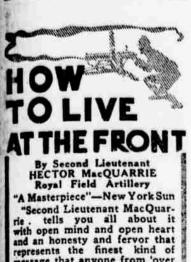




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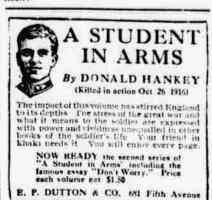
I in my library lately," said Doctor cases, "and I have been impressed by the j large number of great works by foreigners. I have begun to wonder whether America has produced any men of letters who can take rank with the big men of | other nations."

"There is J. Fenimore Cooper." remarked Owen. "His stories are read in England, France and Russia as well as

in America. And I do not know into how many languages 'Uncie Tom's Cabin' has een translated." "But you don't call 'Uncle Tom's Cabin'

ten in slovenly English." "People read them and like them, all the same," Owen inststed. "And you enough importance to justify the use of know Longfellow is one of the favorite

poets of the English." "You have not yet mentioned the greatest name in American literature," I said. "What is it?" Miss Ames asked. "Is it Howells or James or Poe or Walt Whitman?"



"Those are all great names," I admitted, but I think there is a greater one. We McFabre as he stood before my book. have produced a man who even new takes rank along with Cervantes, the Spaniard, and Le Sage, the erenchman, and as we get farther from him we are likely to recognize his greatness more and more. He looms above the rest as Pike's Peak lifts itself above the plains. His name is Mark Twain."

"What! You don't call that buffoon great?" said Doctor McFabre.

"You interest me very much, doctor," I said. "You are the second man of infelligence who has made such a remark

to me. The first one was the editor of a iterature, do you?" Miss Ames wanted weekly magazine of large circulation. I to know. "And Cooper's stories are writtold him when Mark Twain died that he might to have an editorial article about

him, but he said that the man was not of the necessary space. My friend was a good editor, however, and when he discovered that the whole world was paying

tribute to the dead author he consented. "Mark Twain was more than a humorist, like Artemus Ward," I went on. "I

would not say this if you did not seem to be unaware of it, doctor. We do not think of Cervantes as primarily a humorist, nor does the fame of Le Sage rest on his ability to make a joke. Humor with these three glants is merely the

human folbles. They all wrote commentaries on life, commentaries so true and

so full of insight that Cervantes and Le-Same are still read with pleasure and profit. And if I mistake not Mark Twalte will be read when nine-tenths of hiscontemporaries are forgotten. He was one of the biggest men of letters that the world has produced. In spite of the failure of some to appreciate him, he was admittedly the greatest living American writer for several years before his death.

There are men who say that Howells is now our greatest living writer. Curiously enough, these two men who were

written to Howells than to any one else. style which is the despair of little men. "Letters are dreary reading," said Doc- The men who said that Grant could not tor McFabre.

"You would make an exception in favor of Mark Twain if you should read those he wrote," I replied. "No more delightful

correspondent than this genial Missourian ever sent a message to a friend through the post." They are full of humor and

A New Chesterton A SHORT HISTORY OF ENGLAND

wit, and the kindly, affectionate spirit of A PHILADELPHIA the man shines on every page. I do not believe you could read them, doctor, without regretting that you did not know the

the few notes to his wife which are included you would begin to measure the love letters which you get-

"I don't ---- " she started to say,

EVENING LEDGER-PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1917

"Maybe you don't get any to talk about just now, and maybe you won't talk about them anyway," I went on, "but the man who could address such tenderness to her and such adoration would bring the most confirmed spinster perilously near to the point of recanting."

"Priscilla has not taken any vows of elibney," said Doctor McFabre.

"Owen will be glad to hear it." I said. and before he could interrupt I hastened to say: "The collection of letters is almost as good as an autobiography. In some respects it is better, for the letters were written without any expectation that they would ever he printed. An excellent biography of Mark Twain has been written, but these two volumes would serve, very well if fuller details were not accessible. They are preceded by a brief sketch of his life, which gives the main facts of his career. The letters themselves are full of interesting and important information and illuminating comment on his contemporaries. You admire Roosevelt, doctor. What do you think of this description of him?"

And I read the following extract from t letter to Doctor Twichell, of Hartford, dated November 4, 1994;

It vexes me to catch myself praising the clean private citizen Boosevelt and blaning the solied President Roosevelt, when I know that neither praise nor blane is due to him for any thought or word or deed of his, he being merely a helpless, irresponsib by the hand of God sible coffee-mill ground

"That's nothing but bosh," said the clergyman

"I won't argue the point," I continued. "The letters have things to say about General Grant as well as about Roosevelt You know that Mark Twain's publishing house issued Grant's reminiscences. There of not so quickly that he cannot capture hem and imprison them in paper bands for as are those which have found lodgment in the minus of thousands of thinking men was gossip at the time and afterward that Grant did not write the book which bore his name. It was said that he had and women And the way in a expressed them could not b given the material to some one who had There are whole poems sometimes in a sin-gle phrase, as for example, when he speaks of "the spell and tremendous locantation of whipped it into shape to print. Indeed. the critics were automished by the superb literary style of the book. Some of them the Thought of Death." The book is one which those who delight in literature cancould not believe that a man who had not not afford to miss.

been trained to write could have produced so different were intimate friends. Two it. These letters prove that Grant did volumes of Mark Twain's letters have the writing himself. He had a story to just been published. More c" them are tell and he told it in the simple direct

> write in this way evidently forgot that Caesar produced a book that is a model

of compact statement." "I suppose that is no." said Doctor Me-Fabre, "but I don't like Mark Twain's religious views."

Royalists were fomenting plots to overthrow Napoleon just at a time when victory over "His wife was troubled about them all foreign enemies seemed within his grasp In those days, as now, there were no slack ers in France, and the bitterness of the ilso," I admitted, "but do you know that one of his most intimate friends was a

distinguished clergyman of Hartford? 1 **BOOKS THAT CHEER** am inclined to think that these two men got along so well together because they were so much alike. They expalined matters in a different way, but at bottom they were agreed. There was something fine in a theory of life that could produce such a man as Mark Twain. You know his wife once said that if her husbana went to hell she wanted to go with him By G. K. CHESTERTON. "Orthodoxy," for heaven would be hell without him; Author of "Heretics," Cloth, \$1.50 net. and she gave up attempting to explain etc. The momentous contest between im by any of the futile formulas which the churches have put out for the salvathe forces of self-government and absolutism has inspired Mr. Chesterton tion of men. If you read the letters you to write this brilliant commentary on English history, and he will be welwill discover some of the reasons which led her to this conclusion. 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Though not a tale of the trenches, training ad the factor of grinders, who are playing such an important part in the present army. "The Man in the Ranks" (Houghton M film Commany) is simply a collection of frank, friendly words of advice from one who has gone through the entire gramut of military experiences and who knows the difficulties of the first day in this is none the less a story of warfare, fought with the weapon of Science. It is a powerful novel, in which love and sacrifice play a tremendous part, and amp. the characterization is unusually ex-Career of Mirandy cellent. The series of short stories written by Armistead C. Gordon and published under BEST-SELLING BOOKS The series of anot before any published under the name of "Ommirandy" really constitute one character study and very little more There is not much of the drumatic about these tales of a Virginia plantation, and the comparison which they naturally invite with the work of certain well-known writers of southern stories is perhaps not flattering to Mr. Gordon. But there can be no deny-ing the fact that the one central figure of the old before-the-war nearess transplant; d to the unfamiliar environment of post-war days is finely sketched. The theme of the devotion of a former slave to the master and family she has lived her life with is not new in fiction; it' is so trite, indeed that it is all the more to this author's credit that he has made the type seem not only The Best-Selling Novel THE **RED PLANET** By WILLIAM J. LOCKE. Author of "The Wonderful Year," etc. Cloth. Net, \$1.50. 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We are told that many of the characters are drawn from life, but this assurance that the story is founded on fact does not detract from its interest, for it is possible and detract from its from the parts of appendix OF ALL BOOKSELLERS

POET IN PROSE man, and, Mins Ames, if you should read Logan Pearsall Smith Has Written a Volume of Enchant-

ing Little Essays

"But how is one to keep free from thus mental microbes that worm-eat people's brains-those Theories and Diets and En-thuslasms and infectious Dectrines that we are always liable to catch from what seem the most innocuous contacts?" asks Logan Pearsall Smith in a remarkable and unusual olume of little essays. He remarks that "books and newspapers are simply creening with them," and wonders whether "this struggle for a healthy mind in a maggity

universe is really after all worth it. The answer, after reading his book, which shows that he has succeeded in escaping the con-tagion, is that the effort is worth while. Mr. Smith is a Uniledsimilian by birth, His Mr. Smith is a Philadelphian by birth, His father was the late R. Pearsall Smith and his sister A ye married Bertrand Bussell, a di tinguished Iriti -h philosopher. He was educated at Haverford and Harvard and bidded to his mental equipment by reading at Oxford. He has fived in England for every locate and has produced one or two everal years and has produced one or two moles of a solid and serious character that leave men without imagination. His new ok has been written because he had some things has been written because he had some things he felt like saring. He conferences to wonder what his Great Work shall be. Should he "complain against the mutabil-ity of Fortune and impugn Fats and the Conststiations" or should he denounce con-temporary Vices but as he reads in mod-ern books about "the Steed of the Age" he The books about the steel of the Age ne freis "an impulse to go out and comfort it and speak carnest words of Consolation to it." Then he wonders what people would read his book—"the e Thoughts (if I may call them so) dipped up from that phan-, tasmagoria and phosphorescence which, by some unexplained process of combustion, lickers even the large lump of soft gray while disciplished process of combustion, flickers over the large lump of soft gray matter in the bowl of my skull," and he speculates about them "Their tiste is ex-nulative," he writes: "they live in Geordian bouses, in a world of ivery and precious china, of old brick work and stone pliasters. In white drawing rooms I see them, or on bluebird-humted lawns."

He will certainly have readers, for a not enchanting book has not come from for o chemating book has not come from the prevents in a year at any rate. It is filled with the reflections of a poetic and original mind, detached from the turmoil of life, but sensitively connectous of it all. The thoughts that flit through his mind.

TRIVIA, By Logan Pearsall Smith, Garden Chr.; Doubleday, Page 4 Co. 11.25,

In the Days of Napoleon

With the greatest war of all history in progress, it seems a bit odd to de've into the conflicts of the past to find a martial

setting for a novel, and yet that is what Baroness Orczy has done in "A Sheaf of Rluebells." The story is a romance of

France in the days of Bonaparte, when the

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be improved

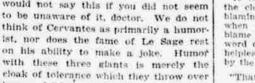
comes the happy culmination of the low affair. Like most of Baroness Orczy's noves, "A Sheaf of Bluebells" is a grippit story which stirs the blood to action and rouses every scintilla of patriotism in the soul of a man. SHEAF OF BLUEBELLS. By Haroness Orray. New York: George H. Deran Con-

## Century for December

When the first detachment of American roops marched through the streets of Lon-ton they were welcomed with enthusiastic troops marched through the streets of Lon-don they were welcomed with enthusiastic cheers, but the men marched silently, look-ing neither to the right nor to the left A cockney who was watching them remarked to the man beside him. "They're solemn-looking blokes, ain't they?" Stacy Au-monier tells in the December Century Magn-zine the story of this famous march and he discovered on the faces of the Ameri-cans an expression of determination and of solemn realization of the task which they had undertaken. And when a friend asked him that night what news he had he replied: "I have seen a portent. The world is safe for dem cracy." Whatever else one may read in this or any of the other current magazines no one should neg-lect to read Stacy Aumonier's article. It is as moving a piece of literature as has been written about the entrance of America into the war. There are Christmas stories in the number, as there should be and articles on different phases of the war and a continuation of Alice Duer Miller's serial. "The Happiest Time of Their Lives"







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