

Esther Gould's Book Corner

JUST PARAGRAPHS

Rebecca West, Visiting Critic for the Herald Tribune for the month, has arrived in New York. Miss West admits for the benefit of those who await in more or less despair the coming of her long promised novel that she has three novels either completed or well under way. They will none of them be published until after the publication of her book of criticism "The Strange Necessity."

Eminie Sach's biography of Victoria Woodhull Martin, "the red-hot grandma of all the flappers" is almost ready for publication. The truth about "Rasputin, The Holy Devil" is said to have been revealed at last in a book by that name by a German biographer, Fulop-Miller. Mussolini, another enigma of our inquiring age has chosen characteristically to do his own "My Autobiography" to be published Oct. 26. Mussolini is said to have stopped a newspaper contest on the subject of the enigma of himself, saying "It is absurd since I myself cannot enter an opinion." He has evidently thought better of it and tried.

EXCEPT UNCLE JOHNNIE

"ALL KNEELING"

By Ann Parrish
Harper & Bros.

"Humor, tragedy and pathos are acceptable, but not stories that are morbid or that leave the reader uncomfortable." So runs the delicately phrased slip of guidance to its contributors that a certain American magazine sends out. We don't know just where it would class Ann Parrish's "All Kneeling" among these but we should think it would adjudge that it leaves the reader uncomfortable. Nothing leaves one more uncomfortable than to be presented with the evidence, perhaps the proof, that one lives in the midst of hypocrites with their following of dolts.

For it is of this, if skill is able to convince you of anything, that Miss Parrish's excellently drawn character of Christabel Caine and her adorers does convince you. In fact the universality with which Christabel is able to take them all in is the weakest point in the book. Only Uncle Johnnie out of all the ramifications of relations in Germantown or out of all the admiring throngs that Christabel met when she goes to fashionable watering places with the rich aunts, only Uncle Johnnie knows that she is a little fraud, a snob, a self-worshiper, a cheat. If this is possible, what is the use of virtue in a world that would just as soon have its shadow? It is most depressing. But we don't think it is possible.

However, aside from these sad moral aspects of the theme one can sit back and enjoy the faithfulness with which the author impales her character, the skill with which she paints to the life the pseudo-poet and aesthete.

THE WOMAN PAYS

"PIGSTIES WITH SPIRES"

By Georgina Garry
E. P. Dutton & Co.

Under this engaging title, "Pigsties with Spires," Georgina Garry, a new English author, presents the story of a kept woman. "High deeds can blend with low desires. . . So let

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THE STRANGE CASE OF MISS ANNIE SPRAGG

By Louis Bromfield

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By Gertrude Bell
of Arabia

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Horace Liveright \$3.00

What the Critics Say of

PIGSTIES WITH SPIRES

By Georgina Garry

"Dutton's selection in their outstanding book of the month. . . it seems to me it is very likely it will be the outstanding book for many months."—Times Daily World.

E. P. Dutton & Co.

us build our sties with spires" runs the title verse. We should change it to "low deeds" and "high desires." For the reason why Josephine Demayne consents to be the mistress of her employer's husband is that she is tired of poverty not only for herself but for her small pale daughter Sonia.

Left a widow very young, never having had any chance for anything in life but poverty and work, Josephine Demayne does not know the possibilities that are within her. Possibilities to be attractive, to be gay and carefree. It is left for Robert, the man of means but utterly devoid of moral sense, to show her these. But Josephine pays a high price. Endless effort to please, to be a good sport, to adapt her mood to his uncertainty, the placing of her child in a secondary place in her life, these are only a few of the things that she pays. The book gives an excellent study of what effect these things have on Josephine's life and on the development of her child. Sonia grows into the precocious cynical, rather lonely yet determined woman that such an upbringing would make probable. The book is well done, an extremely interesting psychological study, and the theme is handled in such a way as to make it less "shocking" than most of our happy little romances.

DELIGHTFUL SKETCHES

PERSIAN PICTURES

By Gertrude Bell
Horace Liveright

In a delightful format of grey and crushed grape this little book, the first one to be written by the now famous Gertrude Bell, has been published. For those who have enthusiasm for the east, for delicately drawn word-pictures of romantic things "Persian Pictures" will be a happy discovery.

Gertrude Bell who as truly as Lawrence won undying fame in Arabia during the war, did not want these pictures of her trip to Persia to be published at all. "I have got all the fun out of them that I expect to have," and this was not affectation for when she was finally persuaded she only consented to have them come out anonymously. Now after her death when there is so much interest in her as a personality and in the east, itself, they are reissued. If you love the names of Teheran and Samarkand and the secrets of the east the value of which as Miss Bell says "no one understands better than the Oriental" you will enjoy these sketches.

AND, AFTER ALL, WHAT COULD BE SWEETER?

Conclusion of Explanation of Why Hotel Rooms Cost More Nowadays

Here is one of many reasons why a night's lodging in a good hotel costs a great deal more today than it did when grandfather was a traveling salesman:

In 1910 a chambermaid was paid \$12 a month and was fed in a good hotel, and at night she slept on a cot in a hall that looked as large as an auditorium and probably sounded like one. She did not get out in the sunlight very often because she was interested in her work. By the time she had made up the last room she tried to walk on her hands because her feet were so swollen, and she loafed in bed until five o'clock every morning because she was too tired to get up, writes Herbert Corey, in the Nation's Business.

Chambermaids are paid \$40 a month and board nowadays and instead of sleeping in dormitories each pair is given a neat little room in the more recently built hotels. In tomorrow's hotels they will not "sleep in" at all, because land and building costs are too great to permit a hotel the extravagance of bedrooms for the help. I am not going deeply into the servant question, only enough to indicate the bearing the servants have on that eight dollars a day. In most States nowadays the girls work in three shifts on a six-day week. The \$12 a month chambermaid of 1919 never did get through work until her feet broke at the ankles.

When the poet wrote that "woman's work is never done," he thought of hotel chambermaids, who worked 30 days a month except in February. Nowadays they have plenty of time to go to dances. A handsome Danish girl told me that she had been a stenographer in Denmark and worked at the trade for a time after she got to this country. The best salary she could hope to get was \$25 a week. As a chambermaid she is paid \$40 a month and given board and room, her tips average \$25, and she has all the time she wants to see her "feller." What could be sweeter.

FRESH AND ROTTEN MANURE AND BLACK SOIL

Reuben Lloyd

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SHOWS HIGH COST OF COMPETITION

Grim Figures Given by Head of Steel Company at Meeting Quoted

Grim figures of the high cost of competition were given by Charles M. Schwab at a recent sales and distribution conference called together by the Bolt, Nut and Rivet Manufacturers' association.

"In the last five years," he said, according to the Nation's Business Magazine, "the Bethlehem Steel company has spent \$80,000,000 bettering its processes. After four years I find we have reduced our cost an average of \$7 a ton but that we have sold steel at an average of \$8 less a ton than we did before we started the program."

Mr. Schwab's remedy, or a part of his remedy is to modify the anti-trust laws to permit manufacturers to com-

bine in selling. It is the fashion nowadays to call for a modification of the Sherman act to cure all sorts of ills, but those who urge its modification might well consider one thing that stands in the pathway towards a relaxation of the law.

The "trust" we were taught to fear at the beginning of this century, the "trust" against which spellbinders inveigled and which "trustbusters" sought to bust was a trust of manufacturers.

What of the new forces at work in the fields of retailing? What of the chain stores?

Are not the worried and harassed retailers more apt to ask stricter legislation against "big business" than to ask to see our laws modified?

Apparently the principal calamity that can be expected from the election, is that a large number of politicians will fail to get the jobs they are after.

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