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WHAT DO YOU WANT?

The Personal Advertisements on page 23 can be useful as well as entertaining. Where else can you exchange almost anything from an idea to an ibex* for only seven cents a word?

*This is a slight exaggeration, but these columns have sold donkeys and parrots.

WHAT HAVE YOU GOT?

The PHOENIX NEST

BY WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

TWO young ladies (I presume) in *The Nation* have lately been having a barrel of fun for themselves, pointing out how fatuous are most reviewers of books in New York, when not downright venal. Recently the *Saturday Review* was laid out by them on the operating table, and several whacks were taken at it with a blunt instrument. The Phoenix got a good one on the occiput. This column—you had better know the worst right now—is "half-coy" and also "half-intimate." How it manages to preserve so delicate a balance is entirely the secret of my own genius, and I'm not going to give the recipe away. It is also "boisterous." Furthermore, it is laid at my door that I once—but that was in earlier infamy, when I was connected with *The Century Magazine*, of—to me, at least—blessed and amusing memory—I once sent back one of *Edna St. Vincent Millay's* best sonnets, saying I liked certain lines in it. Maybe I did, I have lived an evil life. But, even though I coveted it, I never had the final authority of rejection on the old *Century*. Nor have I any recollection of the incident. And certainly, in later years, when I knew Miss Millay (for whom I cherish a sincere admiration), she was kind enough never to bring it up. My conscience, however, is fairly clear in regard to the poets I have known. I may have done them dirt sometimes, but not as a general practice.

Those are the facts as I see them, my friends. Oh yes, in the past I much enjoyed *Carl Van Vechten's* "The Tattooed Countess," and thought *Robinson Jeffers* overpraised for his "Tamar." These opinions, now brought home to roost, have elicited several superior snorts. Well, let them stand! I am slow on the pick-up, and can only say what I think I honestly think at the time of thinking it. Infallibility is for the Pope. Also, to see ourselves as others see us must be salutary. Indeed I have one helpful correspondent who takes the trouble constantly to correct my grammar, sending me clippings of the Nest with each individual error carefully pointed out. That's service! And don't think I don't appreciate it! . . .

Francis Brett Young is giving himself a year's vacation before starting another novel; he is planning a long trip through Africa next spring.

Whittlesey House has a perambulating author in *Walter B. Pitkin*, who is now travelling about the country interviewing people for a program broadcast over a national hook-up. . . . I wish to thank the F. E. Compton Company for sending me copies of *Anne Carroll Moore's* "Reading for Pleasure," as their contribution to Book Week. Miss Moore is an expert at selecting children's books.

The Macmillan Company is bringing out not only the "Poems, 1935" by *F. L. Lucas* but also "Four Plays" by the same English writer. They are being issued as companion volumes. In the preface to his poems Mr. Lucas defends some of his

ideas about poetry. . . . The winter term of the John Reed Writers' School will open on December 2nd. Among the instructors and guest lecturers are *Malcolm Cowley*, *Josephine Herbst*, *Joseph Freeman*, *Genevieve Taggard*, *Isidor Schneider*, *Langston Hughes*, *Granville Hicks*, *Kenneth Fearing*, and so on. Registration is daily and evenings at 430 Sixth Avenue.

Trade Winds

By P. E. G. QUERCUS

CELEBRATING the 25th anniversary of the Doubleday Doran bookshops, Alfred van A. van Duym has exhumed for their attractive little give-away magazine *The Book Dial* a list of books which were selling well in the first D. D. shop at Christmas 1910. Looking over the titles gives reminiscent Old Q many a fugacious twinge. For instance, among the high spots of that gift season 25 years ago:—*African Game Trails*, by T. R.—*Cupid's Cyclopedia*, by Oliver Herford (with pictures in color by Harrison Fisher, then a huge favorite).—*Once Upon a Time*, by Richard Harding Davis.—*Mr. Dooley Says*, by F. P. Dunne.—*What's Wrong with the World*, by G. K. Chesterton (it seemed relatively curable then, however?).—*Burning Daylight*, by Jack London.—*Molly Make Believe*, by Eleanor H. Abbott.—*The House of Bondage*, by Reginald Wright Kauffman ("Terrible in its realism" said the reviews).—*Jean Christophe*, vol I, by Romain Rolland.—*Adventures in Friendship*, by David Grayson.—*Whirligigs*, by O. Henry.—*An Affair of Dishonor*, by William De Morgan.—*Freckles*, by Gene Stratton-Porter.—*Clayhanger*, by Arnold Bennett. These are only a few of Mr. van Duym's culled list; books don't die as fast as some other commodities; several of these are actually still readable. What was there that made *The Bath Chairman*, by *Himself* (with introduction by H. G. Wells) "a literary discovery"? The ranking best seller of that whole year was Florence Barclay's *The Rosary*. Many a good grin can be had from the *Pennsylvania Dutch Cook Book* published for 15c at P. O. Box 250, Reading, Pa. Old Puerile Quercus's favorite P. D. motto is *De Mad mit dika Boka*, *Hen Hartsa we de Woka* (which means "the girls with fat cheeks have hearts like flint"). Gimbel's are said to have sold 7500 copies of this bellysmling pamphlet.

Marguerite Vance is holding a special meeting for young people at Dutton's Children's Department, 681 Fifth Avenue, November 23rd at 11 A. M. Edward Ellsberg, Emma Gelders Sterne and Edwin T. Hamilton will speak. Mr. and Mrs. Charles B. Borden have opened the Yankee Bookshop at the Elm Tree Press, Woodstock, Vermont. The first of the R. R. Bowker Memorial Lectures on the History of Book Publishing was given (at the N. Y. Public Library) on November 15 by Mr. Frederick A. Stokes.

The Compleat Collector

RARE BOOKS: CONDUCTED BY JOHN T. WINTERICH

*In alternate weeks this Department is devoted to Fine Printing
and is conducted by Carl Purington Rollins*

Sculptured Books

THIS department's recent appeal for identification of statues in which books are depicted has brought in an abundance of data which is bewildering in the heterogeneity of the subjects described. President Samuel Harden Church of Carnegie Institute writes:

We in Pittsburgh would like to have a part in rounding out your collection of books in stone and bronze and so we hasten to call your attention to two in our city that are beloved sculptural landmarks.

One is familiar to all visitors to the Carnegie Institute—a seated Shakespeare in stone by J. Massey Rhind which guards the entrance to our Carnegie Music Hall. The second is of a workman in bronze by Daniel Chester French which stands in front of the Carnegie Library of Allegheny (now known as the North Side of Pittsburgh), the very first library gift Mr. Carnegie ever made in this country. The statue is a memorial to Colonel James Anderson, who gave the messenger boy Andrew Carnegie access to his private library on Saturday afternoons, thereby implanting in the young reader his first taste of the joys of sharing books with others.

The Pittsburgh Shakespeare, as portrayed on this page, is being decorated on his birthday in accordance with annual custom. The decorator is Pauline Bauer-smith, a Carnegie drama school student, attired as Lady Macbeth but looking, as anyone can see, far too gentle and good-natured for the messy business ahead of her. It will be noticed that Lady Macbeth is so placing the wreath that the recipient cannot hope to derive further instruction from the comely folio in his lap—a representation, perhaps, of the Florio translation of Montaigne or of Holinshed's "Chronicle."

The Anderson bust, of which Dr. Church sends an illustration and description as published in the *Carnegie Magazine* for January, 1930, surmounts a broad pedestal before which a steel worker, seated on an anvil, is earnestly reading an imposing quarto. The figure is, of course, idealized, but it is worth pointing out that the books which young Carnegie is known to have consulted in Colonel Anderson's library included "His-

tingo," "Historical Sketches of Statesmen Who Flourished in the Time of George III," "Lives of Most Eminent Sovereigns," "Confessions of a Reformed Inebriate," "History of Peter the Great," "Connections of the Physical Sciences," and "Heroines of Sacred History." The actual copies of these titles and several others which the future master of steel consulted were sent to the Andrew Carnegie Memorial Birthplace in Dunfermline on the occasion of its opening.

Dr. Church adds a postscript: "Of course many of your readers have by this time called your attention to Bryant Barker's Pioneer Woman with her Bible under her arm." No, only Dr. Church did, but Mrs. Samuel G. Babcock of Boston offers an eminently comparable effigy—the statue of Anne Hutchinson with her open Bible in the State House grounds. Mrs. Babcock also cites the figure of Guy de Maupassant in the Parc Monceau, Paris, at the base of which is "a reclining woman's figure reading an open



BOOKTOTING BARD GETS BAYS
From The Carnegie Magazine

book—'Bel Ami' perhaps." Carl William Hull, librarian of the DuBois (Pennsylvania) Public Library, also notes the Maupassant statue and adds the detail that the reading lady is "all ruffles and petticoats."

Other reports on sculptured books will be published in due course.

A poet's excursion into narrative...

With these vignettes of four New England eccentrics, lovable but slightly mad characters, Winifred Welles extends the boundaries of her deft art. Her humor, her crystalline grace, the gay, ironic, and appealing qualities of her verse, are already known to the readers of her lyrics. In this new form, the narrative in verse, she recounts four curious histories: Abigail Penfold, saintly spinster, received an evil visitation; Miss Leffingwell wrote history while the flood raged; Parson Perkins communed with a lone green fay; Lemuel invented a universal language which lacked the verb "to be." Miss Welles has written her most delightful book—a lovely contribution to the poetry of today. The Viking Press. \$1.75.



A SPECTACLE FOR SCHOLARS

by Winifred Welles

"Four extraordinary narrative poems... a small book of high and unusual quality."—Herschel Brickell, *Post*. "I stand among those who think Winifred Welles one of the finest craftsmen among our women writers... a book of beauty and shy humor."—W. R. Benet, *S. R. L.* "It is a rare and surprising pleasure to find such poetry written in our time."—*Herald Tribune Books*.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 86)

AMY LOWELL—"PURPLE
GRACKLES"

A sociable lot, these purple grackles.
With high good nature they tell me
what I do not want to hear.
Nonchalant highwaymen, pick-
pockets, second-story burglars,
Stealing away my little hope of
summer.