

Esther Gould's Book Corner

Are you interested in books of Fiction, Biography, Travel, or History? For lists write to ESTHER GOULD, c/o The Lake Forester

JUST PARAGRAPHS

Katherine Mansfield's first book, "In a German Pension," which has been unavailable since 1911, and about which there has been so much controversy, has been re-issued. Its appearance, although it did not measure up to the high standard the author set for herself, is amply justified by the merits of the books, and the fact that in it are contained the germs of her later book.

Lovers of Sabatini may once more rush to the bookstalls for another draught of that thirst-quenching vigor in a re-issue of one of the "modern Dumas" earlier books. "The Lion's Skin" is a story of France and England in the Eighteenth Century.

Chicago is getting its usual dose of visiting authors. James Stephens has been enrapturing his audience as always; Richard Halliburton, handsome and dashing author of "The Royal Road to Romance," is expected in Chicago early in March.

TRAGEDY INDEED

"AN AMERICAN TRAGEDY"

By Theodore Dreiser
Bonie & Liveright

We think Theodore Dreiser has recently written his first novel since 1915. That novel was "The Genius," this one "An American Tragedy." Both of them are exhaustive works of what is commonly known as the "realistic" type. Both of them are done with the passionate attention to detail, and the meticulous skill which are Mr. Dreiser's. In a choice between them, if such a thing were necessary, it seems to me that it would rest directly upon the personalities involved.

I heard someone say, in making a rather pointless criticism of "The Constant Nymph," "but they aren't people that I would want to live next door to." In a book like "The Constant Nymph," that is hardly the question, you are not asked to live next door to them, much as most of us would enjoy it, or even in the next street. You merely glimpse them, much as we do personalities on the stage. But in "An American Tragedy," which is indeed a tragedy, it is more nearly a living next door to, or practically in the same house with the main character. We watch him from childhood, we follow his comings and his goings through two long volumes, until sometimes we almost lose sight of our own personalities and feel that we have never done anything but follow him as the tail after the kite.

We see Clyde Griffiths first at fifteen as he is trailing around the streets of Kansas City, one of a little family group which goes about preaching on the streets, "publicly raising its voice against the vast skepticism and apathy of life." But Clyde is not religious by nature and often as he has heard it repeated, his experience has led him to doubt that "The Lord will provide." So being a boy of a certain amount of resource he decides to do it for himself.

Then begins a long series of events which lead to a whole wrong moral concept of everything, starting with the fringe of life to which a bell-boy in a fashionable hotel penetrates, going on to a vicarious social position through a rich uncle, and leading by the way of deceit, seduction and murder to the electric chair. No, it is not a pretty or comforting story, but it is unassailably well done.

While the strain of fatalism is not over-emphasized, yet it is there, we feel that Clyde is a football carried by a too strong team of environment and heredity to his terrible goal. And in the end we have only reached the beginning of another cycle, "Dusk of a summer night." And through the streets of San Francisco this time trail the little group only it is Clyde's nephew instead of Clyde, who holds the hymnals.

EXCELLENT ESSAYS

"THE GOD OF FUNDAMENTALISM AND OTHER STUDIES"

By Horace J. Bridges
Pascall Corvici

Certainly nothing could be so pertinent at this moment as a little clear thinking on the subject of evolution. When this very day we are being solicited for funds to help carry on the Scopes trial even the least thoughtful can scarcely avoid doing on the subject a little definitive thinking. Nor can we avoid giving some thought to the question which is bound up so closely with that of evolution, that of Fundamentalism. And thirdly, of equal timeliness and perhaps of equal importance, there is that growing problem of race prejudice. Mr. Bridges in this excellent book of essays has dealt with these three issues. As he himself says in his introduction: "In short, I have attacked three tendencies, or three manifestations of a single tendency, which constitute a danger to America, simply because they all involve a betrayal of that

fundamental faith on which America was built and by which it has thus far weathered the storms of time." Three forms of intolerance, the very thing that our forefathers came to America to escape.

Chicago is fortunate in having as a leader of a group of people a man of Mr. Bridges' brilliant intellectual achievements. And he not only has great gifts but he is willing to use them for the solving of problems of general importance. It is minds like his which we need to clear the atmosphere, to sift out from the general soot what little real coal there is for our furnaces and consume the smoke before it escapes to befog our minds.

The question of the responsibility of the criminal—or irresponsibility—has become a household word since its embodiment by Mr. Darrow, and this, too, Mr. Bridges carves most swiftly to the bone, showing that bone to be a paradox.

In a democracy where the people who make our laws are average citizens, no more thoughtful or educated or brilliant than ourselves, it is a thousand times more important than under the old autocratic forms of government that everyone give some time and thought to the great issues of the day. It is not, as Mr. Bridges points out that our intelligence is less than in former times but that our responsibility is more. Instead of blindly following authority we at least think we think for ourselves.

It is for helping us to think straight on these questions that we need men like Mr. Bridges.

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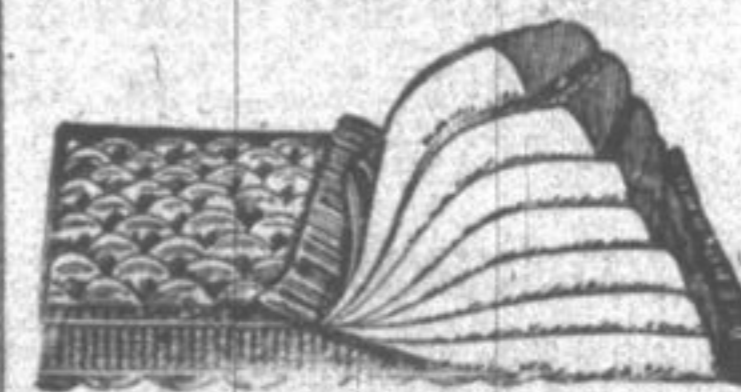
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PROMISE INTERESTING PROGRAM FOR MARCH

Sunday Evening Club Announces Good Speakers; David Shillinglaw Next Sunday

The Sunday Evening club is announcing an interesting program for March: on the seventh, David Shillinglaw "An Inquiry Into Financial Conditions in Europe"; the fourteenth, Kenneth Miller "Social Effects of the New Immigration Law"; the twenty-first, Jesse L. Smith "A Trip Through Europe"; the twenty-eighth, Dr. W. T. Grenfell "Labrador."

The meetings, with the exception of the last, will be held in the parish house of the Presbyterian church at 7:30. Dr. Grenfell's talk will be given at Elm Place school.

Mr. Shillinglaw who is to speak next Sunday is president of the County Association of the American Legion. He was with the A. E. F. and Y. M. C. A. in France and has kept well informed on financial developments in Europe. For two summers he has attended the Williamstown Political Institute. All interested in the much discussed question of Europe's ability to pay should hear Mr. Shillinglaw.

Last Sunday evening the club travelled through Switzerland with Mr. Frank C. Peyraud. Both the talk and the pictures were highly appreciated.

HOW FIRST AMERICAN VALENTINE WAS MADE

Mount Holyoke Girl Built Big Business From Her Idea About 1850

The display of Valentines, from the collection of Mrs. Emma B. Hodge of Chicago which is now being shown in the children's museum in the Art Institute is attracting much attention.

It was a college girl, Esther A. Howland, a Mount Holyoke girl, who graduated in 1847, who invented the first American Valentine. In 1839 some early Valentines from England fell into her hands. Miss Howland made two of her own designs, using lace paper, colored paper and paper flowers. These were pronounced superior to the English makes and her father, who was a stationer, sent a few samples to be submitted to the trade, through her brother, who was the traveling representative of the firm. On his return the brother handed her orders amounting to five thousand dollars.

She was aghast. And the only way she could meet the demand was to enlist the services of her friends, who were set to work cutting out like de-

signs and colored flowers and lithographed pictures which were obtained from the only lithographer in the country, then in New York. The second year the orders were so numerous she had to double her force. Eventually her business increased so that she was sending out from her Worcester, Massachusetts, headquarters over \$100,000 worth of Valentines. The present display from Mrs. Hodge's collection embraces a wide variety of Valentines, from the earliest ones to the later and more elaborate designs. The original work box used by Miss Howland is also shown in the collection.

It is said that a Scandinavian pirate ship is ravaging the Baltic, which may mean that Eric the Red and Lief the Lucky have come back to earth again.

The favorite American phrase was formerly "Play ball," but now it seems to be "Charge it."

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