

Esther Forbes' Book Corner

JUST PARAGRAPHS

It seems that Babe Ruth has made another home-run, in literature this time. The Boston Post says of his autobiography it is "rich in anecdote, mellow with philosophy, bright with witty sayings and goings." Among other facts of his early youth the player discloses that his training in pitching came from his favorite practice of throwing over-ripe fruit and over-ripe eggs at passing truck-drivers.

We are becoming tremendously patriotic. Arthur Garfield Hays tells in his new book "Let Freedom Ring" how some words of Lincoln's to the effect that the people had the right to amend or overthrow their government were vigorously hissed by an audience unaware of their authorship.

A GOOD BOOK

"A MIRROR FOR WITCHES"

By Esther Forbes
Houghton Mifflin Co.

Esther Forbes has done that rare and gratifying thing, write a second book as good as her first. She has accomplished this probably by doing that other rare thing making her second book different from her first.

"O Genteel Lady" received such praise that Miss Forbes might have been tempted to try another of that preeminently charming quasi-serious style, but in "A Mirror for Witches" she has tackled sterner stuff. She has gone back to the days of the Salem witches and has not only captured remarkably well the spirit of the age but its diction also, and its quaint primness and severity of tone.

Miss Forbes tells her story with her tongue imperceptibly inclined toward her cheek so that, even as we should probably see it in documents of that day, we see the judges and accusers as the evildoers and the witch herself as the innocent wronged. So her tale becomes not only a narrative but a subtle satire of that stern and self-righteous age.

Bilby's Doll, born of witch parentage in Brittany was brought to the coasts of the New World by a foster-father who having rescued her from the fire which consumed her parents fell so under her spell that he loved her above all mortal things. Though she was always persecuted by his jealous wife, yet she grew up happily enough for she spent most of her time in the woods and fields with him. Then gradually as the years go on strange things which happen in the community and cannot be explained in other ways come to be laid to the memory of witchcraft brought by Doll from those far, off infantile years.

So we see how to an imaginative child the picture of witchcraft always held up before herself comes to be believed and she does at last accept the fact that she is a witch. Inexorably then move the wheels of justice, never pausing until they have ground between them this poor guileless and lonely child. As we see the last of

her—in her miserable cell we are convinced that she is the most innocent one of them all.

HARD ON DAISY

"DAISY AND DAPHNE"

By Rose Macaulay
Boni & Liveright

Rose Macaulay has a highly developed gift for satire. In "Daisy and Daphne" she has used it to mercilessly expose the soul of a little middle-class girl, whom after all we feel like reminding her, as the small school boy usually does the larger, "never did her no harm." So why should she enjoy being so ruthless? Miss Macaulay bases her story on a little technical device which it would be unkind to disclose since to know it beforehand would impair one's pleasure in the story.

At the opening of the book Daisy and Daphne are spending a few weeks abroad in a semi-secretarial capacity with the Folyots, who belong to the

social bolsheviks, Italian reformers, science and writing books on sculpture. Daisy and Daphne are exhilarated by this rare atmosphere, they were born down on the plains. In the course of the weeks Daisy falls in love with Raymond Foylet, the scientist, and Raymond in love with Daphne. The rest of the book is given up to the painful proving of the fact that try as you will middle classism will out, and out at the very least convenient moments.

The story is written brilliantly but it is not happy reading. Its moral is, that brave as may be our resolution to get out or ourselves, begin the new life which periodical defeats make us think not only noble but advisable, it is hard to do. We are what we are, thinks Miss Macaulay and it takes a lot of changing to make us anything different. How depressing.

Taken from an old legend current in England this book tells how a youth, Trevy, born on the banks of a tempestuous river, takes not only its name but its characteristics also. It is written in beautiful prose.

Trevy, The River

By Leslie Reid

E. P. DUTTON & CO. \$2.50

AT LAST WE HEAR THAT Gentlemen Marry Brunettes

By Anita Loos

Seldom has a book of humor ever swept the country and the world as did "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes." Now we have from Lorelei's friend, Dorothy, the other side of the story in which the brunettes get their innings. Don't miss it!

BONI & LIVERIGHT \$2.00

VALUE OF SUNLIGHT AS HEALTH BENEFIT

ULTRA VIOLET RAYS GOOD

Practical Explanation of Beneficial Effects Given in Plain Language; How Rays Operate

The Irishman who said that the hole in his roof didn't need fixing during fair weather and that it was too wet to work at it during a rain, really expressed a great truth without suspecting it. Hiding under a roof from the sunshine works out to be one of man's greatest sins against his health. Of course there is no sense in tearing holes in the shelter that protects us from the vagaries of the weather but it is just as senseless, in view of present-day knowledge, to stay under that roof perpetually.

Squirt water in a spray from a hose and some of the tiny streams leap much farther away from the nozzle than others. Some are so short that they fall almost straight down. Rays from the sun are like that. Some are long and strong, traveling fast enough to generate great heat when they strike the earth. Others are short, carry little light and are cool. By a strange turn of fate these short, cool rays, usually called ultra-violet, are very essential in keeping folks well. We need more of the long, light, heat-producing rays and we get more but the short, cool ones are just as necessary.

Long and Short Rays

The long, heat rays break right through window glass, warming the room inside and making it cheerful. The short, ultra-violet rays never get through the glass and they are even absorbed or diverted by thin clouds, dust, smoke and haze. They never penetrate clothing nor does their influence drive itself through walls or clothing like the heat from the longer rays.

When the dentist recklessly buzzes

that unwelcome drill around a sensitive tooth that feels as big as a leek the helpless owner may be paying for some of the time he spent hiding from the sun in a comfortable chair. Or maybe he is helping to pay the bill for some of his ancestors who did that. Sunshing isn't the whole thing in making hard, durable teeth but it has a lot to do with the chemical processes which convert the right food materials into teeth, bone and muscle.

Many a fellow never appreciates the good job that he has until it's gone. Then he yearns to connect his name with the payroll again. A new opportunity is nursed along for a while and then, often enough, he begins to find fault again—too long hours, not enough pay, too many bosses, etc. Old Sol gives everybody in this latitude the chance to exercise their spleen that way every year. In the spring and summer he is prodigally extravagant with his shower of ultra-violet rays upon the earth but in the winter he cuts down the supply to a minimum. He travels so far south that the short rays get lost in the mase of atmosphere and its load of dirt, smoke and clouds before they reach the earth.

About March first he gets far enough back on his northward trip to give the short rays a much better chance of arriving in Illinois than is the case for December, January and February. But the short rays reach the earth in greater abundance between eleven and one o'clock so that is the period when exposure is more likely to return benefits.

Rickets is a nutritional disturbance that may have a far more significant influence over physical development than the outward manifestations of bow legs, enlarged head and the like indicate. Soft teeth are closely associated with a ricketic condition and decayed teeth may start all sorts of uncomfortable complications. And the lack of sunshine may be the predominant cause of it all. The kind of food a mother and a child eats has a great deal to do with it but an adequate amount of pure sunshine is necessary in order that the body may utilize the food that is digested.

FARMING CONDITIONS REPORTED IMPROVING

Bureau Reports Indicate That Tide Has Turned Throughout Country

According to the report of the Department of Agriculture there were 19,000 fewer farmers in the United States in 1927 than there were in 1926. The number has been steadily decreasing year from year and we have heard a great deal about the emigration from the farm to the city with the disastrous results that were predicted that if the migration continued the time would come when the people of the United States might be called on to face a serious food shortage.

But there is another side to the picture and one which is not quite so gloomy. The diminishing of the farm population in 1927 was not so great as it had been in the years previous. For instance: the loss in 1926 in farm population was 649,000 while in 1925 it was 441,000. The farm population of the country in 1920 is estimated to have been 31,000,000, while in 1927 it is said to have shrunk to a little over twenty-seven and a half million.

The record in 1927, however, was completed, will show that the drift from the country to the city has been definitely stopped.

Of course, with the increased production necessary during the war, and the deflation following the war, it was logical to expect some increased moving from the country to the city. The industries of the cities recovered from post-war deflation more quickly than the farm did, and the drift to the cities continued, because more money could be made working in the cities than on the farms.

But it would now seem, basing the opinion on the 1927 figures quoted above, that a new balance is being struck and that this desertion of the farms may stop in another year. This is a situation we will all hope for. When the drift to the cities stops we will know that the farmer is coming into his own again.

ILLINOIS HOUSEWIVES UTILIZE FACILITIES

Degree to Which They Avail Themselves of Modern Aids Shown

Illinois housewives are availing themselves of gas for cooking where piped gas is obtainable to a much greater extent than women in cities throughout the country, according to results of a survey of home equipment made public from state headquarters of the Illinois Federation of Women's clubs here today by Mrs. J. Marc Fowler, chairman of the federation's well-equipped homes committee.

Illinois has a larger proportion of automobiles per family in towns under 1,000 population, and more telephones in communities under 50,000 population than similar-sized cities throughout the country, but falls far below the nation's average in the availability of running water and number of kitchen sinks, stationary bath tubs and flush toilets, the figures showed.

The survey was conducted in 153 communities throughout the state by the 200 clubs affiliated with the federation and is being made the basis of a "four-months' better home" campaign to be held here at the Stevens hotel, May 15 to 18, in conjunction with the federation's thirty-third annual convention.

Demonstrations of labor-saving devices and other household conveniences will feature the exhibits. The Home Bureau of the University of Illinois, and the department of Home Economics of the University of Chicago are co-operating.

If the young crowd would only show the same speed in getting up in the morning that they do in driving the family car, their parents would be encouraged.

Something must be done for farm relief, and one thing that would relieve the farmer considerably, would be fewer canvassers and agents trying to sell him something.

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