

# Esther Gould's Book Corner

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

## HISTORY THROUGH GLASSES

### "ENCHANTERS OF MEN"

By Ethel Colburn Mayne  
G. P. Putnam's Sons

To look at history through personalities is like looking through opera glasses at a stage. The entire stage is not visible at once but the part on which the glasses are fixed is extraordinary clear. In Ethel Colburn Mayne's fascinating volume "Enchanters of Men," we turn the glasses on the Renaissance, the France of Louis XIV and of the Revolution, the England of Dickens and Swinburne. And for such short swift glimpses as these must be, the effect is remarkably vivid.

Who can ever forget the reply of Diane de Poitiers when she was ordered to leave her palace and Paris where she had reigned as Queen for so many years, "Le roi est mort?" Queen one day and a driven exile the next was the dramatic fate of these women who played for the highest stakes.

The author has performed the difficult feat of making this a scholarly work, in which she has sifted down the most important points of history, and yet not in any way losing the understanding and the spirit of the whole.

## ITALIAN REALISM

### "THE OUTCAST"

By Luigi Pirandello  
E. P. Dutton

"The Outcast," by Luigi Pirandello, perhaps the foremost Italian playwright, the author of, among other plays, "Six Characters in Search of an Author," is a stirring realistic novel.

Strikingly dramatic, it has every element of contrast and suspense of unity and continuity which a play would demand. The method is one of swift clean strokes, not the tortuous windings of our Sinclair Lewis type of realism.

The scene is laid in a small Italian town. Rocco Pentagora, accusing his wife of unfaithfulness, casts her out of his house. His evidence is a letter

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## When We Were Very Young

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E. P. Dutton & Co. New York

from a wealthy man of the town, which though it is formal in tone uses the informal "tu." That is enough. Primitive, violent, unprincipled, Rocco accuses her and rushes to his own home.

Marta, bewildered by the injustice and cruelty of her husband's action, goes to her parents also. Tacitly the world, even her own family, takes up her husband's charge. Her father shuts himself up in a room and refuses to come out, until months later he finally dies of rage. Marta is publicly insulted. Each time she tries to raise herself by slow tortuous effort out of the mire there is someone ready to push her back.

It is a human version of Katherine Mansfield's unforgettable story, "The Fly." "He plunged his pen back into the ink, leaned his thick wrist on the blotting paper, and as the fly tried its wings, down came a great heavy blot. What would it make of that? What indeed?" It made what Marta made, what everyone would make of it in the end, it succumbed to the ink. And when after long months her husband offers to take her back, Marta's cry has the poignance of all the bitterly oppressed, "Justice—reparation. Do you believe there can be such a thing? Who is going to take away from us the memory of all we have suffered?"

## A NOVEL OF YOUTH

### "QUEST"

By Katharine Newlin Burt  
Houghton Mifflin Co.

"Quest" is an interesting story of two youths in their search for God, one of whom approaches in a spirit of fear, the other in the white heat of ecstasy.

Little John's first immediate experience with God was on a day, when, after a harsh punishment from his father, he had been shut in a dark room for repentance, the parrot of his just arrived Aunt Tabby intones from a corner, "I am the Lord thy God. I am a jealous God." Poor Little John, terrified, believes him, and never quite ceases to do so.

Nicholas after a less harsh punishment, wakes up from a wonderful dream and sees a star shining through his window. He feels himself to be

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Sometimes the story dips slightly toward the melodramatic, at other times it is remarkably good depiction of a group of characters living a very real life.

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## Christmas Gift Books

(Biographies from \$2. to \$5.)

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THE ROMANTIC '90's. A delightful autobiography by Richard LeGallienne. \$2.50

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