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Linwood Library Gazette

"Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body."

Vol. 3 No. 2



November 1937

THE PRINTED WORD AND CIVILIZATION

By J. W. BATY

The word "civilization," according to one of the greatest authorities, is used to describe a state of human society in which people have reached a certain degree of culture.

One of the greatest factors in the attainment of "a certain degree of culture" is the progress the world has made through the "printed word" and without attempting to trace the earliest degrees of civilization, this article will deal more specifically with the origin of the means whereby the "printed word" became the medium through which modern civilization has reached such a degree of perfection.

The first known form of records was produced on papyrus and parchment, which were the natural forerunners of paper—the manufacture of the former being a flourishing industry in Egypt about 3000 B.C. The stem of a water reed used was cut in sections, split and opened out and cemented together on the same principal that three-ply wood is made today. The Romans improved the process and made different kinds, and named the water reed "papyrus," from which our word paper is derived. Parchment, made from the skin of goats, sheep, pigs and other animals, in use long before Christ, attained its greatest consumption in the Middle Ages, and is still in use for certain legal documents.

The art of paper-making was cradled in the East. The Chinese, about A.D. 105, are credited with having first produced paper from fibrous material, reduced to the condition of pulp. Paper was discovered in Turkistan in the fourth century and contained flax and hemp as minor constituents, but it was not until A.D. 760 that paper was entirely prepared from linen rags by the Samarkand. The art was acquired by the Arabs during their conquests in Tartary, became established in Egypt in the tenth century, and was introduced by the Moors in Spain early in the eleventh century, and brought to Europe by the Crusaders. The first paper mills were erected in Hainault, Germany, in 1189, in England at Hertford about 1496, in America 1690, and in Canada in 1803.

In 1798 the first paper-making machine was invented by Louis Robert, an English patent being taken out in 1801, when the installation of the Fourdrinier paper machine took place at the Two Waters' Mill, Hertford in 1804.

After the publication of the first newspaper in England in 1588, the demand for paper steadily grew, and following the increased consumption of paper due to better education, the British paper-makers were compelled to search for new sources of supply, and two important chemical discoveries were made at the close of the eighteenth century. One was the bleaching action of chlorine, the other the preparation of artificial soda; the latter en-

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abled paper manufacturers all over the world to produce a cheap cellulose pulp from a wide range of fibre material, straw, esparto grass, bamboo, and ultimately ground wood in 1840; but in 1866 the sulphite process of producing chemical pulp from wood was perfected, and a new era began in the production of books and newspapers, leading to the establishment of immense paper and pulp industries in Scandinavia, the United States of America and Canada.

We have arrived at the stage in our article where the manufacture of paper has reached its zenith, particularly in relation to the production of newspapers and books. The discoveries of the new components of paper, and the development of paper-making for commercial and other purposes have given us the present means of exchange amongst nations and communities. Reference is here made to the manufacture of bank note paper, and it is recorded that in 1725 a monopoly was granted to de Portal for the manufacture of paper for the Bank of England notes.

The connecting link with the production of paper and the ultimate appearance of the "printed word" is the process of printing, and the invention of movable type in A.D. 1400, was the beginning of the production of books.

(To be continued)

FROM THE PRESIDENTIAL CHAIR

Among the many items mentioned in the Budget recently in the House of Representatives was one of great interest, and, indeed, of importance to those engaged in library work in New Zealand; it ran as follows:—

"A scheme is being inaugurated for assisting small libraries in the country districts. This will take the form of a regular loan supply of books from a central source and will constitute the beginning of a comprehensive National Library System. This service will be ready for operation early next year. A sum of £3,000 is to be provided as an initial grant.

"A Council of Adult Education is being set up to co-ordinate the various efforts made in the direction of Adult Education, for the general purposes of which (including such education in public works camps and the activities of the W.E.A.) an increased sum is being provided.

"Also, a larger sum than in any previous year is being allocated to school and class libraries. A sum is provided to allow of the restoration of grants for public libraries in rural communities."

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of the interest that the present Government is taking in the great work of Adult Education, and its recognition of the fact that libraries are an essential link and a powerful factor in that direction. It will take some time for New Zealand to reach the standard existing in England, but the movement is gaining strength and forging ahead here, just as it is in Australia. With the co-operation and co-ordination of the country libraries with the urban centres, the day is steadily drawing nearer when the National Free Library System will be an accomplished fact in New Zealand.

NEW NOVELS

By Our Reviewer.

Summer Half. By Angela Thurkill. It is some time since we had a novel from this writer but Mrs Thurkill is one of the few novelists who can describe all the most trivial affairs of everyday life without tediousness and can give minute details of unimportant actions of her characters, making them sound natural and amusing. In this book there is no sustained story worth mentioning with the exception of a few amorous complications consisting of a subtle understanding of the characters and conversation of ordinary intelligent people.

There is Phillip the clever young school-master with communistic leanings; Collin Keith, a half-fledged lawyer who takes up teaching in an unappreciated spirit of self-sacrifice; Kate the quiet sister; Noel Merton, a successful barrister; Rose Birkett and others that make up reading comparing with a long, pleasant letter, written humorously of our friends by a witty and gossip-loving correspondent.

Worth While, by P. C. Wren, "deals with the adventures with Richard Wendover who appeared in 'The Man of a Ghost,' that is a tale of Russian intrigue on the North West frontier of India and one may read it from cover to cover with no small satisfaction. Its plot is self-contained so that readers can embark upon it without previous research into Major Wendover's career."—Times Literary Supplement.

Dragons to Slay. By Bok. A well-written story detailing the rounding up of a notorious gang of Chinese pirates. Plenty of movement and thrills with a strong love interest.

On Eagles' Wings. By Leslie D. Weatherhead. An entirely new type of novel by a really able writer. The story of Moses is told in a most enjoyable novel form full of interest. Apart from the Biblical story, a keen sense of drama on the part of the author keeps the reader fully interested.

The First Man. By Alexandra Dick. Here is a fine story told in a new way of the Dictator of a small Balkan power. He is determined to stop intrigue and prevent revolution but a young Englishwoman tourist crosses his path and ends up in a revolution of his ways. Well written and full of interest.

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Linwood Library Gazette

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In this small journal of ours space is limited and valuable, and it appears to us, upon glancing through the previous few issues, that the Editorial has been perhaps too lengthy. So this month, as something must perforce be crowded out, we will confine our remarks to the front page articles.

We have been singularly fortunate in securing items from many distinguished contributors who have given us their views on library matters, taken from varying viewpoints. This month we print the first part of an interesting article on "The Printed Word and Civilization," by Mr J. W. Baty, Registrar of the Justices of the Peace Association. Mr Baty has given us much food for reflective thought and shows us how modern literature, as well as the ancient classics, owes much to man's ingenuity in evolving signs, written or printed, to convey thought through the ages. We commend this article, in its entirety, to our readers.

Our readers' opinions upon any matter relative to Library matters are welcomed.

Address all correspondence to "The Editor,"
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BOOKS RECENTLY PLACED IN THE NON-FICTION ROOM

The Defence of the Empire. By Sir Norman Angell. Sir Norman Angell in the opening chapters discusses the change in thought and attitude of Britishers regarding dominance and power during the last twenty years. How England has abandoned the Imperialistic idea, and how the Press "has contrary to precedent, approved the surrender, often applauding." What is this Empire, he asks, and points out that here and there the substance has been given away, retaining the shadowy, elusive glamour of the crown. Further how the Labour Movement has operated along similar lines, with the difference of getting the substance, leaving the ancient symbols, a psychological development hard to understand by other nations. She has de-imperialised the Empire. The Dominions are Republics in nearly everything but the name. "The Empire has become a nascent international society." Speaking of her trade, he sees an urgent reason for access to distant dominions without interference and as we cannot separate the problem of economic organisation from the problem of defence, the two are one. The conditions of effective defence are presented in a manner that clearly shows how little we understand the psychological attitude. To those who say they will not fight except for their direct interests, he points out that it is literally true that only by being willing to defend others can we possibly defend ourselves. Defencelessness would not prevent aggression, nor give safety. The problem is to combine peace with defence. The British "retreat" is grim reading for Britishers, and seems to point that the opportunities for action in Africa and Asia were in existence but, that the powers that be, chose differently. Now she is re-arming at a tremendous rate, and for what? The letters in the final chapter give us opinions of the author and of others and conclude a most interesting book and one that many should read, for it helps one to understand better, the problems that are troubling many.

Back from the U.S.S.R. By André Gide. This book has aroused considerable and widespread interest. The author tells us in the foreword that three years ago, he declared his admiration and love for the U.S.S.R.; later, he tells us, there arose misgiving in his mind as to the welfare of the Soviet and that he determined to re-visit Russia. Was he mistaken? Or, was the change in the U.S.S.R.? Then follows an important and suggestive sentence, "By the U.S.S.R. I mean the man at its head." He doubts the value and sin-

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cerity of the spirit of Conformism visible every-
where. He enquires, Is it begotten of fear?
Concluding he says: "My heart ached with a
fresh anguish. In declaring my love afresh,
must I hide my reservations and give a lying
approval to everything."

The tone of the book is restrained and
judicial, and deserves careful reading.

Round the World with Tom Clarke. The
author, Mr Tom Clarke, was offered a trip round
the world, passage paid—and £1,000. Would you
believe it? Well, it did happen and the book
he has written about this trip, with his daughter
Pat, is good reading. Always there is something
that tells us that the author has an aptness for
seeing many things the average man would not
see; the effect sometimes is just that something
that makes a story worth-while telling—and
reading. Pat must have been a charming girl,
and the girl from Blackpool just delightful, full
of vim and quick at repartee. This is not only
a book that will be well read but there is plenty
of matter suggestive of a very wide grip of cur-
rent affairs. Don't miss Tom Clarke.

Inside Europe. By John Gunther. The de-
mand for this book has been and still is, so great
that we have bought another copy.

Something of Myself. By Rudyard Kipling.
Full of most interesting particulars of the
author's life relating to his books and the char-
acters in them.

Coronations Commentary. By Geoffrey Dennis.
A book that aroused much interest, and one that
is full of interest.

The Restraining Hand. By R. A. Bosshardt.
An unique book relating the adventures of a
missionary of the China Inland Mission captured
by the Communistic armies in China.

The Family Life of Queen Elizabeth. By
Lady Cynthia Asquith.

First Movement, by Mark Grossek. "Mark
Grossek" is the nom-de-guerre of a well-known
figure in the literary world. Born in London,
where his father was a tailor in the East End,
the life of the family was one of long and arduous
work and meagre food. Schooldays began at
Gibraltar Street Board School, where he won a
scholarship giving him a period at Whitaker's
Foundation School, where he gained an interme-
diate scholarship, which qualified him for admis-
sion to the City of London School. There he
gained scholarships that gave him three years
at East London College as an internal student of
London University. Successful in getting his
degree as B.A., he says at the close of the book,
"My education had ended. But if I were to say
that it had hardly begun, I should be nearer the
truth."

The pictures he gives of the different teachers
and masters at each school are all drawn with a
humour, sometimes tinged with pathos, but
always restrained and generous. He never forgot
the rock from whence he was hewed, and some-
times the memory was pathetic. Through all his
school days was the insistent urge that know-
ledge, by and bye would mean, success to beauty,
and those factors that mean the fulness of life.

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purpose. Many autobiographies are written but
few attain to this standard.

Japan Must Fight Britain, by Lieut. Comm.
Tota Ishimaru. This is a book well worth read-
ing, and more than that, it is one that must be
read in order to get the Japanese viewpoint of
expansion. The author tells us that the ultimate
aim of Japan is to include China and India in the
Japanese economic block, and as he holds that
Britain's era of prosperity and power is quickly
vanishing, he is confident of Japan's victory. He
leaves a possible hope for Britain if she will
renounce some of her Asiatic territory, thus
making a gesture that will placate Japan and
render a war of acquisition unnecessary. He
makes out a case that will please naval authori-
ties in Japan, does not conceal his anger at the
development of Singapore, and concedes that as
long as Britain has a powerful navy, and Singa-
pore, we in New Zealand and Australia can sleep
in peace. He might have added that Britain has
been likened unto a bulldog, whose strong point
is to grip and hang on. A book to read by those
who take concern at Pacific Ocean affairs.

SOME NEWLY-PURCHASED FICTION

African Tragedy Stephen Graham
All the King's Men W. H. Lane Crawford
Bitter Rapture Anne Duffield
Blue Ridge Crime Wyndham Martin
The Citadel A. J. Cronin
The Crusader's Secret Jean Barre
Cuckoo Street Mrs Victor Richard
Doctor Julian Winifred Graham
Donovan Rides Arthur Henry Gooden
Dragons to Slay "Bok"
The Faithful Compass Doreen Wallace
Ferdinand Nina Bradshaw
Feudists of the Outlands W. D. Hoffman
The Fifth Horseman Robt. W. Chambers
The First Man Alexandra Dick
Glad Surrender Helena Grose
Gone with the Wind Margaret Mitchell
I Dare Not Dream Anne Maybury
John Cornelius Hugh Walpole
Mystery Flowers Grace L. Hill
The Moon is Making Storm Jameson
Moose River Range F. C. Robertson
Nor Breed Nor Birth Sinbad
Pelican Without Piety Ann Stafford
Return to Youth Maribel Edwin
Romance Royal Berta Ruck
Seaway Humphrey Jordan
She Painted Her Face Dornford Yates
Storm Girl J. C. Lincoln
They Seek a Country F. Brett Young
.38 Automatic E. Chas. Vivian
The Tide Watches Sydney Parkman
Tucker Sees India M. L. Skinner

THE ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA GOES ASTRAY

In the issue for July of the Canterbury Public
Library Journal we noticed the following item:—

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The Library has been fortunate in obtaining a set of the 14th edition of the Britannica to replace the well-worn set, in the Reference Library. The Britannica is one of the oldest cyclopaedias, and was first issued in 1763 in three volumes. The fourteenth edition is a complete revision, many of the articles are new, and a large amount of technical information has been included. It is stated that the index volume contains 500,000 references and some 500 good maps. In the make-up of this great work 45,000 articles have been included, these being contributed by 25,000 persons, all well-known authorities. We noted, however, that the article dealing with public libraries in New Zealand is sadly astray. It states:—

"In New Zealand there are 13 (thirteen) public libraries established under the Acts dating from 1869 to 1877, which allow a penny rate. At Auckland the Turnbull Free Public Library has Sir George Grey's Australasian collection and many rare books."

It is hardly necessary to point out that there are many more than thirteen libraries at the penny rate, that the Turnbull Library is in Wellington, and that Sir George Grey's collection is in the Auckland Public Library.

JUVENILE SECTION

New Books placed on the shelves during the month

GIRLS

The Homesteader Girl Bessie Marchant
The Girls of Mystery Gorge E. E. Cowper
A Thrilling Term at Janeways Elinor M. Brent-Dyer
The Heart of Glenayrt May Wynne
Gillian the Dauntless .. Frederick J. E. Bennett
Billabong Gold Mary Grant Bruce
Jill's Jolliest School Angela Brazil
The Good Intentions of Angela Isabel M. Peacocke

BOYS

Let's Learn to Fly C. St. John Sprigg
Bushrangers' Gold A. A. Methley
Adventures Under Ground T. C. Bridges
Dastral of the Flying Corps .. Rowland Walker
The Airship "Golden Hind" .. P. F. Westerman
Wings Over the Atlantic A. D. Divine
The Wolf Runner E. E. Cowper
The Secret Battleplane P. F. Westerman
Great Flights C. St. John Sprigg
The Fight for Honour Bernard Bowles
The Uncharted Island Skelton Kuppard

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