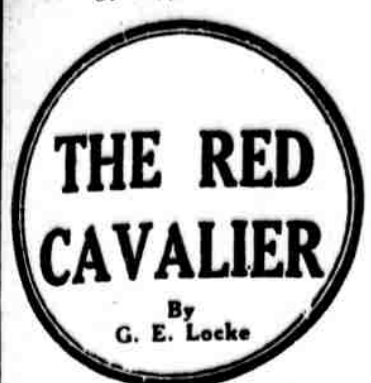


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EFFECT OF FREEDOM ON THE LITERARY ART OF NEGROES

Unconscious and Conscious Art Displayed in Poetry by Negroes

THREE recent books of verse by Negroes afford an excellent opportunity to those interested in such matters to examine into the literary development of the race and incidentally into the changing temper of its literary spokesmen.

The Negro of slavery and the years immediately following the emancipation is represented in "Negro Folk Rhymes" (Macmillan), a collection of folk verse made by Prof. Thomas W. Talley, of Fisk University. These rhymes have no known author. They grew up among the Negroes and were developed by repetition and adjustment until they reached the form in which they are now repeated in the South.

and the recent past. It is evident that a literary consciousness is awakening in the race. And after reading Mr. Johnson's anthology one must admit that the Negro has a gift for poetry, even if the simpler and more spontaneous folk rhymes in Prof. Talley's volume had not demonstrated it.

There is no great poetry in the volume; that is hardly to be expected. But there is a considerable body of good poetry, distinguished by imagination and insight and written with a fine sense of rhythm and cadence. Some of the poets represented are educated men, college professors or preachers or journalists. Others are more humble workers, one of the best having been a kitchen worker in a restaurant.

MR. JOHNSON, who has put his anthology, "Brothers," into his hands, is much more tolerant than some of the others, for he only makes the whites who have burned a Negro at the stake for an atrocious crime wonder what the victim meant when he said, "Brothers in spirit, brothers in deed are we." Claude McKay, of whom I shall speak a little later, is voluble with ink. Joseph S. Cotter, Jr., merely asks:

Why do men sneer when I arise And stand in their councils, And look them eye to eye, And speak their tongues? Is it because I am black?

The late James D. Corrothers was in a very different mood when he wrote of the obstacles in the way of recognition for a Negro workman:

Thus, my true Brother, dream-led I Forfeid the anathema, following the I hold my head as proudly high As any man.

THE bitterest of the whole company is Claude McKay, whose name appears on the title page of "Harlem Shadows" (Harcourt, Brace & Co.). Mr. McKay was born in Jamaica, slave ancestor, than two years before the plan to return to his native island. He earned a living at whatever work he could get. For a time he was a waiter in the dining car on the railroad between this city and New York.

Of course, many of the rhymes in the volume are little more than non-sensical jingles. They are the product of a comparatively happy and irresponsible phase of the life of the Negro in America. There is no conscious literary art, no introspection and no philosophizing. These things had to wait until a later period.

Within the past twenty years the Negroes have become conscious literary artists.

THEY have written such a considerable volume of poetry as to justify the production of an anthology. Under the title of "The Book of American Negro Poetry" (Harcourt, Brace & Co.), James Weldon Johnson has set forth selections from the work of more than thirty Negroes who have published verse since the late Paul Laurence Dunbar began to write. Mr. Johnson says in his preface that one must distinguish Negroes in the United States who have published volumes of poetry and that only thirty of them came between Phillips Wheatley and Dunbar. The remaining seventy belong to the present

Brief Notes of Interesting Books

THE success of Frederick Arnold Kummer's "Plaster Saints" (The Macaulay Company) is very interesting. The saint and sinner of his verse is a model of Paris, of New York. To be sure, in ethical and conventional terms, the act and the deed are not of the same order. But she wants to make the most of her asset. She thinks she can stun men by her beauty but keep them off at the same time. She doesn't want to be a plaster saint—there is no hypocrisy about her. Willing to be of the world worldly, she hesitates to pay the price. But Jean's experiences and reactions Mr. Kummer has woven a story that holds the interest by its keen observations, its backstage revelations and its sheer good writing.

THE LETTERS OF PAUL GATGUIN (Dodd, Mead & Co.) we have presented what is virtually an epistolary sketch of the life and artistic philosophy of the noted painter who broke with all the conventions of civilization and adopted the life of a South Sea Islander. The letters were written to Georges Daniel Monfreid and a few to Charles Morice. There is an introduction by Frederick G. Brien, author of "White Shadows in the South Seas," who says: "He was a tortured soul. He could not control his fierce appetites and his body decayed for many years, so that when he died at Atuono it was merely the breaking of a cord long worn almost to severance." Elsewhere Mr. Brien says: "To me he was one of the most heart-breaking men I know of. As a painter he was absolutely necessary to his age, which was fast hardening to a wretched scientific precision and which had abandoned simplicity and directness. He was unable to adjust himself to anything about him, either in Europe or the South Seas, he yielded only to death, and that upon him only as he was smiling at his own plight."

AN ARTIST IN REVOLT (Putnam's) is a collection of delightful sketches of the life of H. T. Sheringham. These sketches are described as "a beat as described in a comparable in substance and spirit with those classics of childhood, Kenneth Grahame's "Dream Days" and "The Golden Age." They are done with rare insight into the child-heart and understanding of youthful character. Delicate traceries rather than loving artistry, they have much mellowness of mood. They look backward lovingly and appreciatively.

FANNIE HURST LIVES WITH PEASANTS (Fannie Hurst, whose latest collection of short stories the Harpers have just published, is living in the home of Austrian peasants near Salzburg, Austria. She has been delivering milk to the homes of undernourished children.



THE NEW ART Woodcut by Joseph Huber, reproduced from "Broom," a magazine devoted to the latest things in art and literature

ROMANCE WITH A SOUL

Lee Wilson Dodd's Second Novel Fulfills the Promise of the First

When "The Book of Susan" appeared a year or two ago its author was hailed on this page as a novelist of immensely better equipment than the average. "The Book of Susan" gave evidence that it was written by a man who was seeking to do something more than write merely an entertaining story.

Lee Wilson Dodd, its author, has justified this estimate of him by his second novel, "Lilia Chenoweth" (E. P. Dutton & Co.). The greater part of the action takes place in a woman's college in New England and in a theatre in Paris, but it is a novel of neither the one nor the other. The real action takes place in the mind of the principal characters. Mr. Dodd has used the college and theatre setting merely because it has given him an opportunity to get his characters into such juxtaposition and into such conflict as would enable him to deal with his spiritual problem.

If the realism of his setting may be unsatisfactory the realism of his characters is so genuine that the interest in their fate grows as the books progresses until the suspense becomes almost painful. The tragic denouement comes with a shock, but on reflection the reader will conclude that there was no other way out.

Lilia, the heroine, is the daughter of a brilliant dramatist by a woman whom he never married. She inherits her father's brilliance, but she has a gentleness and sincerity which he lacked. Mr. Dodd brings her into contact with a young college professor with a yearning for fame, a man who had been stung and who had never had his soul awakened. The book is the story of the effect of Lilia upon this professor, the effect of genuineness and hatred of sham and love of beauty for its own sake upon a man who had not yet begun to think of beauty save in terms of cash and fame.

It is a moving story that will stir the emotions of every sensitive reader and leave him with a sense of that overwhelming pity for man in his struggles with fate, which every great book written with insight stirs in the mind of the thoughtful. It is romance with a soul.

NEW BOOKS

General AFoot in England. By W. H. Hudson. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. A collection of the finest modern prose in English and never printed in America. CHRONICLES OF CHICORA WOOD. By Elizabeth Allison Pringle. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. A volume of recollections of the old world by a woman who lived in a plantation with vividness and charm.

FICTION HOAX. Anonymous. New York: George H. Doran Company. A romantic story of a son as viewed by a father. THROUGH THE SHADOWS. By Cyril Alington. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. A story of a man who had not yet begun to think of beauty save in terms of cash and fame.

THE UNBREAKABLE GENTLEMAN. By H. G. Wells. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. A story of a man who had not yet begun to think of beauty save in terms of cash and fame.

THE AMOURETTE LANDSCAPE AND OTHER STORIES. By Adeline Adams. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company. Stories about artists and sculptors, their models and friends and families, by the wife of one of the distinguished sculptors of the day.

JUVENILE A MEMOIR. THINGS A GIRL CAN MAKE. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company. HENRIETTA'S INHERITANCE. By Lela Horn Richards. Boston: Page Company. A story of "Only Henrietta," which was one of her middle-teens. Wholesome and bright.

LITTLE WESTERN INDIAN COURSE. By Emily Taylor. Boston: Page Company. A new volume in a series now of numerous titles. It sets forth the habits and good picture of the customs of the islands.

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AN ORDEAL OF HONOR By Anthony Pryde THE LARGE PRINTING CO. MBRIDGE, Publisher, New York

TWO MEN—AND A GIRL

"The White Kami," His Second Novel, Stamps Jewell a Story Teller

A couple of years ago, Edward Alden Jewell, was veteran, actor and newspaperman, tired of the humdrum of journalism, dropped his position as Sunday editor of the New York Tribune and hid himself to Bermuda, determined to turn his varied experiences to literary use.

But there is difference of opinion as to the identity of this particular devil. That of the man of diverse views Dr. Hollopeter arrives at the conclusion, strengthened by years of experience and observation, that there is first an exciting agent, usually some kind of plant, followed by a system predisposed by debility of some character to the influence of the irritant.

That the disease may be prevented, and that it may be cured is argued with a skill that will appeal to every logical mind. That there have been many cures effected is without doubt. And that, in spite of this, here and there may be found some hay fever sufferer who remains cold and skeptical is probably due to the low state of mind which the fever begets.

DR. HOLLOPETER'S OPTIMISM ABOUT CURE OF HAY FEVER For hay fever sufferers who are anxious to know just what all that can be done for them, this is a most instructive, entertaining and helpful book. "Hay Fever, Its Prevention and Cure," by William C. Hollopeter, M. D. (Funk & Wagnalls Company).

That many readers have found it to be all of these things is evidenced by the fact that the book is now in its fourth edition.

We have it on the authority of one who has suffered from "the very devil." It is not too much to say, therefore, that Dr. Hollopeter treats his subject as the oldtime clergyman might have done, but with a touch of the modern, and a touch of the new. "We must consider first who the devil

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