intended to visit and then attacked them at their weakest spot. She even noted the effects of weather on her client's moods. While these comments on bookselling are interesting, not to say amusing, the book is good fun chiefly because Annie takes herself too seriously. One of her objects in writing it, she explains, is "that the world may be informed, so far as it is in my power, of the real character of those who have so foully wronged and ill-treated me."

FRED HARTUNG.

New York City.

An Ironic Story of the Greed for Gold

THE TREASURE OF THE SIERRA MADRE. By B. Traven. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1935. \$2.50.

Reviewed by ROBERT B. MACDOUGALL

A YEAR ago, Mr. Traven's "The Death Ship" came as a belligerent and bitter document, violent against the forces that degrade men and drag them down to moral and economic depths. In his new book, "The Treasure of the Sierra Madre," Mr. Traven turns his hatred on the disintegrating power of the greed for gold, and on the misery that he believes the Roman Catholic organization has brought for centuries to Mexico. Once more he has written a burning narrative of human derelicts.

Howard, an experienced prospector, with Dodds and Curtin, two down and out Americans, left Tampico for the western mountains. They discovered a moderately plentiful deposit in a high valley, and in spite of bandits and of growing quarrels among themselves, they were able to start back to the nearest town. But the return journey, with its burden of gold, demanded more intelligence and grit than they possessed; disaster inevitably overtook them. The conclusion is double-edged irony.

The author writes from a fresh and original mind. His manner of approach tends to the oblique, giving at times a disconcerting distribution of emphasis, at times a looseness of construction. But in far greater measure, Mr. Traven has power, earnestness, and a mastery over significant and vivid violence. At first glance merely a rip-roaring adventure story, the novel digs down to uncover the wretchedness of greed and ignorance. This book and "The Death Ship" give evidence of a passionate and striking talent.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	Crime, Place, Sleuth	Summing Up	Verdict
THE INTRUSIVE TOURIST Mrs. Baillie Reynolds (Crime Club: \$2)	Overseas claimant to British castle and title clears up ancient murder—and almost kills himself doing it.	Haunted rooms, gliding beds, musty documents nicely mixed with lively chatter, thrills, and romance.	Capital
THE ALLEGED GREAT AUNT Henry Kitchell Webster (and others) (Bobbs Merrill: \$2.)	Ingratiously written tale of forgery, abduction, and the fortunes of a long lost child.	Besides pleasantly exciting plot there's a certain zest in guessing where Webster MS. ended and his successors began.	Enjoyable
THE LADDER OF DEATH Brian Flynn (Macrae Smith: \$2.)	Three or four British gels ostensibly motor crash victims found to be murdered. Anthony Bathurst traces killers.	Nice problem to start with, but story almost succumbs to overwriting and creaky mechanism.	Not so good

Lawrence of Arabia

(Continued from page 4)

cess turned on new material conditions which are even more marked in modern regular warfare. No civilized nation can maintain itself long without the railway, or maintain war without munitions. What the Arabs did yesterday the Air Force may do tomorrow, yet more swiftly. Moreover, this new exploitation of the changed "biological" conditions of war may be coupled with a more calculated exploitation of the psychological conditions—to which Lawrence also showed the way. To disarm is more potent than to kill. This fact, by bringing him into relation with the whole of the war, gives a new meaning to his exploits in Arabia and Syria. Military history cannot dismiss him as merely a successful leader of irregulars. He is seen to be more than a guerilla genius—rather he appears a strategist of genius who had the vision to anticipate the guerilla trend of the civilized warfare that arises from the growing dependence of nations on industrial resources.

Lawrence himself was fully aware of this application. It had no small influence on the part he played in securing the Air Force its opportunity in the Middle East after the war, and also on his action in joining it himself—the utilization of the air, as he remarked, was "the one big thing left for our generation to do." Other factors, however, prompted the second step. He had a sense of fulfilment, reinforced by a sense of futility. It may be near the truth to say that he enlisted in the Air Force for the same reason that thoughtful men in the Middle Ages entered a monastery. A further impulse was his own awareness that he had strained his balance—as much by the excitement generated in writing his great book, "The Seven Pillars of Wisdom," as by his war effort. The earlier years of humdrum service were years of restoration—it was a healthier man, physically and mentally, who took his discharge this last March; a man who looked much less than his forty-six years and radiated an air of contentment, whatever the unease that might lie deeper in one who saw all things too clearly. In the later years of his service his interest revived and his gifts were better utilized—although still insisting on the lowest rank, he gave invaluable aid in the development of high-speed motor-boats for the assistance of seaplanes, and of target-boats for bombing experiments.

On the road to Damascus his eyes had been opened to more than a new theory of war. He gained a fresh measure of spiritual release. He had been born more nearly free than most men, helped by the whim of nature which made him apparently devoid of normal appetites. The possessive instinct had never been strong in him, and he had sought to remove its tendrils whenever and wherever perceived. From the competitive instinct he had also

been free; throughout his life he strove only to reach a standard raised in his own mind, not to outrival other men. But ambition takes many forms; the lust of power is often strongest in those who are immune from lower cravings. Ambition, Lawrence certainly had—an ambition so immense that in youth he dreamt of attaining equal greatness in the sphere of action and in the sphere of thought.

Thus, when the war called him to action, he determined to prove his power by gaining the prizes to which men of action commonly aspired—rank and title. These desires he soon shed—as soon, indeed, as he found them within his reach. The ambition that survived was for real power, and its accompanying achievement. This in turn dropped away when Damascus was gained. For three days he ruled it; on the fourth he left—driven forth by his perception of the threat to his wisdom, and the consequent danger to freedom, his own and others'.

For in reflection he had imbibed the lesson of history—that most of mankind's troubles are man-made, and arise from the compound effect of decisions taken without knowledge, ambitions uncontrolled by wisdom, and judgments that lack understanding. Their ceaseless repetition is the grimmest jest that providence plays upon the human race. Lawrence's sense of humor appreciated the jest to the full; his wisdom deterred him from contributing to its furtherance. He came to distrust power, although he did not despise influence—the unseen current that works through the mind. His understanding of other men was greater than any I have known. Himself he did not know—seeing himself from too many angles. This helps to explain the abstentions and superficial contradictions which, accentuated by an impish sense of humor, were often baffling and provoking, even to friends. But the deeper one penetrated beneath the surface, the stronger grew the impression of his essential consistency and sanity.

In his freedom from possessiveness, from competitiveness, and, finally, from ambition, he was an incarnate message of the wisdom which approaches the divine. That message cannot die. For this, his greatest potential influence, even his passing may have been well-timed. If he had lived to re-emerge in some hour of crisis as a ruler of men—for which he was fitted not least by his unwillingness to take the sceptre—anything he could have done would have been small compared with what his memory may do. He has gone, but has left behind a dynamic legend of incalculable inspiration. No man can ever approach the power of a legend. And this one, having a more substantial basis of truth than any perhaps in recent ages, has the greater promise.

Liddell Hart, whose book "Colonel Lawrence, the Man behind the Legend" appeared a year ago, recently became military critic of the London Times.

Who wrote it—a demure Victorian or a witty modern?

The Bazalgettes

Or Folly and Farewell

The book that has all England guessing. A novel of loves, woes, wicked fathers, brutal husbands, handsome suitors—thoroughly modern in plot, purely Victorian in handling, brilliant in effect. A volume reminiscent of the sheer enjoyment found in "The Diary of a Young Lady of Fashion." \$2.50

No Traveller Returns

By

JOSEPH AUSLANDER

The new volume of poetry by the author of "Letters To Women", "Sunrise Trumpets", etc. "I admire Mr. Auslander's work very much indeed. His work is head and shoulders above the rank and file of those writing verse in this country. He has preserved both honesty of intention and vigorous independence as a craftsman."—William Rose Benét. \$2.50

HARPER & BROTHERS New York

R

Christopher Morley's



Vacation - Time Prescription

"A hammock or deck chair in the shade

"Tobacco or iced tea or both

"A copy of

THE ELIGIBLE BACHELOR

"What quiet, agreeable, demurely humorous writing it is!"

—Christopher Morley

Thus prescribes Dr. Morley in *The Book-of-the-Month Club News*. Ask at any bookstore for THE ELIGIBLE BACHELOR, Humphrey Pakington's new gloom-chaser.

(\$2 at all bookstores. NORTON)

Reinforcements for Sales Resistance

COUNTERFEIT. By Arthur Kallet. New York: The Vanguard Press. 1935. \$1.50.

LET'S GET WHAT WE WANT! By Walter B. Pitkin. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1935. \$2.

HOW TO SPEND MONEY. By Ruth Brindze. New York: The Vanguard Press. 1935. \$2.

Reviewed by T. SWANN HARDING

FIVE or six years ago the publication of two books—"Your Money's Worth," by Stuart Chase and F. J. Schlink, and "Fads, Frauds, and Physicians," by the present writer—ushered in an avalanche of advertising exposés. The two books mentioned were quite accurate and they "named names" of well known products. Many of the later books, especially the first wild, hysterical preachments from Consumers' Research, were inaccurate, distorted, and sensational. Yet the books have done much to stiffen intelligent sales resistance on the part of that amorphous body called consumers.

Members of Consumers' Research continually publish as their own private works books made possible only by the existence of the factual material accumulated by that organization and paid for by fees from its trusting members. Arthur Kallet's "Counterfeit" is another such work, and it stands in the old exposé tradition. But the job is done well, and the illustrations make the book as attractive as commercial advertisements themselves are. The general argument is that producers in a profit economy exact too great a monetary tribute for the cosmetics, textiles, equipment, furniture, foods, and drugs provided the public.

Hokum is made dramatic by the use of arresting pictures. Kallet sees no hope save in the fundamental, revolutionary change in our economic system. He deviates into a number of sacred inaccuracies, long sanctified by Consumers' Research beliefs, such as the poisonous character of a toothpaste containing potassium chlorate,—on the theory that children might eat it. A child might also eat Kallet's book, yet, like the toothpaste, it also bears no warning against such perverted appetite that would surely prove disastrous.

The old misstatement is repeated that the Food and Drug Administration prosecutes only unimportant firms, evidently a deliberate misstatement because, by his own confession, author Kallet reads the Administration's *Notices of Judgment* regularly, and these prove the contrary. Senator Copeland is slandered, and the new Food and Drugs Act is given a distorted interpretation and an injection of irony. But on the whole the book is quite accurate, though it would leave your average reader merely asking: "So what?"

In his "Let's Get What We Want!" Walter B. Pitkin endeavors to answer that question. Pitkin takes the position that the American consumer would not be sold hokum if he were not so stupid as to like it. He therefore believes that no amount of Government regulation will end this preying upon consumers (we are all of us

consumers, remember), and, instead, he suggests that purchasers boldly unite to inform themselves even if they have to pay Secret Shoppers to get and publish the facts about products on the market.

Pitkin divides his subject into four parts: Clothing; Foods and Drugs; Medical Attention; Housing. He first exposes the shoddy and the waste in each of these fields in his Book II (entitled "The Order of Evils in the Consumer Goods Industries"), and then, in Book III, he demonstrates "How to Get What You Want" in each field. He winds up by reminding the consumer that it is now his move to act intelligently for his own protection.

In general, Pitkin envisages a continuance of the capitalistic system and tries to demonstrate how ordinary people can manage to live under it without being defrauded if they but exercise their intelli-



WALTER B. PITKIN

gence. His book contains a vast deal of useful, factual information, and the final suggestions indicate some keen thought.

In her "How to Spend Money" Ruth Brindze treats the same subject as Pitkin, though she cannot be said to cover the same ground. She devotes little or no space to examinations of the capitalistic system or to exposés of fraud *per se*. She considers these jobs finished by others. As Chairman of the Consumers' Council of Westchester County, N. Y., she has apparently had an opportunity to study consumer problems over a very wide field.

Household supplies, foods, drugs, bathroom supplies, men's and women's clothing, bed and table linen, women's handbags, traveling bags, shows, bedding, china ware, and canned goods are all covered—only alcoholic beverages are strangely omitted! Miss Brindze is unprejudiced, accurate, clear, and intelligently informative. Her book would be a liberal education in consumption to many housewives. It is limited only by the paucity of knowledge on the subject and by the fact that the multiplicity of technical detail to be remembered would, in many cases, defy the purchaser's memory in a critical attack of buying fever and leave her floundering.

However, each one of these books is a useful and effective contribution to consumer education in its own way.

Back of the Lines

A REBEL WAR CLERK'S DIARY. By J. B. Jones. Edited by Howard Swiggett. New York: Old Hickory Bookshop. 1935. 2 vols. \$7.50.

Reviewed by STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT

THIS work has been, since its first publication, one of the essential, if minor, source-books, for all those interested in the Southern side of the Civil War. Essential, because it is a literal, day-by-day account of the life of the Confederate Government, seen through the eyes of a clerk in the War Department, from that Government's organization to its fall. Minor, because, while Jones is a good diarist, with a crabbed tang of his own at best, he lacks, for the most part, Pepys's inimitable gift of bringing an entire past life before your eyes with one helter-skelter phrase.

John Beauchamp Jones was fifty-one when Lincoln was inaugurated. Southern-born, editor of the *Weekly Southern Monitor*, a Philadelphia paper devoted to Southern interests, he left his home in Burlington, New Jersey, on April 9, 1861, to join the South. The diary begins the day before, when Jones is packing his trunk for departure, fearing, as he says, that "the first gun fired on Fort Sumter will be the signal for a burst of ungovernable fury, and I should be seized and thrown into prison." It ends on April 19, 1865, after Richmond's fall and Lincoln's assassination, with the entry "Yesterday windy, today bright and calm. It appears that the day of the death of President Lincoln was appointed for illuminations and rejoicings on the surrender of Lee. There is no intelligence of the death of Mr. Seward or his son. It was a dastardly deed—surely the act of a madman." Between these two entries lie all the immense, complicated web of the Confederate civil and military effort—good news and bad from the Front, truth and lies about the progress of the war, rising prices, departmental politics, weather, spy-mania, official communiqués, unofficial fears and hopes, the blossoming date of a neighbor's plum tree—in a word, all that goes to make up the civilian side of war.

He is bloodthirsty where the Yankees are concerned, but sees no reason why his sons should serve in the army. He admires Lee, prophesies great things of Jackson—and prophesies equally great things of generals who were neither Lees nor Jacksons. "The foe must bleed," he writes, and also "God speed the growth of the Peace Party, North and South." In other words, he is an average human being, writing of great events which pass before his eyes with as much and as little comprehension as human beings generally have. And therein lies his fascination, for the casual reader. Now and then, too, comes such an ideal diary entry as "Today at 12 M., I saw a common, leather-winged bat flying over the War Department. What this portends I do not pretend to say, perhaps nothing." Or the amazing story of the lieutenant who curtsied instead of saluting and turned out to be a woman in lieutenant's uniform.

Though he moved among great events, Jones was not a great man—John Quincy