

TYPES OF WOMEN

Studies of women from various walks of life are offered by Katharine Brush in "Other Women," a collection of short stories. The first group of sketches is interrelated in that all the characters are residents of a typical small town in Ohio. The wife of a Cleveland gangster, once a shoemaker's daughter; the town gossip and a devout Christian; and the wealthy leader of the young married set—all these contrasting types serve to hold one's interest. The second division contains a group of unrelated though equally entertaining character studies.

TRAVEL BOOKS

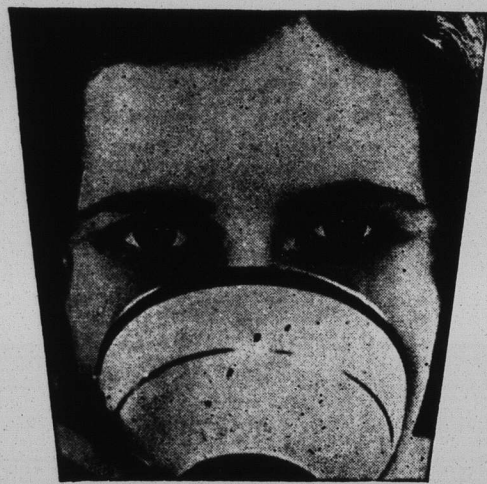


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COMMENT on BOOKS and AUTHORS

"A New Deal"

A WINDOW REVOLUTION. (The Chestnut Court Book Shop)

By Louise Lackner

For over two years Winnetkans who have some into—or walked by—the Chestnut Court Book shop have looked at the same window arrangement. Almost every day at least one new book was put in but the display was so unvaried that only a veteran window-shopper would have noticed any change. And window-shoppers are highly coveted by the prideful shop-keeper; their attention is as flattering as that of a "good listener". So, one rainy and otherwise useless Sunday, the spirit of the "new deal" asserted itself in the Chestnut Court book emporium.

Destruction prevailed for an hour or so. Everything came out of the window and much was thrown away. Even the little Dickens' prints of which I am so fond, were taken down. (They were later hung in another part of the shop; no new deal could force me to consign THEM to the oblivion of a cupboard!) Finally, confronted with what suddenly seemed like an appalling amount of space, we began to reconstruct. We proved, incidentally, that a person doing things in a shop window is a definite bait for trade because, despite the fact that it was Sunday and raining, a number of people stopped to watch and one came in to buy!

First, the once bright blue floorboards were covered with heavy terra-cotta colored paper; then a brand-new (home-made) display shelf took the place of the pyramid that had done such stout service. On and around this shelf, and with the aid of new book posters and current magazines, we arranged an exhibit of books that have a common subject or belong to a specific classification. This took all afternoon, what with running outside "to see how it looks," and trying to figure out how both the front and the back of a book can be shown at once.

That is the actual play-by-play account of our window revolution, but that is only the beginning. The exhibit of books will change every Monday morning. Next week, for instance, will be devoted to travel books, (with maps, pictures, etc.), the next week there will be an exhibit of art books.

Of course, the success of this plan depends on the number of people who show enough curiosity to stop and look at the window each week. We have a number of ideas up our sleeve and we would be much gratified if, as we sit behind the partition, we would hear a few comments from those who pause outside!

An English Novel

MISS CHARLESWORTH. By Mabel L. Tyrrell Stokes.

This English novel belongs in the class of competently written and well constructed stories, with no claim to being a great book but with nothing to be ashamed of in the way of mediocrity. It has indeed one quality which lends it real individuality: while written in the tone of what might be called—in the best sense of the word—a society novel, far removed from the modern mystery story, it does yet contain a mystery, whose solution at the extreme end of the book possesses distinct values.

The plot through which the characters move is complex, but well constructed and adequately handled. Its central feature is the love affair of an older man—with peculiar difficulties of his own—and a charming young girl, genuine on his side but with a high ulterior motive on hers.

With courage Miss Charlesworth breaks through this false situation and others as well, assuring to the girl her life with the boy of her own age who loves her, and straightening out whatever can be adjusted in the tangled situations that have developed. It is possibly a considerable complexity in the extensive plot that makes the reader aware that it has indeed been constructed with care. But interest and good writing should, in judging the book, be given their due.

Death Takes Creator of "Charlie Chan"

A vast multitude of people in every land are mourning the recent death of Earl Derr Biggers, creator of that inimitable character, "Charlie Chan." Mr. Biggers passed away in Pasadena, Calif., at the very height of his career. The Charlie Chan mystery stories have been translated into ten foreign languages, and four of them have been made the basis for motion pictures.

It is significant that less than a month before his death Mr. Biggers first five Charlie Chan stories, "The House Without a Key," "The Chinese Parrot," "The Black Camel," "Behind That Curtain," "Charlie Chan Carries On," were assembled in one volume under the title of "The Celebrated Cases of Charlie Chan." Only the last Charlie Chan story, "Keeper of the Keys," was not included in this volume. A dramatization of this last story is now being rehearsed in Boston for stage presentation.

Wilmette Resident Answers Technocrats

The business man's answer to technocracy is given in "Can Business Build a Great Age?" by William Kix-Miller of Wilmette, recently published by Macmillan.

In his first chapter the author says, "Today the world is being held back by something as new as the discoveries which give the problem birth, namely, the failure of business to utilize science effectively and in a world-wide manner. The problem, for decades immediately ahead, is a business problem, using the word 'business' in more than an economic sense. Not scientist, who have done their immediate job, but business men, are the hope of the universe, if they will appreciate the power they now wield, or rather can wield."

The author is a Chicago business man.

Escape From the Reds

FLIGHT FROM TERROR. By Alya Rachmanova. The John Day company.

Reviewed by Vera McDermid

This book represents the experiences of a young woman during the revolutionary days in Russia, as well as prior to the Revolution. In the fall of 1916, on the date of her seventeenth birthday, Alya Rachmanova began her diary, the new one she received for her birthday. The events that follow deal with the writer's home life and her university life, and then the "reign of horror." The accounts of the revolution that we have from refugees in America lead us to believe that even the most horrible tales told about the Bolsheviks are not exaggerated.

Gleb Botkin, son of the physician to the late Czar, writes a foreword to the book in which he says that this is the best book about the Russian revolution that has yet been written. There is also inserted in the book a sworn affidavit from Alya Rachmanova testifying to the authenticity of the experiences which she narrates, and also an affidavit from the German publishers of the book guaranteeing the authenticity of the original manuscript. With all these to reinforce the reader he embarks upon the story.

The author gives a fascinating picture of Russian bourgeois life and of university life in those carefree but nevertheless serious days of 1916-1917. She was a member of the provincial intelligentsia and a student of strong revolutionary leanings. Her father was a prominent doctor in the city so that her family was highly respected and esteemed. Miss Rachmanova vividly portrays students and professors whom she met at the university; Griselda, a handsome, peculiar creature who had a mind "like a man's," who was tall and ugly, but mysterious and interesting; she married a Chinese doctor (whom she left soon after the wedding) and later joined the famous Soviet organization, the Tcheka. Then there was Professor Weidle, the French teacher, and the students, Vadim and Arkadi who were in love with Alya. The part of the book, though, that holds the reader with intensity is that part that deals with the "reign of terror" and the flight of thousands of Bourgeois families in freight cars into Siberia. The author writes:

"Swarms of people were lugging their poor bundles and baskets to the station—the long, dusty streets echoed to the shouting and cursing of the men, to the weeping and wailing of the women and children. They pushed on—these hordes, these fear-maddened thousands, who had only one thought in their heads—escape from the Reds. What they had worked and built and striven through decades to attain they were throwing away now as one throws away an old glove... Escape from the Reds!

"Our train has stopped suddenly; there's another train ahead of us, another of that, and so on far as the eye can reach. An endless line of cattle-cars, each jammed with unfortunates, trembling for their lives."

TASMANIA

"Pageant," by A. B. Lancaster, is aptly named. It is a novel rich in interesting characters, presenting a vivid panorama of the days of empire building in the English colony of Tasmania. A straightforward story of passionate love and adventure, dominated by two delightful people, Madam Comyn and her charming granddaughter, Jenny, this book will appeal to all tastes.

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