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# WAR FACTS IN FICTION—FAME OF W. H. HUDSON

## CONFESSIONS OF A NATURALIST

Two Fascinating Books by an Author Whose American Fame Is Just Beginning

W. H. Hudson, born in Argentina of an English father and a New England mother, is one of the greatest writers in English at the present time. If we may trust his admirers, John Galsworthy, who dedicated "The Country House" to him, says of him that "as a simple narrator, his is well-nigh unsurpassed; as a stylist he has few if any living equals." Yet almost nothing is known of his life save what he has revealed in his books. The English "Who's Who" says not a word about the place of his birth, or the year, his parentage or his residence. It simply gives a list of his books, beginning with "Argentine Ornithology," published in 1888, and ending with "Adventures Among Birds," which appeared in 1913.

His autobiography, published under the title of "Far Away and Long Ago," gives little information about the time he was born. Nothing is said of the part of England his father came from or the New England State in which his mother was born, and one has to conjecture when he first saw daylight. He was about seven years old when the Argentine dictator, Rosas, was deposed. As this was in 1852 Hudson must be about twenty-three years old. He has had to wait a long time for fame to come to him. But it is moving his way with such speed that it is likely to envelop him in the near future.

His autobiography stops with his fifteenth year, and for a little discussion of his mental and spiritual experiences after he was older. It is the story of the boyhood of a lover of birds and flowers on an Argentine estancia, in the middle of the last century, with incidental revelation of the manner of life of the people of the country. Its style justifies the praise of Galsworthy, for its English is simple, clear and beautiful, without pretension of any kind. He tells his story with the directness of Bunyan in "The Pilgrim's Progress."

The book is filled with love of nature. Here is the way he tells how it affected him when he became aware of the beauty of the world as a child:

It was not, I think, till my eighth year that I began to be distinctly conscious of something more than this mere childish delight in nature. It may have been all the time from infancy—I don't know; but when I began to know it consciously, as if some hand had suddenly dropped something into the honeyed cup which gave it at certain times a new flavor, it was not as a child, but as a man, that I was aware of it. At other times, starting, and with very warm feelings, I would feel as if some hand had suddenly dropped something into the honeyed cup which gave it at certain times a new flavor, it was not as a child, but as a man, that I was aware of it.

"Nature and the sea are it is the substance of all that he has written. It fills "A Little Boy Lost," a child's book which he has recently written in order that there might be in existence the kind of a book which he would have liked to read when he was a child. His own childhood has inspired the part of it that is real, and a vivid imagination and a fine realization of the desire of a child to have its mind stretched by wonders inspire the rest. It is the story of a little English boy in Argentina who wandered away from home and was lost on the plains. The Queen of the Mirages, with her train of attendants found him. One of the attendants said: "He loves wandering; let him have his will and be a wanderer all his days on the face of the earth. He is to be; let the sea do him no harm." And the Queen adds: "So be it, and to your gifts I shall add a third. Let all men love him. And so the child continues his wandering over the plains until he reaches the mountains, meeting with strange adventures, and the book ends with the child asleep on a raft at sea. It is a story that is likely to be as popular as Kingsley's "Water Babies."

**FAR AWAY AND LONG AGO**, by W. H. Hudson. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. \$1.25.

**A LITTLE BOY LOST**, by W. H. Hudson. New York: A. A. Knopf. \$1.50.

## Dr. Adriaan

By LOUIS COUPERUS

That long-awaited fourth volume of *The Books of the Small Souls* is here, and Couperus, past master in family psychology and the eternal comedy of family expectations and jealousies, has achieved another triumph in this story of the growth of a great soul among the small souls. The unfamiliar Dutch setting gives these Books of the Small Souls a touch of added interest for the American reader.

By the author of "Old People and the Things They Pass," etc.

Translated by Teixeira. \$1.50

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DOROTHY CANFIELD AND W. H. HUDSON  
Whose new books are among the best of the year

## A Naive Optimist

Popular essays on simplicity in living, cast in the semi-fictional form of conversations, make up "Mr. Squem and Some Male Triangles," by Arthur Russell Taylor. The primary purpose of these genial little sketches is to demonstrate "the massive decency at the heart of the common man," as exemplified in the optimistic and common, exceedingly common, person of Peter B. Squem, peripatetic peddler of automobile tires, whose philosophy is more practical than that of his "highbrow" chance acquaintances of railway coaches and theatres. He knows just what to do in a wreck, and he has a more practical sense of humor than that in "Die Walkure." Yet, despite his unashamed vulgarity he is the soul of kindness, thanks to the inspiring influence of a picture postcard of Christ which he constantly carries in his watch. Those who revel in the obvious may find Mr. Squem entertaining.

**MR. SQUEM AND SOME MALE TRIANGLES**, by Arthur Russell Taylor. New York: George H. Doran Company. \$1.50.

## What Our Navy Has Done

Nobody who reads Lawrence Perry's account of "Our Navy in the War" will again indulge in the thoughtless remark that "the navy plays no part in this war." For he will learn just how effectively submarines have been fought and captured, and our anti-submarine activities now cover in war areas alone more than 1,000,000 square miles of sea. "In a six-month period, known as the 'torpedo campaign,' our fleet of 217 single vessels, participated in eighty-six convoys, and spent 150 days at sea. There has been more than a six-fold increase in naval mail power and about a fourfold increase in the number of ships in service. When present plans have been carried out—and all projects are proceeding swiftly—the United States will probably have secured the British among naval Powers of the world."

The book is enlivened with many interesting and instructive anecdotes. The author covers the activity of all branches of the service, and even visits the life aboard a German submarine. It includes sketches of the "U-boats" and tells of naval camouflage, and describes the organization of auxiliary naval departments. The scope of the book is as large and varied as the navy itself.

**OUR NAVY IN THE WAR**, by Lawrence Perry. Illustrated with sketches. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. \$1.50.

## A "Tommy Waac's" Letters

"Tommy Atkins" has told us his story of and in the great war many times and in many ways. But now, for the first time, the "Tommy Waac" comes forward to tell us of the "bit" she is doing behind the lines to aid the fighting man in the trenches and the whole vast British military organization.

The anonymous author of "The Letters of Thomasia Atkins" is a private in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps. Mildred Aldrich, author of "A Hilltop on the Marne," vouches for Thomasia's reality and for the authenticity of the letters, which contain the value, chiefly, for the manner in which they reflect the unflinching cheerfulness and optimism of the author and her fellow "Waacs."

"Tommy Waac's" very little of actual condition in her own particular part of the war zone "somewhere in France." But she tells us of her own feelings and reactions, and memories of her former stage life, as she pursues her clerical routine.

The letters run from last fall, during preliminary training in England, to the beginning of the German drive in March of this year. "There they trumped and, with their vehement cry, 'We Shall Win' has been splendidly vindicated since those dark days."

**THE LETTERS OF THOMASINA ATKINS**, by Mildred Aldrich. New York: George H. Doran Company. \$1.50.

## Engineers in War Work

The success or failure of a modern battle may be controlled more by the ability of a single engineer than by a whole regiment of infantry. In the absence of the engineering forces, no military operations of any sort would be possible today. While the public realizes this in a vague way, the importance of the engineer in modern warfare is provided by Francis A. Collins in "The Fighting Engineers." He tells in clear, straightforward and unpretentious language the part of the engineer in the field and in the rear. He tells of their vital importance in reconstruction work, and in numerous illuminating anecdotes shows how American engineering forces have set a new pace in France, performing formidable and difficult tasks smoothly and in an admirable, well-timed manner. The book is a well-rounded account of the part now being played by "the minute men of our industrial army."

**THE FIGHTING ENGINEERS**, by Francis A. Collins. Illustrated. New York: The Century Company. \$1.50.

## Paris Sketches by Symons

A series of sketches written by Arthur Symons between the years 1890 and 1910 have been gathered in a book called "Colour Studies in Paris." They include a description of the gingerbread fair at Vincennes, a criticism of Yvette Guilbert when she had just emerged from obscurity, notes on the Paris of Paul Verlaine, songs of the streets and similar matters. They will be priced highly by admirers of Paris and those who delight in the limpid English of Mr. Symons.

**COLOUR STUDIES IN PARIS**, by Arthur Symons. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. \$1.50.

## Verses by Three Women

With the casualty lists war's sorrows have crept closer to the homelands and roused new poets to pour out their emotions in rhythm. Among these are three women whose homes have been touched by the new war.

It was the death of her brother, Corporal Frank E. Leveridge, wounded in action in France, that inspired Lillian Leveridge's "Verses from a Home," which is already widely quoted. She has made it the title poem in her book of twenty-five short poems. Touched with tenderness and pathos though they are, there is a monotony of rhythm that wears on the reader who scans them closely.

Katherine Lee Bates, who was previously heard from in "Fairy Gold," has given some beautiful lyrics of the war in her "Believe and Other Poems." She is simple, clear and beautiful, without pretension of any kind. Her lyrics lend itself to powerful pictures. Versatility is shown in contrasting poems of daily humorous quality.

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## French for Adults

One of the best books for the instruction of those adults who wish to learn conversational French or to refresh their memory of what they learned of the language in school is "Colloquial French," by William Robert Patterson. The chapter on pronunciation is really informing and its directions are so simple and illustrated by so many examples with familiar sounds in English that the student can get a pretty fair knowledge of the subject. Mr. Patterson, however, wisely advises every one to get the assistance of a Frenchman in perfecting his pronunciation. There follow lessons in the elements of the language and service of the article and the gender of words, followed by simple conversation, increasing in difficulty as the lessons proceed. The idiomatic expressions are explained in simple English lists of them. One who goes through the book faithfully, following the instructions will be able to carry on a simple conversation in French.

**COLLOQUIAL FRENCH**, by William Robert Patterson. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. \$1.25.

## Life at the Front

Life of the common soldier at the front in the present war is described in a remarkably interesting manner by Cornelius Van Pulst, a Michigan boy by birth, he enlisted in a Scotch regiment at the outbreak of the war in 1914, and served for more than two years until a severe wound disabled him. His simple account of his varied experiences in camp and in the trenches has an unusual personal touch which adds much to its interest. A strong attachment to his comrades is shown throughout his narrative, and his appreciation of their faithful service in the statement "In the nearly three years I was in France I never forgot the men I met. But he leaves a lasting impression of their faces, giving in one chapter an almost inconceivable account of their faithful deeds.

## A Noncombatant at the Front

A vivid and informing description of war on the firing line is to be found in "Ambulancing on the Front." The author, Edward R. Coyle, one of the first Americans to serve as ambulance driver, spent ten months in Red Cross ambulance service near Verdun at the time of its siege. The strongest impression, which his story leaves, is the value of the man who, though in the heart of the conflict, does not fire a shot. If he did not take food and munitions to the men at the front, it would be impossible. In addition to his own experiences he gives much information in regard to some of the present methods of warfare, as "snipers" or sharpshooters and hand grenades work. There is also an enthusiastic chapter on the American Y. M. C. A. The value and interest of the book is increased by the twenty-three reproductions of his graphic photographs.

## A Jockey Who Fought

Some additional sidelights on the workings of German Kultur upon the noncombatants of France and Belgium have been assembled in book form by Fred Mitchell, a noted jockey, who obtained his information through personal observation in the war zone at a heavy cost in the way of danger and hardship. Of particular interest is the author's narrative of his experiences while a prisoner in the hands of the Germans.

## A Christmas Masque

Percy Mackaye has written so many plays, operas and community dramas that he needs no introduction as the author of "The Christmas Masque." The masque of Christmas time for community singing and acting. The scenic and costume designs are by Robert Edmond Jones. This volume also contains three monographs on the masque written by the author, the scenic designer and by Arthur Farwell, composer of the music.

**THE CHRISTMAS MASQUE**, by Percy Mackaye. New York: Appleton & Co. \$1.50.

## WAR FICTION

BASED ON FACT  
Dorothy Canfield Has Produced Literature—Empey Has Told Tales

If Dorothy Canfield had written nothing else her latest book, "Home Fires in France," would assure her of distinction. It is made up of a series of tales of the war, based on facts. She has assimilated her material so completely that her narrative moves with freedom and ease. Her style and method of treatment remind one of the French masters of fiction at their best. "The Permissionnaire," for instance, is equal to any tale that has come out of the war and it is superior to most. It tells of a soldier who had fought for three years without going home, for the Germans were in possession of the village where his wife and family lived. As soon as the Germans were pushed back last spring he asked permission to go home and received leave for all the time due him. He starts joyously, stops in Paris to buy tools and seeds to cultivate and plant his little garden, leaves the train miles from his destination and walks on still cheerful. But his steps lag as he sees the devastation that has been wrought. Finally he reaches his village. Not a house is standing. Everything has been laid waste. After a little search he finds where his own home had been and falls face downward upon the ruins in an agony of despair. His wife, who had taken refuge in a dugout some distance away, discovers him there some hours later. What happened in the interim is so pathetic and restrained as one finds only in literature of the highest class. It is a great story. The volume contains others almost as good.

A book of an entirely different quality is Arthur Guy Empey's third volume about the war. It is a group of tales of the soldiers and their life in and out of the trenches based on the author's experiences while in Europe. No one has ever accused Mr. Empey of being a man of letters, and he is likely to escape the charge. The new book is as lacking in literary quality as his other two. "Over the Top" was popular because of the slangy and unconventional way in which the life of the soldiers was described. This new book, "Tales From a Dugout," is written in the same style. A literary artist, handling his material, might have made something out of it that would be of more than temporary interest. But Mr. Empey handles it so crudely that those who will find Dorothy Canfield's book so moving that they will treasure it will be likely to forget Empey's after the first reading.

**HOME FIRES FROM FRANCE**, by Dorothy Canfield. New York: Henry Holt & Co. \$1.25.

**TALES FROM A DUGOUT**, by Arthur Guy Empey. New York: The Century Co. \$1.50.

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"Shavings" has not been published serially.

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