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NEW BOOKS OF A VARIED APPEAL



JOHN T. FARIS Who has extended his observations into the Eastern States

THE BALKANS

The Romance, the Tragedies and the Political Importance of the Cockpit of Europe In the Middle Ages, through the Grand Monarchy and up to Napoleon's era what is now Belgium used to be the cockpit of Europe, but the nineteenth century replaced it with the Balkan States. There has been for generations a dynamite in this congeries of rival small nationalities and diverse races. Their geographic position has made them coveted, more or less, by Austria, Italy and Russia, for they have a vast strategic importance and likewise an economic importance quite beyond their size as the gateway to the Orient. Control of the Balkans was one factor of the Berlin-to-Bagdad Railway which represented a war-inciting Germanic ambition. Then, too, the Balkan states are hot-blooded and hot-headed and their constant broils bring into the conflict their various big protectors, to whom they have allied themselves. Yet the history and the aspirations of this section are very ill known to Americans. Before they become first-hand students in the Magazines and other drives they were little more than names. With such a splendid book available as "The Balkan Peninsula" (Harcourt, Brace & Co.), there can be no longer excuse for ignorance either of the past of the Balkans, which explains much of their recent events, or of their present, as well as a matter of world politics. Ferdinand Schevill, professor of modern history at the University of Chicago and author of the excellent "Political History of Modern Europe," has performed a noble task exceedingly well in this compact and readable history which discusses the Balkan peninsula and its numerous racial and nationalistic mutations from the earliest days to the present day. He discusses amply enough the Mongolian and other invasions from the East and the place of the Balkans in history under the Romans and Byzantines and Turks, their struggles to throw off the Ottoman rule, their influencing by the Hapsburgs and the Romanoffs, and other matters, especially the key matters of their geographical placement and their political and economic importance proceeding therefrom. The story is full of romance. In addition there is a full consideration of the roots of the World War planted deep in the Balkans and a narrative of the part they played both in the war and in the peace. It is pointed out that the Balkan peninsula, including Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria, Montenegro and Rumania, together with ethnic relations adjoining, had a determining influence in the explosion that led to the war of the nations just ended. The book shows that the Balkans furnished the stage setting for the World War and that it may be the stage for the next, if the existing growing problems drift toward chaos. Dr. Schevill describes vividly in its most intense form the interaction of nationalism, the rivalry of European powers for control in the region, the growing problems drift toward chaos. Dr. Schevill describes vividly in its most intense form the interaction of nationalism, the rivalry of European powers for control in the region, the growing problems drift toward chaos. Dr. Schevill describes vividly in its most intense form the interaction of nationalism, the rivalry of European powers for control in the region, the growing problems drift toward chaos.

A BOOK OF WONDERS

Ossendowski's Tale of His Wanderings in Mongolia Suggests Marco Polo's Adventures Alexis Triona, the hero of W. J. Locke's latest novel, wrote a book of adventures in Russia during the Bolshevik revolution based on the notes of one of his victims. "Beasts, Men and Gods" (E. P. Dutton & Co.) is the actual story of the adventures of Ferdinand Ossendowski, a Polish man of science, while escaping from the Bolsheviks who wanted to kill him.



G. K. CHESTERTON Whose detective tales are fuller of satire than of mystery

SKILLFUL SATIRE

Chesterton's "The Man Who Knew Too Much" Aimed at the Foibles of the British Gilbert K. Chesterton is too much of a satirist to write a story merely for the sake of the story. Consequently his detective stories will never rival those of Poe or Doyle or the other masters of the art of unraveling mystery for the ordinary side of the side and the weary. He has to make them a comment on life rather than a mere entertainment. In "The Man Who Knew Too Much" (Harper & Brothers) he has assembled a group of tales about the activities of Horne Fisher, his amateur detective who never brings a man to punishment. Fisher is an individual in his way as is Sherlock Holmes in his. Possibly the secret of Mr. Chesterton's theory in creating Horne Fisher is best disclosed in the tale he calls "The Temple of Silence." This tells how Fisher when a man was induced to stand for Parliament. He entered the race in good faith only to discover that he was to be used to split the opposition vote against the candidate whose election the political powers desired to insure. This candidate was a huckster and a generally disreputable character, but the Government had no other way of getting Fisher, who was elected after all because of the skill of his own campaign, refused to take his seat out of disgust with the device and dishonest ways of politics. He knew too much, but he did not know how to fight the whole British political system. If one reads the book as satire one will find it entertaining.

YANKEE TRAVELOGUE

Dr. Faris Writes Observant Book in "Seeing the Eastern States" There is no better way of learning the reaction on a traveler in a strange land than the one to be expected in a book that follows the trip. Each traveler has something different to interest him. Some travelers might be said to have the general character of the story itself. John T. Faris, who, to his intensely interesting "travels," has added "Seeing the Eastern States" (J. B. Lippincott Company), scenery and the physical aspects of a country, coupled with a recalling of the many legends that are attached, interest Dr. Faris more than those who people the territories under the sun. He is a family of interweaving these things—scenery and legends—so interestingly that the lack of the human note is not apparent. Along the rugged Maine coast and then through the State in a canoe, into Vermont and a sauntering through New Hampshire—these are merely a part of the trip on which Dr. Faris takes his readers, Boston as pictured in a manner that gives a delightful mental picture of that interesting town to those who never have seen it. New York City, New York, is described in a way that makes the Adirondacks nor New Jersey. It is an exhaustive but not an exhausting journey that is taken. Properly viewed, it is the same ground in actuality, the next best thing would be a Morris chair trip with "Seeing the Eastern States" as a companion.

Who is Hugh Lofting

The man who wrote "The Story of Dr. Dolittle," and whose name immediately became linked with Lewis Carroll, is a quiet, unassuming English physician who makes his home in this country. He devotes his time to writing and to drawing, having illustrated both of his books with quaint sketches that elicit a smile. His latest book, "The Voyages of Dr. Dolittle," has just been published by Stokes.

NEW BOOKS

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