

Esther Gould's Book Corner

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ANOTHER TALE OF RUSSIA "FROM PRESIDENT TO PRISON"

By Ferdinand Ossendowski,
E. P. Dutton & Co.

Ferdinand Ossendowski has written a third book of the trilogy of his experiences in Russia of which "Beasts, Men and Gods" and "Man and Mystery in Asia" were the first two. "From President to Prison" is the story of his experiences before and during the Revolution of 1905, and his later term in the terrible Russian prisons.

Appointed by the Government as experimental chemist to cooperate with the Russian army in Siberia during the Russo-Japanese War, Dr. Ossendowski had a remarkable opportunity for studying the conditions that existed. He saw the undernourished, ill-managed troops the money for whose food and clothing went into the pockets of grafting officers, whose very lives were sacrificed in useless engagements so that these same officers might have honorable mention for taking part in such bloody battles.

He saw the horrible "pogroms" which were common in the subject territories, and himself was witness to the massacre of the Russians, in 1905, when betrayed by their leader-priest they were shot down in the streets like hunted animals. Unbelievable things and conditions Dr. Ossendowski has witnessed, all of the last great acts of the tragedy leading inevitably up to the final act—the Russian Revolution. And now that that act has been played Dr. Ossendowski sees no brighter hope. "This was, and surely will continue to be for a long time still" he says, "the manner of the authorities in dealing with the people, whom they have always regarded merely as cattle without rights and accustomed to most monstrous measures of repression. Watchwords have changed but the system of government has remained the same. It is illegality and violence."

Dr. Ossendowski always manages to give in his books that feeling of a vast unknown country in which the most startling things are not only possible but usual. In this one he has been less successful than in his others in giving one continuous thread to his narrative and thus carrying his reader's interest triumphantly to the end. It is, in spite of the great underlying events with which it deals, rather a series of incidents than a drama.

OLD CHICAGO

"THE SMITHS"

By Janet A. Fairbank.
The Bobbs Merrill Co.

Mrs. Janet A. Fairbank has taken one of the descendants of "The Cortlandts of Washington Square" and done for Chicago what she there did for New York. She runs the risks which all writers of historical novels must run, either that she make the characters too subservient to the history or that she make the history too subservient to the characters. To a certain extent Mrs. Fairbank has committed both of these errors. Perhaps she would have committed one of them anyway, the one of not letting us really sufficiently feel the characters. We never seem to be living in exactly the same world with them. On the other hand when the most vital interest has been aroused in great historical events such as the Chicago fire she gives us much less than we—of Chicago at least—would like to have and turns to her character development.

However, though this division of attention prevents the book from being an intensely gripping one it is very interesting, particularly to those who by accidents of time or place are not familiar with the building up of Chicago.

Peter Smith, the central character of the book, epitomizes in his indomitable rise from a small machinist to a great iron king, the spectacular emergence, during his lifetime, of Chicago as a great city. Yet the character about which we care the most is not Peter but his wife, Ann Cortlandt Smith, who has much less to do with the rise of Chicago. She is very much occupied with the problem of living, about which she says at the end "Life is all very well to live, Dan,—but it won't bear thinking about."

In Peter's family we see the great family of a new community, the early pioneering spirit, the appalling obstacles overcome, the final rise to immense fortune on the wave of the city's progress.

And in the children, too, we see the frequent sequel, the entire lack of the indomitable strain which seems

to have run out with the parents' early life, the desire for luxury and an easier occupation than their father's and the father's consequent great disappointment.

In Ann's life we realize that those early days made up a man's world, for a man of Peter Smith's calibre, at least, the problems of building up a great industry were too immense to be shared by a woman. So Ann was left to build what life she could from the fragments of the old New York world she had left and the new one growing up before her.

FIRST GRADERS NEED WATCHING

Calls Physical Defects Hindrance to Study

With more than 200,000 Illinois children about to face the school mistress for the first time, after which their lives will be fraught with books and bells for a decade or more, Dr. Isaac D. Rawlings, state health director, takes occasion to suggest in a bulletin issued this week that a health certificate for each of these men and women of tomorrow will have a far more profound affect upon the ultimate result of school life than will the faultless grooming of the hair, the immaculate washing of hands and face or the dainty adjustment of a freshly laundered collar. Lited out of a carefree life of playful exercise in the open, the six-year olds will find the physical strain of classroom discipline hard enough without nursing the handicaps of defective vision, diseased tonsils, decayed teeth, impaired hearing or other disorders that are so frequently present but which usually may be promptly corrected by proper medical treatment.

Susceptible to Ills

"Experience in public schools where adequate medical supervision exists shows that first grade children lose considerably more time from school because of illness than the children of any other grade", said Dr. Rawlings. "They are more susceptible to disease because of their tender years and because of the radical change of environment imposed by school room discipline and confinement. They therefore need every possible attention which tends to increase their physical health

and bodily resistance against infections. "Neatness of clothing and cleanliness of body are highly commendable virtues in school children but soap and water cannot remove a diseased tonsil nor can a freshly laundered collar correct poor vision or fill decayed teeth. The frequency of physical defects among young children and their evil affects upon health and school progress make corrective measures of great importance.

Need Examination

"Year after year a lot of children who have been rated as dull and who have fallen behind their classes are found to be suffering from physical defects rather than mental incapacity. Such children, although they make satisfactory progress after corrective treatment, have lost forever the tardy years that were spent in vain efforts at learning and have had an unnecessary degree of discouragement thrust upon them because of their innocent backwardness.

"For the sake of the child's health and welfare and for economy to the parents and public each of the 200,000 six-year-old tots who will soon answer the school bell for the first time ought to have the advantage of a thorough physical examination by a competent doctor. Each one ought to face his teacher with the scar of a successful smallpox vaccination on his arm, a record of immunization against diphtheria and a certificate of health showing freedom from corrective defects. Armed with these safeguards and a normal mind, his career in school will cause him to approach much nearer the aspirations of his parents and the demands of modern civilized life than will otherwise be the case.

STAGE QUEEN NOW IN FILM

Irene Olsen, well known in musical comedy, is making her screen debut in support of Barbara La Marr and Conway Tearle in "The Heart of a Siren."

Miss Olsen's work was so successful that she was contracted with, at the close of filming on "The Heart of a Siren," to appear in the next La Marr picture, as well.

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Kenilworth Man Enjoys "Y" Camp Life in Woods

A Kenilworth man, Wesley Amundson, is reported to be one of the successful fishermen at Camp Nawakwa, conducted by the Y. M. C. A. of Chicago for men in the Lac du Flambeau Indian reservation, in northern Wisconsin.

No telephone calls, no business conferences, no roar of "L" trains, no stiff collars, but it was a chance to camp in the beautiful woods and be a boy again, said Mr. Amundson. Swimming, long canoe trips, over the connecting lakes and streams of northern Wisconsin, fine fishing, baseball, volleyball, or reading and quieter games around the big fire place in the lodge fill up the days, which pass very quickly.

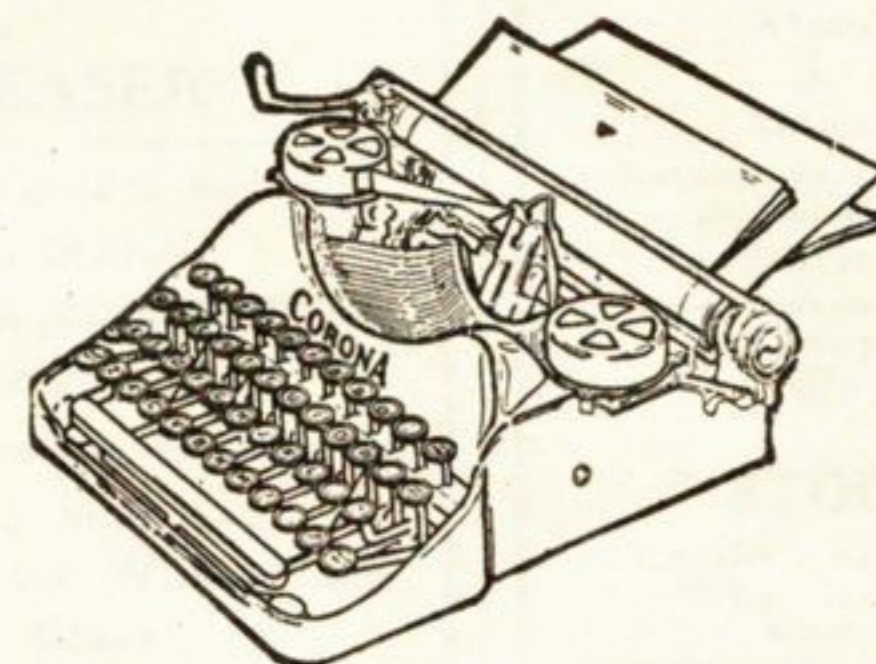
The intellectual atmosphere about the camp is indicated by the official labeling of the four cows that give milk for

the campers with the titles of "Venus", "Erysipelas", "Queen Elizabeth", and "The Queen of Sheba." Three pigs which serve as the camp garbage incinerators are named, "Good Morning", "Good Evening", and "Good Night."

Claim Auto Drivers Become More Careful

The careful crossing campaigns of safety organizations and of the railroads is beginning to have its effect, according to the accident prevention department of the Chicago Motor club.

During the first six months of 1924 the Chicago terminal division of the Pennsylvania railroad reported that 112 crossing gates were broken by motorists. During the same period in 1925, however, this occurred but 85 times, a reduction of 27, which, with the tremendous increase in car registration, means that there has been considerable improvement in driving.



Tougher than a Cross-word Puzzle

The boss left town last night, and the stenographer tried in vain to make out one vital word in a memo he had left on his desk. Perhaps her failure would cost the firm a good customer - but it would not be her fault.

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