

terial that was originally satisfactorily presented in a magazine article, and that would have made an excellent brochure of a hundred pages, has been padded out to 330. This is done by prefixing to the history of Grant's last eight months a lengthy review of his entire previous career, a review based throughout upon secondary materials, covering long-familiar ground with no new facts or ideas, and at times clearly inexpert. The book is also written in an unfortunate key of hero-worship. Mr. Green even quotes approvingly the preposterous assertion of Louis A. Coolidge that Grant's Presidency ranks second only to that of Washington in constructive achievements! The time has gone by when such a statement can be seriously offered, or when his work as President (as distinguished from that of his best Ministers, like Fish and Bristow) can even be plausibly defended. The time should have gone by when Grant could be regarded as well educated, or large-minded, or generally magnanimous, or well-disciplined. Among the authorities quoted by Mr. Green are not the two who pierced most shrewdly to the bottom of Grant's strange conglomerate of weak and strong traits—Henry Adams and Jacob D. Cox.

A Great Elizabethan

HERE WAS A MAN. By Norah Lofts. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1936. \$2.50.

THIS "romantic history of Sir Walter Raleigh, his voyages, his discoveries, and his Queen" offers a fumigated and prettified version of a few of the more creditable exploits of one of the most complex and unpredictable of Elizabethans and a great deal of fanciful writing about his power over women. Over the novelist, at least, the projection she calls Raleigh has exercised a fatal fascination; such a character might be charmingly impersonated for the movies by Mr. Leslie Howard but bears only a remote resemblance to the swashbuckler, politician, poet, company promoter, and melancholy philosopher who sums up better than any other man the gravest weaknesses and most heroic virtues of his age, an age suggested here only by groups of lay figures labelled "Drake," "Sidney," "Marlowe," "Spenser," "Shakespeare," in the background of the episodes through which the hero strolls. One is not supposed to object to errors of fact in a novel, but since the distortion of dates and relationships leads to nothing significant, one may conclude that the weakness in character drawing results partly from insufficient study. Even this telling cannot quite dull the excitement of Raleigh's story. That story is well and truly told in a recent biography by Edward Thompson, which the reader will find not only authentic, but many times more strange, romantic, and absorbing than this novel.

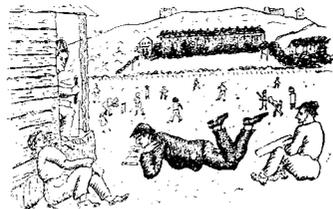
Tonight you can enjoy the *inside* story of the immortal *Stalky & Co.* told by M'TURK!

SCHOOLDAYS with KIPLING

By G. C. BERESFORD (M'TURK)



"Into the small-boy's house at Westward Ho! in the chill gray January days of 1878 there fluttered a cheery, capering, podgy, little fellow as precocious as ever he could be. Or, rather, a broad smile appearing with a small boy behind it, carrying it about and pointing it in all directions. Over the smile there was a pair of spectacles, regarded in those days as a mark of extreme seriousness and crabbed age. When you looked more closely at this new boy, you were astonished to see what seemed to be a mustache right across the smile; and so it was—an early spring mustache just out of the ground of his upper lip. On persistent inquiry the name of the smile turned out to be Kipling — only that and nothing more," so begins M'Turk in this singularly intimate and fascinating account of a famous writer in the making . . . which is at once an extraordinary revelation, coming from the pen of one who shared practically all of Kipling's waking hours during their school days.



The Keen Cricketeer

KIPLING vs. FACTS

"We may be amused," says Beresford, "at the strange sight of the British public imagining that in *Stalky & Co.* it was having a peep at Gigger's real biography. Poor souls! *Stalky & Co.* is nothing of the sort." (Kipling was yclept *Giglamps* by a laundry-cart man.)

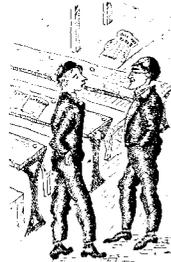
Here is Kipling the youth, pretentious, pompous, lording it over his school mates, dazzling them with his erudition, crossing swords with the masters. One day he sat down in the study shared with M'Turk and said in a lofty way, "I'm going to write essays on the following words, *synthesis*, *apophthegm*, *exegesis*, *synoptics*, *metagrammatism*, *dithyrambic*,

anaglyph and sciolism, and you don't even know the meaning of a single one of them!"

EAST IS EAST

When Gigger was sixteen and finished with public school, his father sent for him to join the rest of the family in India. Young Kipling, deciding that London was the life for him, wrote back: "I have married and therefore I cannot come." In the ensuing family consternation and correspondence the valiant liar came off second and was forced out to India!

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The PHOENIX NEST

CONTEMPORARY POETRY: BY WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

THAT hermit-sage of the Upper Hudson, the poet Arthur Davison Ficke, writes that he has recently been greatly depressed by Middleton Murry's biography, and by English biographers in general of late years—so sends me the following "sad little poem":

HINT TO MEMOIR-WRITERS

With lack of morals
I've no quarrels:
But there my tolerance ends.
So—if you please—
No biographies
That gnaw the bones of friends!

Two recent books of poetry have specially interested me: John Hall Wheelock's "Poems 1911-1936" (Scribners. \$2.50) and Genevieve Taggard's "Calling Western Union" (Harper's. \$2). Louise Bogan, in a recent interesting review in *The New Yorker*, both of Mr. Wheelock and Miss Taggard, has doubted, with respect to the former, whether poets still feel humanitarian and pantheistic. I think they do. They also feel communistic, as Miss Taggard now does. At the present moment the forces of sociological and economic change are challenging the poet as never before. It is a good thing, on the whole, for him so to be challenged. Max Eastman has been hammering at him (the generic him) for quite awhile, for God's sake—or rather, not—to be more scientific in his attitude. Actually, I am not so darned conservative myself, and I have a lot of sympathy with the radical poets. Some of them have written stirring things. But I still don't see that you can write the best poetry to order—to anyone's order. Mr.

Wheelock has always written out of his deepest feelings. He is not a great thinker. But he is a fine lyricist, and not, I think, in a minor strain. Miss Bogan seemed worried because he has used the word "belovéd" rather often, and, as an example of what is being done today, as a contrast, she reminded the reader of an amusing bit of patter by Mr. Auden. "Belovéd" has been spoiled for her by the popular song and the radio, and Mr. Auden seemed quite smart. He is smart—not that he isn't a lot more than that too—but his quip remains "patter," and I refuse to relinquish the word "belovéd" because asinine popular songs have bleated it. Miss Bogan admits that Mr. Wheelock's book "rises at moments to clear and moving poetic expression." It does; and I don't see much the matter with his material. Young love may have a different sort of "patter" today; but when Mr. Wheelock was writing of it it was no less beautiful than it always will be at its best. Nor do I think that awe and humility and rapture, the common feelings of man, will ever be liquidated so long as man remains aware of his cosmic predicament. Where I agree with Miss Bogan is in the feeling that Mr. Wheelock has written rather too much in the same strain. But if you care for pure song, here it is:

Sleep on, I lie at heaven's high oriels,
Over the stars that murmur as they go,
Lighting your lattice-window far below—
And every star some of the glory spells
Whereof I know.

I have forgotten you, long, long ago,
Like the sweet, silver singing of thin bells
Ended, or music fading faint and low.
Sleep on, I lie at heaven's high oriels,
Who loved you so.

This is in a category somewhat removed from "I had an aunt who loved a plant. But you're my cup of tea," the Auden note that sounded in Miss Bogan's mind. Also, take the really superb poem on "The Fish-Hawk," with its high wide sweep:

Till from that tower of ecstasy, that baffled height,
Stooping, he sank; and slowly on the world's wide way
Walked, with great wing on wing, the merciless, proud Might,
Hunting the huddled and lone reaches for his prey,
Down the dim shore—and faded in the crumbling light.

We may turn to the modern poet, Stephen Spender, when he writes

Can be deception of things only changing.
Out there
perhaps growth of humanity above the plain
hangs: not the timed explosion, oh but Time
monstrous with stillness like the himalayan range



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