

ABOUT BOOKS AND THE PEOPLE WHO WRITE THEM

Stories of Mystery and Murder "THE CHARING CROSS MYSTERY", by J. S. Fletcher. Publisher: G. P. Putnam's Sons, \$2.00. "OUT OF THE FRYING PAN", by C. Nine Boyle. Publisher: Thomas Seltzer, \$2.00. "JIMMIE DALE AND THE PHANTOM CLUE", by Frank L. Packard. Publisher: George H. Doran Co. \$2.00.

In this story of murder and abduction Mr. Fletcher departs from the usual procedure of writers of mystery stories. After the crime is committed there is very little doubt in the reader's mind as to who actually did the killing; but there is grave doubt as to whether or not the villain will be brought to justice. The false leads are not obviously false—another departure from established precedent. So many detective stories take the sleuth down trails that cannot possibly be anything but blind!

Mr. Fletcher has departed no whit from the standards set in his many other stories of the discovery and capture of criminals. In fact, we enjoyed "The Charing Cross Mystery" rather more than some others of his series. Keep 'em coming, Mr. Fletcher.

Maisie, the heroine of "Out of the Frying Pan!", amply justifies the title by her adventures. Her parentage, her search for her mother and what happened when she found her, her flight from one parent to the other, with the consequent regrets on finding her father worse than her mother—truly, poor Maisie leaps out of the frying-pan into—well, you know the rest of the proverb.

However, she escapes uncooked, or at the most slightly singed, and—but never mind. The ending is all that could be expected.

Which reminds me. Charles Reade used to end his books that way, and we used to like it—still do, in fact. It has been so long since we read a last chapter like the one in "Out of the Frying-pan" that we whooped with delight when we finished it. Whatever the author's creed may have been, there is one article in which she distinctly does not believe. We turned the last page with a satisfied sigh, leaving Maisie—and friend husband—and the villain—and...but shades of the late lamented Charles Reade!

Once more Jimmie Dale and the "Toc-sin" come into contact with the mysterious forces of the underworld. Once more the immaculate clubman lays aside his purple and fine linen for the disreputable garb of a broken-down hanger-on at the fringes of gangland. Once more the "Gray Seal" spreads terror equally among crook and police.

If you have read the other tales of Jimmie Dale you will want to read this book. If you haven't, and like a good crime-and-mystery combination, you'll want to read it anyway. Frank L. Packard has written many tales of mystery and crime, but his art diminishes not at all with the production of a new one.

The only objection we have to his book is that in it the forces arrayed against Mr. Packard's hero come to a definite defeat; the end is thoroughly final. But we think of Sherlock Holmes and are comforted. If Sherlock Holmes could come alive out of the Reichenbach fall it will be no trick for Mr. Packard to get his hero into more trouble. There may be another Jimmie Dale story soon! F. Gregory Hartswick.

Mr. Kohlsaats Memoirs "FROM MCKINLEY TO HARDING" By H. H. Kohlsaat. Publisher: Charles Scribner's Sons, \$3.00

Here, indeed, is political history written by an "insider". Autographed letters, luncheons, journeys, and conferences with McKinley, Roosevelt, Wilson, Harding, Mark Hanna, John Hay, Elihu Root, Myron T. Herrick, and many others make Mr. Kohlsaat's evidence not only of original historical value, but gives one a fascinating feeling of intimate contact with political forces, a sense of seeing for a moment behind the curtain, usually so carefully drawn.

Attired no more formally than in summer underwear, Mr. Kohlsaat, Mark Hanna and William McKinley, an hour after the close of the Republican convention of 1892 made plans for the latter's candidacy in 1896. The author wrote the famous "Gold Plank" in the Republican platform of 1896 which defeated Bryan in that most tumultuous of campaigns. Riding in the McKinley funeral trains from Buffalo to Washington, Mr. Kohlsaat coached Roosevelt to "sell" himself to Mark Hanna. All of this and much more is told in a style worthy of one who was for years editor-in-chief of the Chicago Record Herald.

The critical reader will notice gaps. Mr. Kohlsaat being high in the Republican circles, we find, as might be expected, three fourths of the book dealing with the McKinley and Roosevelt administrations. The eight years of Woodrow Wilson occupy brief pages, while Taft for some reason is seen mainly as he touches Roosevelt.

But these, after all, are Mr. Kohlsaat's memoirs. The events which that

memory touches he gives us in vivid and revealing retrospects. J. B. Buell.

The West Virginia Coal Fields "THE TYRANNY OF POWER", By Thomas Curtin. Publisher: Little, Brown & Co., \$2.00 In a setting of present day industrial conflict—the coal fields of West Virginia—Mr. Curtin has placed Charles Lannen, escaped prisoner, unjustly convicted in our modern legal machinery. Power misapplied furnishes both background and title for his novel.

Neither vivitany realistic nor profoundly philosophical, the plot itself moves rapidly, with all the necessary essentials for interest and entertainment. Lannen falls in love with Lorette Mills, daughter of a Trimro capitalist mine owner; en-

gages in a political campaign with the candidate of the opposing coal company under the absentee ownership of Martin Goode and his son Justinian, who were responsible for his unjust imprisonment; is denounced by them, but later exonerated; wins the campaigns and Lorette; all in a whirlwind finish exciting enough to satisfy anyone.

The industrial situation in West Virginia, is inherently dramatic and the author's picture of it adds in no small part to the interest of the story. J. B. Buell.

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Girls of the Senior class at Northwestern university were hostesses to the Senior girls at New Trier High school at 4 o'clock vespers at Harris hall Tuesday of this week.

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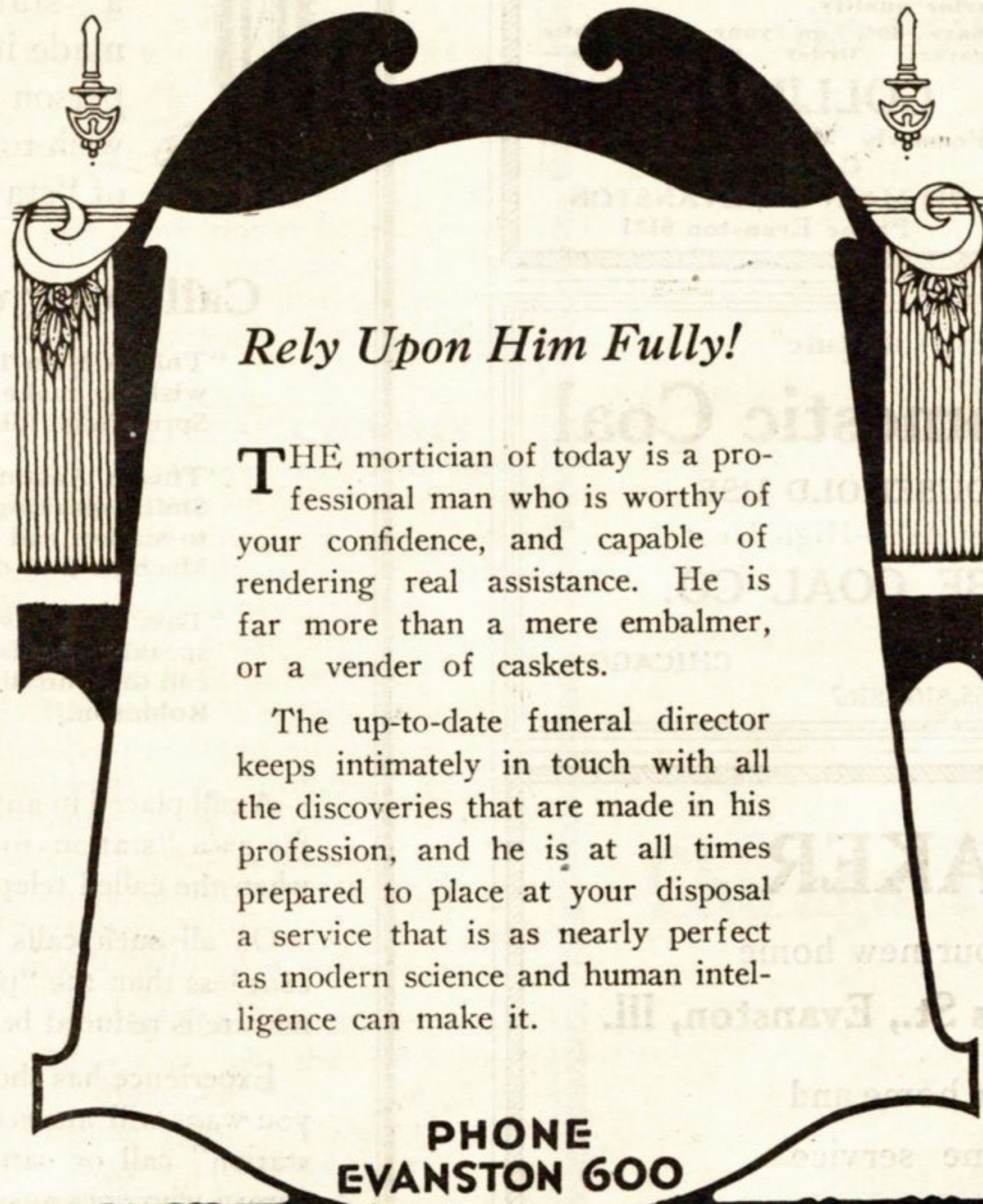
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