

Esther Gould's Book Corner

"ARIEL, THE LIFE OF SHELLEY"
By Andre Maurois.
D. Appleton and Company.

Turning a certain corner in one of the colleges of Oxford, one comes rather startlingly upon the full length figure of a man, lying prostrate as if in too great eagerness he had fallen. It is Shelley, supposedly in the position in which he was found after his drowning. One pauses and stands for a long moment before it, wondering, regretting, and turns away knowing somehow a great deal more about the poet Shelley.

So it is with this life of Shelley of Andre Maurois. You are arrested by its loveliness, you read it slowly, lingeringly, and when you have finished you know a great deal more about the poet, Shelley. M. Maurois gives a clear vision of the poet, how in his too great eagerness to reach something he has tripped and fallen. It was the sordidness of life over which he tripped, it was an ideal state of understanding for which he was reaching.

Perhaps you will say that "Ariel" is not a particularly balanced biography, nor was Shelley's a particularly balanced life. It is perhaps true that M. Maurois has started with the picture of his "Ariel" in mind and has picked out the events which are consistent with that picture. He has written a romance, a delightful story, yet it is based quite firmly on facts.

The incidents in Shelley's life which have been dragged out of dark closets and viewed with shudders are treated simply, delicately, sympathetically. Shelley's leaving Harriet and her subsequent suicide in the Serpentine, the conventional unconventionality of his life with Mary are shown to be as truly the outcome of circumstances and beyond the control of one person's will, as the falling of the leaves in autumn. All of his eager ill advised life, from the time that he was expelled from Oxford for being too pleased with his own literary eloquence, through the childlike romance with Harriet, and the marriage prompted by gallantry, through the stormy years of conflict with society to the bewildered exile, is set down.

To have taken a personality almost universal in its appeal and to have shown it in the light of deep sympathy and understanding, has made this one of the most worth while and delightful biographies of many months.

"THE LITTLE FRENCH GIRL"
By Anne Douglas Sedgwick.
Houghton Mifflin Co.

Anne Douglas Sedgwick has done a thrilling thing. She has written a book which will be outstanding not only among the books of to-day and tomorrow but all the days when people care for reality.

You hear someone say, "It is a slice of life," and you mentally picture a huge meat loaf which is life, and a huge carver which is the artist, handing out slices to a ravenous populace. And yet the simile is not bad. Notice a well made meat loaf and you will find that its ingredients have kept their separate entities while still contributing very definitely to the compact whole. "The Little French Girl" is much like the slice of life which we each more or less timidly nibble. Only it is better. It is a compact firm unity in which no flavor is lacking, no spice too strong. It is well made, well seasoned, well done.

In several ways, it reminds one of "Adrienne Tonner," Miss Sedgwick's well remembered book of two years ago. The English family life, the ingenious mother, the two brothers loving one

woman, the woman loved. Both Adrienne and "Topsy" become more real people when they are at last seen not through the illusioned eyes of their adorners but through the critical spectacles of everyday.

This is an international novel. Ordinarily one shies at the term for most international novels are so busy being international that they forget to be human. Not this one. The conflict is based on the deepest, most fundamental differences in French and English thought, on questions of love, marriage, and family life. And on these questions American thought ranges on the side of the English. Alix, the little French girl in England, sometimes seems in danger of being powdered between the two grinding forces. If she had been made of softer stone she would have been. Because she is not she becomes mentally more polished, more shapely than she could have been without the grinding.

Every character is well drawn, and with every character you have sympathy. There is no swashbuckling villain; the villain is, like most villains, within the hero. Alix's lovely mother is painted first indirectly as if we were looking at someone in a mirror—suddenly we turn and she is there. They are all there, Alix and Giles and Andre and the rest, not in a mirror at all, but there in the little house perched on a cliff beside an emerald sea.

Alice Carter Butler is Taken by Death Sunday

Alice Carter Butler passed away at St. Luke's hospital Sunday morning, November 2. Mrs. Butler had been seriously ill since her return from Europe early in August. The funeral was private.

There will be a memorial service at the Unitarian church, 1407 Chicago avenue, Evanston, on Sunday, November 16, at 3:30 o'clock.

Mrs. Butler formerly resided in Glencoe.

FRENCH TEST AUTO FUELS

Experience thus far demonstrates that the arrangements made for the use of national alcohol stocks as motor fuel in France have not proved satisfactory, but apparently the French intend to carry on the experiment for some time longer.

Nine office buildings in New York City have, in the aggregate more telephones than the whole of Peru, Ecuador, Colombia and Paraguay combined.

By Harvey O'Higgins
JULIE CANE

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"There is no dull page" says Walter Yust in the N. Y. Evening Post, speaking of THE COLOUR OF YOUTH by V. H. Friedlaender. Why should there be? Nothing is dull to youth and if Miss Friedlaender has caught the spirit of her characters as she did in her last great success "Mainspring," there could be no dull page.

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SYMPHONY HAS CROWDED HOUSE

Second of Series Enthusiastically Received

By X. Y. Z.

Last Monday evening, November 3, came the second concert in the series to be given this season by the Symphony Players of Chicago. As usual the New Trier assembly hall, where the program was presented, was filled to the walls with the music lovers of Wilmette, Kenilworth, Winnetka, Hubbard Woods and Glencoe. As our neighbor in the seat to the right remarked, "Nothing succeeds like success," referring to the amazing popularity of these musical occasions.

The players, after having given their afternoon children's concert, had taken their dinner in the school cafeteria. They were consequently (having had a good rest and a first-class meal) in fine trim for the evening performance.

The first number was Haydn's "Clock" Symphony, written in 1794. It is a simple, charming composition, rather a novelty in Chicago and its environs, not having been heard here during the past thirty years. Like all his works this piece reveals the outstanding virtues of the works of "Papa" Haydn—lucidity, perfect finish, studied moderation, firmness of design, and richness of development. The orchestra, under the decisive, sympathetic direction of George Dasch, interpreted this symphony with its usual skill and genuine sincerity.

The assisting artist of the occasion, Ruth Ray, then appeared. She used as her medium of expression Mendelssohn's only concerto for the violin, an amazingly beautiful composition, universally admired by violinists and audiences. Miss Ray played this concerto with what seemed to the writer finished technique and mature powers of emotional appreciation. For an encore she presented a composition, written evidently by Bach, for the unaccompanied violin.

The second half of the program

consisted of a "Slavonic Folk Song Variations," by Leo Delibes, and Liszt's "First Hungarian Rhapsody." The "Variations" of Delibes were exceedingly attractive. Debussy's "Arabesques," originally written for piano solo and transcribed for orchestra by Charles Roberts, were unique and interesting. "The Rhapsody," elaborate and brilliant, made a fitting close for a delightful evening of classical and modern music.

In the whole world there are just twenty-five cities that have over 100,000 telephones apiece. Sixteen of these cities are in the United States.

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LIBRARY GETS REALTY BOOKS

The Los Angeles Realty board has just presented to the public library of the city eight volumes making up the complete proceedings of the National Association of Real Estate boards at its seventeenth annual convention held in Washington in June.

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ARIEL

the life of Shelley
By Andre Maurois

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