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It is doubtful just what attitude John Redmond would take in the present state of Irish politics were he alive. Would he be a Sinn Feiner separatist, a supporter, and, through his genius for statesmanship, an official of the Irish republic? Or would he be leading to some compromise home rule the remnants of the once powerful Nationalist party, which at the last parliamentary election returned only half a dozen or so members to about seventy-five Sinn Feiners and about twenty-five Unionists? Even from Warre B. Wells's "The Life of John Redmond" it is difficult to determine what change of policy might have been wrought by the Wilsonian self-determination and other policies in the mind and soul of the greatest Irish leader of his period.

Mr. Wells, who is associated with Anglican journalism in Ireland and is more or less sympathetic to the "ascendancy" or Dublin Castle party, and by that token natively antipathetic to the full realization of Erin's nationalistic ideals, an Englishman by birth if we mistake not, has paid very noble tribute to Redmond's sincerity of purpose, his great war services, his marvelous parliamentary capacity, his Celtic eloquence compact of wit, humor and sagacity, and his imperial-mindedness. For Redmond was a firm believer in the empire—a British empire that would be based in essential democracy, free from oppressions and inequalities, of inequities and iniquities, that would be conducted in the spirit of large and fine liberalism to ultimate and enduring harmony. Then, because he is generally exceedingly fair, Mr. Wells recounts the betrayals of Mr. Redmond and the home rulers, the intrigues against them and their cause, even after it had achieved final victory of parliamentary passage and signature by the crown; his story skims lightly, but does not gloss the innumerable wrongs, industrial, social, economic, educational, that Ireland has had to suffer from toryism. These passages, coming from a source that is alien and, if anything, prejudiced on the other side, refute time and again arguments made against the Irish cause.

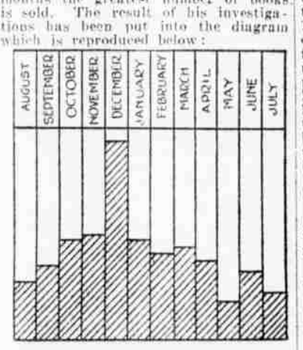
Redmond, the great tribune, died before the fruits of this victory were ripened, died unhonored, but not dishonored. His following had drifted away from him and his school of statesmanship, sick at heart at the perfidy of British toryism, resentful of the unwarranted claims and rewards of Carsonism, which Mr. Wells, despite his own predilections, flays unmercifully, so that there is hardly a strip of hide left on its pretenses of loyalty to the British empire, of love for Ireland, and of its moral and political capacity to govern or even help govern the island. The reader feels somehow that Mr. Redmond would have finally passed from a leader to be a follower of his former followers, just as the great Irish economist and conciliator, Sir Horace Plunkett, is passing from his sole interest in the salvation of Ireland through industrial and agricultural means to an expressed belief in a full dominion government of the island, without any separation of any counties from the others of the thirty-two.

The life of John Redmond spanned an entire generation of Irish politics, which Mr. Wells has recorded and documented. His book will be found peculiarly enlightening at this time when the whole world is interested in the Irish question and when the English-speaking world is alive to the need of a satisfactory settlement.

LIFE OF JOHN REDMOND. By Warre B. Wells. New York: George H. Doran Co. $2.00.

When People Buy Books

An expert familiar with the subject has analyzed the yearly sale of books at retail in order to discover in what months the greatest number of books is sold. The result of his investigations has been put into the diagram which is reproduced below:



The diagram shows what every one expected, namely, that more books are sold in December than in any other month. This is because books make suitable holiday presents. It was not realized, however, that about twice as many books were sold during December as during any other of the twelve. November is second in volume, because the holiday buying has already begun. Perhaps those who do their Christmas shopping early are responsible for the increase in sales in October over those in September. The demand for school books doubtless causes the jump in September from the comparatively small sales in August. The June sales can be traced to the desire to get books for summer holiday reading, although the giving of books as commencement presents may have something to do with it.

The publishers this winter are exerting themselves to lift the January and February sales so that the trade may not suffer so heavily from the reaction from Christmas buying. If they can make the skyline of the diagram appear more like a pyramid with its peak in December they will be gratified.

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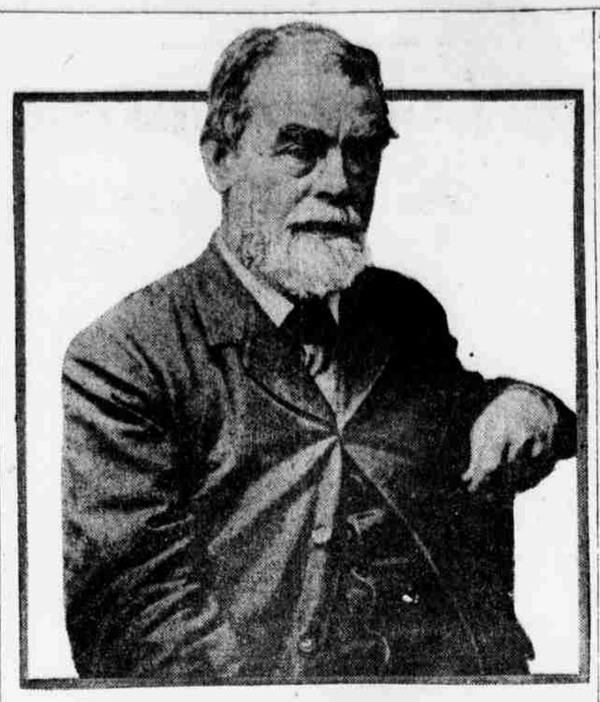

SAMUEL BUTLER
Author of "The Way of All Flesh," who did not become famous till after he died

SAMUEL BUTLER, AS HONEST A MAN AS EVER THOUGHT

Henry Festing Jones's Memoir Reveals the Intellectual Integrity of the Author of "The Way of All Flesh"

It is only by the exercise of the greatest self-control that the reviewer can refrain from saying that Samuel Johnson had his Boswell and that Samuel Butler had his Henry Festing Jones, and then drawing parallels between the two biographers and the two men whose lives they wrote.

This is because for minuteness of detail and for ungrudging admiration Jones's life of Samuel Butler continually suggests the famous work of Boswell.

Butler had to wait till he was dead for his greatness to be recognized: for this reason he is one of the most pathetic figures in the literature of the last half of the nineteenth century. He wrote many books on many subjects, and no publisher would print them unless he paid the bills. He was out of pocket about $5000, for the people would not buy his books. "Erewhon," his first, is an exception, but the total net profit on this during his lifetime amounted to less than $350, and this is the profit on a sale of less than 4000 copies.

His one novel, and what is generally admitted to be his greatest book, "The Way of All Flesh," was not published till after his death in 1902. Then his fame began to grow, and people began to ask for his other books. Yet the other books are not easy to get. A Philadelphian ordered from his bookseller "Erewhon Revisited," three months ago, and has not received it yet. Another Philadelphian went into a book store last week and asked for "Erewhon," but it was not in stock.

Jones's biography, or memoir, as he calls it, is in two large volumes of more than 450 pages each. It starts with the ancestry of Butler, going back to 1580 and tracing it down through the centuries. It deals with his education for the church, his decision that he could not conscientiously take orders, his experiment with sheep farming in New Zealand, his return to London, where he studied painting and had several pictures exhibited in the Royal Academy; his writing of "Erewhon," and his interest in the problem of the origin of life and species, his quarrel with Charles Darwin, and the writing of his other books, including the novel, begun in 1873 and finished in 1885. It tells of his friends, including Miss Savage, with whom he corresponded for years, and many others more famous than she.

Miss Savage is now assured of a fame of which she never dreamed, for her letters reveal her as a woman of most unusual gifts, with a power of expression and a humorous point of view and a kindliness of spirit which justify Butler's estimate of her as the most brilliant and best woman he ever knew.

The admirers of Butler will find the book an admirable supplement of the notebooks and to "The Way of All Flesh," for it authoritatively identifies Butler with the hero of his novel, and tells who the originals of the other characters were and discloses the man's process of working, and exhibits his sincerity and honesty of purpose as dominating all that he did. If any one doubted before that he was intellectually one of the most honest men that ever lived, the book will persuade one to the contrary. Butler refused to take orders because he could not believe what the church taught. Yet he was a deeply religious man and occupied himself all his life with an effort to solve the mystery of the universe. This explains his interest in evolution, and his efforts to get at the bottom of the matter, in order to discover whether things happened or whether they're ordered by a conscious purpose. His point of view is well set forth in a letter to the Bishop of Carlisle written in 1880. He wrote:

If, for example, those who start with an all-pervading supreme intelligence can yet find nothing out of harmony with their initial assumption in a theory of evolution which is attended at each step by mind, purpose and the exercise of the moral qualities; and if again, those who like myself start with tabulae rasae, and working up from the first thing they can lay hold of, find themselves driven first to evolution, then to purposive evolution, and through this to the action of a supreme, all-pervading mind of purpose in both organic and inorganic matter, then surely we may be on the eve of the removal of other misunderstandings.

Butler had confidence in the value of what he wrote and he believed also that his life would be written after he died. In preparation for that, he left his papers carefully classified and annotated for whoever should handle them. Mr. Jones has had access to all these papers. He has followed every clue in them and interviewed personally or by letter every person with whom Butler had any dealings, in search of additional data. As a result, there is no significant or trivial fact in the life of the man not covered in the two volumes. In spite of the richness of detail, perhaps because of it, the book is most fascinating to one at all interested in the movement of thought of the last fifty years. When the book appeared in London late in the autumn, the booksellers could not keep it on their shelves, the demand was so great. This is partly due to the fact that the names of so many living persons are mentioned in it. They or their friends wish to know what Butler thought of them. Its sale here will be a better indication of the extent of the interest in one of the most original men of his generation, a man willing to follow what he thought to be the truth, wherever it might lead.

SAMUEL BUTLER. Author of Erewhon 1835-1902. A memoir. By Henry Festing Jones. New York: The Macmillan Co. $12.50.

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The book is clean from beginning to end. Where a man really said "damn" she makes him say "darn," and so she refrains from offending the most squeamish. It is a love story, of course, for few novels that sell ignore the love interest, but it is at bottom an account of the effort of a clergyman named Black to win the friendship of Dr. Redfield Pepper Burns, the physician with whom Mrs. Richmond's readers are well acquainted. Black is a red-blooded man with a profound respect for his profession and its mission, and as a natural result when he accepts a pastorate in the suburban town where Doctor Burns practices his profession his church is soon crowded by people eager to hear a man who has a positive message. The war comes into the story, and when Black, who enlisted as a chaplain, returns with the cross of war Doctor Burns finally accepts him as a real man instead of regarding him as a member of the third sex of the famous epigram. A religious tone is heard throughout the whole story and the love affair of Black and the heroine, Jean Ray, a charming young woman, finally turns on the young woman's acceptance of the religion of the clergyman. She would not marry him unless she could accept his belief as her own. Her experiences as a nurse in France persuade her that there is such a thing as religion. The book will be read and appreciated by the great church-going mass of the community.

RED AND BLACK. By Grace S. Richmond. Garden City: Doubleday, Page & Co.

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WITH THE WITS. By Paul Elmore Moore. Shelburne Essays. Tenth Series. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.

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OUR LITTLE OLD LADY. By Eleanor Hoyt Brainerd. Garden City: Doubleday, Page & Co

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Braithwaite, W. S.—"Anthology of Magazine Verse for 1919." "Book of Modern British Verse."
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Frazer, S. W.—"Treatise on the Air Brush."
Gibbons, H. D.—"Paris Vistas."
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Ley, J. W. T.—"Dickens Circle."
Logio, G. C.—"Bulgaria."
Loti, Pierre—"L'Horreur Allemande."
Morley, Christopher—"Minor Pipe."
Paton, L. A.—"Elizabeth Cary Agassiz."
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Says the Philadelphia Ledger:

The tale is told with what seems an artless simplicity, but **it is so skillfully done that everything that happens seems real.** It is as though one were taken back to Illinois in the first half of the last century and permitted to see the men and women living their daily lives and thinking their daily thoughts.

Says the Chicago Examiner:

It's an inspiring sort of book to read, in addition to being interesting, and it does make Abraham Lincoln an approachable, near-at-hand person.

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Mr. Batcheller's story is told with such art that the reader sometimes thinks there is no art in the telling of it. It moves with such simplicity, such perfect naturalness that one is never conscious that the writer is making an effort to hold the reader's interest or even to entertain him. Never is there an attempt to "thrill," never any startling climax, never anything strained or affected. It is hard to imagine that the author put any toil into the construction of this novel, so smoothly does the narrative flow. **Yet every line holds the reader as if he were under some gentle and compelling spell of which, however, he is unconscious.**

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Irving Batcheller has told his Lincoln story so simply and unpretentiously that not perhaps until after the story is finished is it realized what a fine achievement it is and how much sympathy and imagination and understanding have been put into what is otherwise an excellent piece of historical writing.

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