

BOOKS in REVIEW . . . by R. C. E.

HENRY the VIIIth
by Francis Hackett
(Horace Liveright, publishers.)
This amazing book is a personal history of Henry the VIIIth, who is perhaps the most romantic king in the history of the world. This is a rich picture of the ruler who for 38 years dominated England, by moulding its statecraft and making himself the head of the religion of the country. A lusty picture is presented of the man who married six women, some for political reasons, and some for love,—and all of them because he wanted an heir. We see Henry busy himself with the affairs of state and love; then we see him involved in war, and from war he goes to religion—all spasmodically.

He was an inconsistent creature and Mr. Hackett shows him as such. Henry spills the blood of Europe without a qualm, and sends his wives and his Prime Ministers to the chopping block without letting it disturb him at all, and goes about his business of state and those of an amatory nature in an unconcerned and most nonchalant manner. Sometimes the reader will chuckle at his doings, but the next moment one is quite irate and furious with him for his escapades. He was a power-ridden man, but none the less fascinating because of his egotism, his brutality, and his often seeming uncouthness. He has rather a jocular quality underneath it all, and one can't loathe and despise him altogether; he seems to have an unerring sense of humor, and that perhaps is his saving grace.

The book is a spirited and pun-

gently written, full of fighting, massacre, and cold-blooded murders. . . . woolings and weddings, and of woolings without weddings, with Henry the VIIIth as the center of all the intrigues. Read this book of Mr. Hackett's and know Henry as his contemporaries knew him.

"WOLF SOLENT"
by John Cowper Powys
(Simon and Schuster, publishers.)
I have just finished reading a novel that I have found to be the most powerful and beautiful one that I have read in many a day, and I'm firmly convinced that it will live, and be known as one of the greatest novels of the century. It is "Wolf Solent," by John Cowper Powys.

It overpowers one as one reads; it is full of superb symbolism, and the character of Wolf Solent is dynamic in its intensity. The entire story is woven about him, and by the time that one has completed the two volumes one knows Wolf as intimately as one's next door neighbor. He is a complex character, and constantly contradicts his own ideas and ideals. He goes to the depths of evil, and then ascends to the heights of goodness. He is caught between ideal and illicit love, we know his character aspirations, his fears, his desires, and his amours. We see him when he feels that life is a futile business, and we watch him as he struggles with his environment.

Mr. Powys has traced every shadow on the brain of Wolf Sol-

ent, and as a result we have a sterling characterization. Solent's whole consciousness is exposed to us, and this claims our undivided attention.

One other character interests me almost as much as Solent. Her name is Gerda, and she is not unlike one of Dreiser's women. She is always there to mislead, to intrigue—and she has the power to drag the man whom she presumably loves through the very depths of tragic circumstances. We wonder at this woman's charm, and marvel at her knowledge of feminine tactics and strategy, and the skill with which she practices them. She is an interesting creature in that she is so home-spun, yet has a woman's heritage, and knows her lover all too thoroughly. She acts as a magnet, and we are instantly attracted to her.

Mr. Powys shows the influence of Proust and Joyce, and we feel that he admires them tremendously, and has assimilated a certain amount of their style and mode of thought. No doubt this detection would please him, as they are splendid models. He has made rather a patch work quilt effect, as a whole—there's a bit of lyricism, some great dramatic moments—but never does it wax melodramatic—a few prosaic situations, and many trite instances, but all of these are as beautifully put together as a macarized mosaic. The book is an unusual piece of work, and it should be praised for its eloquence, clarity and almost super-beauty. It will give the reader who enjoys something more than the Polly Anna sort of thing, a real treat, but you will have a

hard time drawing a conclusion as to why you like it—it is intangible.

"VICTIM AND VICTOR"
by John Rathbone Oliver
(McMillan Co.)

Following up his book, "Fear," John Rathbone Oliver has written another which is also interesting from a psychological standpoint. This time it is a novel, "Victim and Victor." He studies the case of a young Episcopalian minister who is defrocked for some intrigue of a colleague, and shows this unhappy and thoroughly miserable being struggling for reinstatement.

It is a book that makes the reader marvel at how the author can know the depths of a personality's mind, both from the standpoint of a physician or should I say psychiatrist, and as a friend. This book barely missed being awarded the Pulitzer prize for this year. It is a unique thing—something different than the usual sort of thing that the usual story has as its ingredients. Any one interested in something a little more delving than the ordinary, everyday novel will find it a keen and vigorous work.

"BOOK GOSSIP"
"Footprints," by Kay Cleaver Strahan, a Portland woman, and sister of Mrs. Virginia Bacon, state librarian, won the first Scotland Yard prize, and it was such a success that the contest is to be continued. For the best detective or mystery story submitted before the 31st of December, 1929, to the Doubleday, Doran, Co., an award

of \$5000 will be given. Half of this sum will be given outright, the rest as royalties.

The advances tell us that Susan Erts has completed her most enchanting novel, and she has called it "The Galaxy." This book is to be a panorama of English life and manners for the past 50 years, and should prove exceedingly interesting, as Susan Erts should know well the life of the typical Britisher.

John Galsworthy has sold the movie rights of his play "Escape" to Paramount, and it is to be made into a "talkie" very soon. Mr. Galsworthy translated the script of his play for the "talkie," so we imagine that it will be a faithful reproduction of the play. "Escape" is included in the volume of Galsworthy's "Plays," published by Scribners.

It is rumored that Emil Ludwig's next book will be on Mus-

solini. Mr. Ludwig visited in Rome early this spring, and was received by Il Duce, and we imagine that he gathered a great deal of material while in the Fascist city. Mr. Ludwig's real name is Emil Cohn.

I wonder why there is so much pleasure in possessing one's own bookplates? I find it a joy to open one of my own books and find staring me in the face an Ex Lib-

ris of my very own choice. I'm always reminded of the few lines that I used to hear as a child—"If this book should ever roam, box it's ears and send it home," and I'm always sure that my books will find their way home now that I've invested in book-plates. I happened onto some charming ones lately. They are made by art students at Antioch college, which is located at Yellow Springs, Ohio. They are most unusual in design, and beautifully executed.



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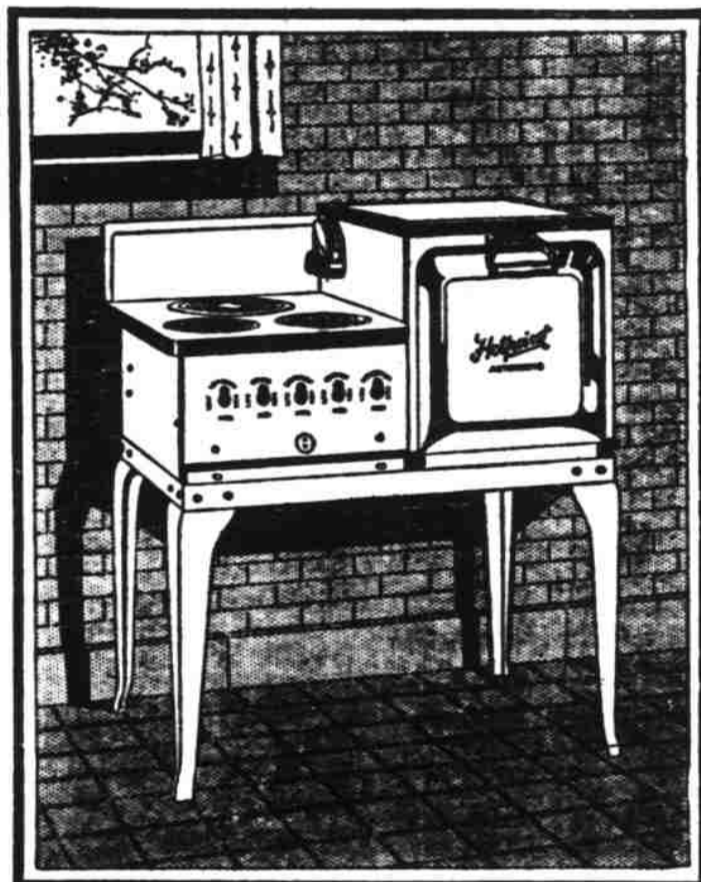
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