

Esther Gould's Book Corner

Are You Interested in books of Fiction, Biography, Travel, or History? For lists write to ESTHER GOULD care your local paper.

Efficiency Ad Absurdum

"WE"

By Eugene Zamiatin.
E. P. Dutton & Co.

A rather frantic young Russian rebelled against the heavy handed method in which the Russian state is attempting to standardize human life. His rebellion has taken the form of a book which has not yet seen the light in Russia but which Gregory Zilboorg has translated into English. It is a thing of cubistic formations, of hard surfaces—cubes and cones and hexagons. It is as restful as the overturning of a box of children's blocks in the dark. Mr. Zamiatin has meant it to be grimly humorous, he succeeds in getting enough truth into it to make it tragic.

Instead of Samuel Butler's prophecy that machinery will one day conquer man, it is standardization and efficiency which have done it here. As Butler's "Erewhon" caricatured and satirized our civilization by opposites, "We" does it by extremes. The process of standardization is carried to its logical conclusion.

The story is told by a mathematician of nine hundred years hence. A day opens. "The cheerful, crystalline sound of the bell at my head. Seven o'clock. Time to get up. To the right and to the left as in mirrors to the right and to the left through the glass walls I see others like myself, other rooms like my own, other clothes like my own, movements like mine, duplicated thousands of times. This invigorates me; I see myself as a part of an enormous, vigorous, united body; and what precise beauty! Not a single superfluous gesture or bow, or turn. Yes, this Taylor was undoubtedly the greatest genius of the ancients. . . . Breakfast was over. The hymn of the United States had been harmoniously sung; rhythmically, four abreast we walked to the elevators, the motors buzzed faintly and swiftly we went down." To the underground railway and to work.

And when the author in this cheerful crystalline world develops a soul, a simple surgical operation at the base of the brain undoes the mischief. And "I am healthy, perfectly healthy. I cannot help smiling, a splinter has been taken out of my head, and I feel so light, so empty.

O, efficiency experts, workers with men, take warning for this way lies your danger.

Mr. Guedalla Scintillates

"A GALLERY"

By Philip Guedalla
G. P. Putnam's Sons

English and American critics of late have fired their best fusillades in honor of the brilliant young historian, essayist, critic, Philip Guedalla. It is good for their souls to do this when the subject is as worthy as Philip Guedalla. He has been lauded ardently enough to become distinctly unpopular if he had not had it in himself to win universal approval.

"A Gallery" is scarcely to be compared with the masterpiece of the "Second Empire," the book in which lives a whole epoch of French history from the time that Napoleon went unbeaten to Elba, to the crash in 1870. It lives not as facts and dates which march by with wooden soldier like precision, but as thoughts and ideas, and vivid pictures.

"A Gallery" is, as its name implies, a gallery. We walk first through a narrow hall in which there are five landscapes. Colorful pictures of foreign cities—but somehow not hung to the best advantage.

We go on into the main room, the portrait gallery. Here is a feast awaiting us. The subjects are modern and of universal importance. "The Seven Sages," who are literary men, "The Seven Sleepers" who are politicians, "The Seven Lamps of Liberalism," and "Shadows" who passed by. Each character is painted vividly, brilliantly hackneyed as the words are in connection with Guedalla, they still must serve. Our impression of each character is shown off memorably—Wells, Hardy, Shaw, J. Ramsay MacDonald, Lloyd George and the rest.

And sprinkled lavishly in among them, so that, as usual with Guedalla, you will feel that you are reading a library instead of one book, are such caustic and delightful criticisms of the world and England as: "Age at any rate has had its due"; (among artists) "and quite a number of bath chairs have been wheeled respectfully up the easy gradients of the British Parnas-

sus. It is a form of good manners in which the people of these islands appear to excel, possibly because, in the highest possible degree, it combines sentimentality with cheapness. It is so obviously a less expensive matter to hand and establish reputation with a handful of bay-leaves out of the garden than to stand Chatterton a square meal; and there is something about the process that is a trifle more flattering to the national vanity. The English have always preferred their young geniuses starving, and almost from the beginning they have specialized in Grand Old Men. It is less perhaps, an inverted form of 'Beaver' than an odd survival of their primeval taste for Druids. . . . But stop us or we will quote the whole book.

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SEEN IN THE CITY

Where to Dine, Shop, Rest, etc.

For further information concerning any of these shops communicate with
Blanche Mason

SEEN IN THE CITY

Sleigh bells! Toboggans full of children, hitched to a speeding automobile, careening dangerously but gloriously at corners, mounting casual drifts to descend with a bang on the other side. "Sparkle," remarks January, clothed in robes of white, and moves happily on her way. We, too, move on happily—but whither? Why on to the specialty shops, of course, to take advantage of the January sales!

Fur Coats At Cost

At Henning's, in the Stewart Building, 108 N. State St., just across from Field's all fur coats are now offered at cost. The sale, of course, is necessary in order to make way for incoming merchandise. But it offers the prospective purchaser of a new fur coat an opportunity of which she should not be slow to take advantage. A magnificent gunmetal Caracul, with slate Fox collar, cuffs and border, for instance, was formerly \$1,500—and may now be had for \$1,000.—More modest furs may be had at very modest prices. The quality of Henning furs is too well known to need description. Mrs. Henning herself will wait upon you if you like.

To California—By The Rock Island

Are you going away, by the way? To California? Ah, after all that's the "land of heart's desire". It is hard to believe, isn't it, that while our countryside lies sleeping under a deep robe of snow the whole of nature is awake and laughing, in California. The oranges and grape-fruit are hanging heavy on their branches. The sun shines warm and the poppies blossom across rolling, up-sweeping hills. Under heavy, weeping vines lie the ruins of the Spanish missions and—a broad white ribbon up the coast—runs the Royal Spanish Road. Mystery, here! Yes, and beauty—and charm. Also, of course, much gaiety and youth.

But the best adventure of all is the trip out, itself, and this year it should be made without fail over the Rock Island. There's a new fast train on the Rock Island, just like a sumptuous modern hotel on wheels, you see, and in order to have the very latest thrills you really must try it. From end to end it is clubbing but Pullmans, observation cars, and dining cars, and so forth. And it has a special lounging room for women—and two baths. Think of it! All that on a train! Besides there is no extra fare for this Golden State Limited, and the route is the most direct to Southern California.

Permanent Wave By Coulson

Before you go, however, you'll need a permanent wave. And in our opinion the only person to give it to you is Coulson—Coulson who has been an authority in permanent waving for fifteen or more years, who has recently established a school to teach permanent waving, whose research work in the subject has made him an authority. Coulson's appointment book reads like the social register. The prices in his establishment are the most reasonable. The address is 15 East Washington Street.

A Perfect Reducing Garment

Alas. What has become of the poor old corset? Gone—down to oblivion—gone forever! And in its place rises the Body Glove, like a phoenix from the ashes of what used to be. The Body Glove is the invention of a graduate nurse and it is the softest garment ever made for reducing. It is not made of rubber, of course! It's action is hygienic and beneficial. But it slenderness by an original and highly effective system, and it moulds the figure to a lovely silhouette. Go and hear more about it at room 332 in the

Republic Building, State at Adams Street. The price is moderate. You will be fitted by an expert.

Lane Bryant's Sale of Dresses

At Lane Bryant's, Wabash and Washington Streets, all the finest winter garments have been priced for immediate clearance. The sellings include dinner, street and afternoon dresses in silk and cloth at \$25—, \$38, \$49—and up, plain and fur trimmed coats at \$35—, \$45—, \$55—and up, and all fur coats from \$169.50 and up. Lane Bryant specializes in clothing for stout women, and for women whom the ordinary stock sizes do not fit comfortably. If you find that ready made garments in general don't seem to suit your figure try Lane Bryant's. They carry sizes from 38 up to 56.

Hats To Order, By An Expert

Nothing is so flattering to a beautiful woman as a really becoming hat. But no hat is becoming unless it really suits the face beneath it. So I commend you to Mrs. McClellan, expert in making hats to order to suit the personality of the wearer. You will find her room 332 in the Republic Building. Formerly with Henri Bendel in New York, Mrs. McClellan has excellent taste, a fine discretion in combining materials and an intuitive understanding of what constitutes elegance. She imports all her material from New York, France and Italy.

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