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BOOKS ON AMERICA AND TURKEY IN THE WAR

THE UNITED STATES IN THE WORLD WAR

Professor McMaster Has Told the Story in a Most Interesting Volume

Professor McMaster has produced what we have all been waiting for; that is, a careful, painstaking and impartial review of the relation of the United States to the world war. His volume ends with the events of last May. When he writes a concluding chapter for the inevitable new edition which will be demanded, bringing the story up to the signing of the armistice, the book will take its place as a permanent contribution to history and it will be drawn upon by those who write the full history of the war and the effect of the conflict upon America.

The volume opens with the story of the immediate origin of the war in the assassination of the Austrian Grand Duke at Sarajevo. The story of the Austrian ultimatum is told and the efforts of England, France and Russia to preserve the peace are set forth in some detail. The chapter devoted to this phase of the subject is an admirable example of the best historic method. This is followed by the story of pro-German propaganda in the United States, telling how a press bureau was established from which pamphlets were scattered broadcast, how organized efforts were made to influence the opinion of Congress by letters and petitions sent from German centers of interest in all parts of the country, and how these efforts of pro-Germans in America were supplemented by official communications from the German Government. A chapter is given to the interference by the belligerents with neutral trade, another chapter is devoted to submarine frightfulness culminating in the sinking of the Lusitania, and a chapter is devoted to the diplomatic correspondence growing out of the Lusitania case. The attempts of pro-German sympathizers and Americans without a realization of what they were doing to prevent the sale of munitions to the Entente Allies are discussed. The treachery of German officials in this country is exhibited with proof, and so on through all phases of our relations with the conflict down to our declaration of war and the discussion of peace.

Professor McMaster's historical method was never used to better purpose than in the preparation of this book. And his literary style clothes his materials most attractively. No intelligent American interested in matters of importance can start the book without finishing it, so fascinatingly has he told his story.

THE UNITED STATES IN THE WORLD WAR. By John Bach McMaster. New York: D. Appleton & Co. $3.

A Dog and the War

It may be there is nothing new under the sun, but it must be admitted that very frequently things are brought forward which at least look different. This also can be said to apply to books in general and to books on the war in particular. Take the new story by Eleanor Atkinson, namely, "Poilu,' a Dog of Roubaix." Ostensibly this would be the tale of an heroic dog, which is just what it is. But one would hardly expect that the whole story of the incidents leading up to the world war and the more terrifying narrative of the sufferings imposed upon the miserable people of France and Belgium would also be incorporated. One is constrained to compliment the author for thus skillfully weaving into a composite whole a twofold narrative and for accomplishing her task without any of the confusion of detail which from experience one might be led to expect.

POILU', A DOG OF ROUBAIX. By Eleanor Atkinson. New York: Harper & Bros. $1.25.

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ALL BOOKSTORES

G. W. EDWARDS ON ALSACE-LORRAINE

Pictures in Color and Monotone Accompanied by Historical and Anecdotal Text

The third of George Whatton Edwards's books provoked by the war appears this year in time for the holiday season. It is about Alsace-Lorraine. It is a large volume handsomely illustrated in color and monotone from drawings and paintings by Mr. Edwards, based on sketches which he made during a tour of the two provinces in 1910. The quality of his art is too well known to need further praise. It is enough to say that the colored illustrations compare favorably with the best that he has done.

The text is a combination of travel sketches, history and legend woven together in a most fascinating manner. The first two chapters are historical, containing a review of the events in which the provinces have figured, their transfer to France and their conquest by Germany, together with a description of the oppressive tactics of Germany since 1871. The story of the famous Zabern incident of 1913 is told in some detail. Incident after incident is related which illustrates the loyalty of the people to France and their feeling of resentment toward their conquerors.

The succeeding chapters deal with the customs of the country, descriptions of the quaint houses and medieval fortresses, and with the tale of experiences in Altkirch, Mulhaus, Colmar, Strasbourg, Thann, Rosheim and other cities and towns. They are filled with such interesting comment and incident as an artist in search of the picturesque would find appropriate. The volume will be most entertaining to tourists who have visited Alsace-Lorraine, for it will recall to them by word and illustration many of their pleasant experiences. It will refresh the memory of those who know the country only through books and it will be instructive to those who have still to learn about the history and the scenery of one of the most fascinating corners of Europe.

ALSACE-LORRAINE. Described and pictured by George Wharton Edwards. Philadelphia: Penn Publishing Company. $6.

The War in Mesopotamia

A great many persons will recall the picturesque articles on Mesopotamia and the role this ancient land played in the world war, which appeared in the Saturday Evening Post under the authorship of Eleanor Franklin Egan. She is at her best as a writer on travel, and it is safe to say that these engaging articles, along with the others which together constitute the narrative of "The War in the Cradle of the World," will endure, for the twofold reason of their genuine worth and that the author was one of the few civilians who was allowed to enter the British war zone in Mesopotamia and observe at close range the British campaign there.

In addition to relating her own experiences in Mesopotamia, Mrs. Egan gives details of the conditions under which the British forces lived and fought. While at Bagdad she was the guest of General Maude, and was under the same roof at the time of his tragic death. Her narrative of the events leading up to that sad happening is grippingly interesting.

THE WAR IN THE CRADLE OF THE WORLD. By Eleanor Franklin Egan. New York: Harper & Brothers. $2.

Books of Verse

The muse of Denis A. McCarthy is robust and cheery. This quality is particularly prominent in the title poem of his fourth little volume of verse, "Songs of Sunrise." The other rhymes and lyrics range from swinging verses in praise of the outdoors to tender bits of sentiment and wistful verses rich in affection for Ireland. "Dreaming of Summer" most characteristically exemplifies Mr. McCarthy's Celtic idealism. The war poems are marked by stalwart courage that is unmarred by trite jingoism, and they are given pervasive human appeal by their finely democratic spirit.

The keynote of Amelia Josephine Burr's poems, which have been collected after fugitive periodical publication in "The Silver Trumpet," is courage for those whose mission in the war is to "keep the home fires burning." The poignant anguish of those who have felt the heavy hand of war has not sufficed to quench the singer's faith in the better traits of human nature; this faith shines forth in the many bits of verse which reflect both the bright and tragic moments of the war in characteristic pictures of domestic ties sundered, happy homecomings or heroic acts. The author's expression is graceful and her technique facile.

An ardent love for France vitalizes Paul Scott Mowrer's verses in "Hours of France in Peace and War." Effective contrast is achieved by mingling vivid bits descriptive of the woe wrought by war with idyllic glimpses of charming, peace-time vistas and incidents. The meters employed are forthright and make no pretense of polish, but they are spontaneous and always in key.

Berton Braley's "In Camp and Trench," described as "songs of the fighting forces," can scarcely be called poetry. They are simply episodes or aspects of army life told in rhyme of blunt and rugged character. There is a hint of Kipling in them, but it is of the consistency of skimmed milk.

SONGS OF SUNRISE. By Denis A. McCarthy. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. $1.25.
THE SILVER TRUMPET. By Amelia J. Burr. New York: George H. Doran & Co. $1.
HOURS OF FRANCE. By Paul Scott Mowrer. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. $1.
IN CAMP AND TRENCH. By Berton Braley. New York: George H. Doran & Co. Fifty cents.

Fighting With Gas and Flame

To the undying shame of Germany a book has been written on the terrible phases of gas-and-flame warfare which had their invention in the fevered minds of dupes of the German militarists. The author became chief gas officer to Sir Julian Byng after the Allies were forced to retaliate in kind upon their conscienceless foe. He tells the story of the first gas attack on April 22, 1915, and the horror of the Allied troops; he recounts the at first frantic and later successful efforts to combat this new terror of warfare, and finally traces the development of gas-and-flame warfare up to the time of its present perfection. Major Auld has received a military cross for his courage in crawling into No Man's Land to observe the effects of a British gas attack.

GAS AND FLAME IN MODERN WARFARE. By Major S. J. M. Auld. New York: George H. Doran Company. $1.35.

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PHELPS AND NATHAN ON THE THEATRE

The Dramatic Critic and College Professor Don't Agree at All

It is from a remarkable fund of knowledge that George Jean Nathan draws for his latest discussion of the merits and demerits of "The Popular Theatre"; knowledge of the very best, and the very worst, that for years has emanated in the show line from Broadway row, of the foreign theatre, of adaptations from the foreign theatre and of actors and playwrights, and even of critics. When George Jean Nathan speaks the American theatre lover does well to listen.

"That the popular play is by sound standards ninety-nine times out of a hundred a bad play," says Nathan, "is a scandal long since interred in the Pit under Platitude." Then he complains that the reasons for the automatic badness are rarely inquired into, and takes exception to the professorial theory that the collective psychology of the crowd is instrumental in reducing the intelligence of the crowd to the lowest common denominator. He contradicts this by contending that in the theatre the mob rises to the highest leaven of intelligence. So the weakness of the modern play must lie elsewhere.

The stupid ritual of the stage, the author contends, which requires that the form of a play must be just so and so and not otherwise, cramps the honest playwright who would save his play from such crucifixion. "Imagine," he says, "cutting three-quarters of an hour out of the reading of Conrad's novel, 'Lord Jim.'" The playwright's medium of expression is too primitive, too greatly curtailed.

Nathan contends that the best and truest of American plays emanates from Broadway. It may be lacking in elegance and worldly philosophy, but its very raciness is typical of our national life, and what more can you ask than that a play be faithful to things as they are?

The American musical play, without plot or theorem, has set a standard for the world, Mr. Nathan believes, and he goes on to say that in beauty, color and movement it marks the one signal achievement of the American theatre. For the motion picture he has little regard, saying: "It has removed style from literature, speech from drama, color from painting, form and the third dimension from sculpture."

Mr. Nathan evidently has little time for the "theoretical authorities who pass for authorities on the drama," but it would be a great injustice for him to thus dismiss the observations of William Lyon Phelps during twenty years' acquaintance with the contemporary English and American stage. It is ironical that in his sane and entirely unprofessional book on "The Twentieth Century Theatre" Professor Phelps should have paid a tribute to the criticism of Mr. Nathan. Professor Phelps believes that more good plays have been written in English in the last thirty years than during any similar period since the death of Shakespeare; but contends that the conditions controlling the production of plays in America should be completely changed. Professor Phelps should be read as a corrective to Mr. Nathan.

THE POPULAR THEATRE. By George Jean Nathan. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $1.00.
THE TWENTIETH CENTURY THEATRE. By William Lyon Phelps. New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.25.

Out of the Shadow

"America, we love you!"

It takes the emigrant who is happy in the blessings of American citizenship, the political outcast who has fled from European injustices, the Jew who is grateful in the humanity from the pogrom to utter this sentiment with all the fervor of a great thankfulness. We native Americans are more inured to our blessings than are these newcomers.

One can scarcely imagine a more touching tribute to the enchanted atmosphere which is America's than the poignant story of a Russian emigrant girl as told in "Out of the Shadow." The narrative is the greater because it is authentic, and when one considers that but a few years ago the English language was foreign to the girl author, the simple directness of her style is nothing short of remarkable.

It would be wrong to give the impression that once on American shores the Cohen family experienced an immediate rehabilitation of spirit. Rather there were the dark days—the darkest days—so typically lived in the smug atmosphere of the East Side of New York, the heartbreaking struggle amid strange surroundings for the mere substance of existence, the stench and the turpitude of the sweatshops in which Ruth and her sister were obliged to toil—all this and more. But through it all hope remains—the hope inspired by America—and the outcome is just what we would expect, the fulfillment of the Cohen family's fondest dream and the rise above the squalor which at one time seemed cut out for it.

OUT OF THE SHADOW. By Rose Cohen. New York: George H. Doran Company. $2.

An Ambulance Driver

The average ambulance driver at the front generally sees more of the grim reality of war than does the soldier. For he is brought more closely and continuously in contact with the terrible aftermath of battle than is the fighting man and his opportunities for observation are more varied. It is the more surprising, in consequence, to find an ambulance driver's narrative in which the echo of battle is heard but faintly, and which is devoted almost entirely to inconsequential chatter about the various courses of a dinner, the weather, the effort to find relaxation at a motion-picture show near the front, and the author's sententious opinion that the present methods of fighting will never end the war.

The narrative covers slightly more than a month last summer on the Lorraine front. It was not the author's fate or fortune to be there during any real military activity. But he evidently felt that his impressions, views and experiences were worth recounting, and he gives them cheerfully to a waiting world in this little book.

NO. 6. By C. De Florez. With an introduction by Frederic R. Coudert. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. $1.50.

Patriotic Drama

The war having gathered together the loose ends of our national life, it is essential that the good work of Americanization continue. Perhaps there will be differences of opinion as to the part the drama should play in this, but at least it will be admitted that the drama can be made contributory to a new Americanism. Such is the belief of Constance D'Arcy Mackay, who in her latest book advances some very workable suggestions for the achievement of a more patriotic drama. In this she does not confine herself alone to the pageant and the play, but to the festival, the pantomime, the masque, dance-drama, processional and simple folk celebrations. Particularly timely are the author's suggestions for the organization of Christmas community celebrations.

PATRIOTIC DRAMA IN YOUR TOWN. By Constance D'Arcy Mackay. New York: Henry Holt & Co. $1.35.

FASCINATING AS A GOOD NOVEL

Morgenthau's Tale of What Went On in Turkey One of the Great War Books

No one will ever be able to write fiction about the great war that will approach the amazing romance and interest of the facts. No novel ever written has a more vivid and absorbing plot that Henry Morgenthau's book on events in Constantinople during the twenty-six months of his residence there as United States ambassador.

"Henry Morgenthau's Story" is one of the books on the war that must be read by every intelligent citizen. It presents a phase of the conflict that is of extraordinary interest, though comparatively remote from scenes of bloodshed. The German intrigue and propaganda in Turkey, carefully planned and directed from Berlin, executed by instruments of notable efficiency, are described by Mr. Morgenthau with the vividness and humor of one who moved in the midst of events alternately thrilling and comic. His narrative, told in terse and delightful fashion, is an authoritative revelation of the marvelous care and cunning with which Berlin had laid its plans for world dominion and had fastened on the Sublime Porte, the phrase seems doubly comic after reading Mr. Morgenthau's accounts of the seedy desperadoes who were in power at Constantinople—as its catspaw. No character in fiction stands before the reader with more lively reality than Wangenheim, the extraordinary ambassador from Berlin, as he is described by Mr. Morgenthau.

This book is of notable historic interest, divulging facts of the highest importance. Among others may be instanced the Potsdam conference of July 5, 1914, when the war was definitely decided upon by the German military and naval chiefs, sitting in counsel with the Kaiser, the great financiers and captains of industry; the strangling of Russian military power by the closure of the Dardanelles, and how this act and the entry of Turkey into the war were forced on by the Germans who had terrorized the Turkish leaders; and the fact that when the Allied fleet abandoned the attack on the Dardanelles the Turks were at their last gasp with only seventeen shells in one of the chief forts on the strait, and ten in another. But this is not merely a book of historical value; it is one which every thoughtful American will read with honest pride and satisfaction, for it reflects the finest traditions of our diplomatic service. Throughout the story Mr. Morgenthau, unsuspected by himself, stands out as the modest, quiet, shrewd, humorous personality that was one of the few redeeming figures in all the welter of Constantinople cruelty, cynicism, bribery and intrigue, a situation partly native to the characters of the Turkish gang in power, and partly fomented from Berlin.

Mr. Morgenthau says: "I acquired this knowledge as the servant of the American people, and it is their property as much as mine." The American people and humanity as a whole would be fortunate indeed if all diplomats were of Mr. Morgenthau's type.

AMBASSADOR MORGENTHAU'S STORY. Garden City: Doubleday, Page & Co. $2.

Blue Stars and Gold

For every home that flies a service flag, Dr. William E. Barton has a message of comfort and cheer in "Blue Stars and Gold." The author is the pastor of a church and the father of three sons in the fighting service, so that he understands the feelings of those who have loved ones with the colors. Tender and sympathetic as these messages are, they are permeated by evidences of a clear conviction of right and an uncompromising patriotism.

BLUE STARS AND GOLD. By Dr. William E. Barton. Chicago: The Reilly & Britton Company. $1.

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