

OBSERVATIONS

BY SARAH B. HARRIS

The Editors Share

EDITORS enjoy some perquisites, to be sure, but no professional man of equal ability works so hard for so little pay as the able editor. Occasionally after years spent in advocating the principles of his party and the election of its candidates an editor is rewarded with a postoffice. There are deputies and clerks to perform the drudgery connected with the transmission of mail matter and the salary of the postmaster is a welcome addition to the average editor's income. The well-beaten path to political distinction does not lead to glory through a sanctum which is the derisive name for the room where an editor works. In considering the early lives of American statesmen I find that few have been editors. Honors were heaped upon Benjamin Franklin, and many boys who study his life get the idea that distinction is attained by first obtaining a place in a printshop. The lives of most of the other great men remind us that senators and ambassadors have been lawyers possessing an instinctive knowledge of human nature and not hampered by a timidity which might have prevented them from asking for what they want. Somehow, with one notable Nebraska exception, editors are modest, shrinking individuals. They are so used to heralding the virtues and abilities of other men that when they want something for themselves they are confused, although many years of labor for their party and of active interest in the welfare of hundreds of individuals in the community they address should give them courage.

Mr. Bushnell, the present Lincoln postmaster, was an editor. His administration has been conscientious and thoroughly business-like. The publishers of the city are especially grateful to him for the regime of prompt distribution of second-class mail which he has insisted upon. There are people with abnormal tastes and standards and of course there are always the "outs," as well as the candidates in the same party who think they have a better claim to the office than the present incumbent.

The postmaster of the Fremont office is a typical editor of the best sort and highest rank in the state. There is not a man or woman connected with the publishing business in this state who does not know Ross Hammond, of the Fremont Tribune. He is the dynamo of political energy for that part of the state. Hundreds of men who have attained their heart's desire owe their election to Ross Hammond. He is an editor of unusual force, humor and originality; moreover he has what the editor at his desk is apt to lack: leadership over men when he is brought face to face with them. As unobtrusive as a dynamo, Mr. Hammond is yet the source of energy in any political meeting or editorial association of which he is a member. He is resourceful, loyal to his convictions, and republican, state and national, owes him a large debt, which has been by no means discharged by a term as postmaster. Not to mention gratitude or the reward for unique services it is inexpedient from a party standpoint to deny Ross Hammond's reasonable request.

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England's Story

A history for grammar and high schools written by Miss Eva March Tappan under the title of England's Story has just been issued by Houghton, Mifflin and Co. of the Riverside Press.

Miss Tappan's style is easy and after beginning one of her several books it is annoying to lay it down before the last page is reached. This quality of attracting pleased attention is an essential characteristic of an author

who writes books for the young. Miss Tappan is the head of the English department in the Worcester, Massachusetts, high school. Recently these columns contained a review of her biography of King Alfred the Great of England. She is also the author of "In the days of William the Conqueror," and Old Ballads in Prose. Teaching exhausts the energy so that few teachers, even among those whose draughts of the Pierian Spring have been deep, have vitality enough to write.

The history of England is a noble story of brave men and brave women, of adventure, of invasion, of great accomplishment and of the final triumph of democratic institutions. It has been told many times. Every new telling is a delight. Mrs. Tappan never forgets her audience. She says in a short preface that the book is an outgrowth of familiar talks to several hundred boys and girls in the freshman classes of the English High School at Worcester. "With the want of a background of knowledge and experience unfamiliar names are confusing and meaningless. I have tried, therefore, to mention no person without an attempt to make him of interest. Since the limits and limitations of the book permit the bringing of but few persons forward into the light, any older reader will, I fear, note many omissions. I can only plead that comforting line of Chaucer's:

"There nys no man that may reporten al."

By the omission of reference to historians' wrangles Mrs. Tappan has made the book much more interesting to youthful readers. All the world loves a lover and per contra all the world is bored by disputes. Unless it is a knock-down fight, where real blood flows and each pugilist is doing his genuine best to knock the other one senseless the world has no interest in a contest. In this short history of England the action does not falter, but from the beginning to the end the reader is carried along by the sense of great events happening and impending. The book contains 355 pictures taken from old woodcuts. They are portraits of the kings and queens, and illustrations of the costumes of each period. There is also an excellent index and genealogical table. The name of history frightens youth, but if a wily parent could get the younger members of his family interested in the first pages of "England's Story," the younger members would forget that they were improving their minds and finish it unurged.

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The Last Moments of Feudalism

In the council chamber at Whitehall last week met a brave company of English nobles and judges to decide upon who should bear the train of King Edward's robe, and who should carry a baton, and the order of precedence at the coronation. The details were discussed for two days, but many more meetings must be held before the claimants who clamor to perform functions so obsolete that their admission would make the ceremonies ridiculous will accept the finality of their sentences. There was the ceremonial solemnity of the Middle Ages about the session. The judges wore their state robes and every man had on all the orders his high estate permitted.

One of the claimants was Frank Dymoke, a descendant of the ancient Dymoke family whose ancestors have been champions at the coronations of English sovereigns for centuries. The champion who enters the hall on his charger and throws down a steel gauntlet as a challenge to any one who desires to dispute the right of a prince to be crowned king of England is a

familiar object to all readers of Scott's novels. But his actual appearance armed cap-a-pie, and with his visor down, would startle the twentieth century into a realization of the real obsolescence of the ceremony and of a king. Frank Dymoke was bitterly disappointed when the shrewd king declined his services. So would we be if for centuries our ancestors had performed an important ceremony and when the rare historical moment arrived our services should be declined as too much out of style. The Dymoke family is celebrated for and owes its standing to this ceremony. Frank must perform a new deed, something demanded by the twentieth century mode, if he expects his family to retain its distinction. It is not as it was before the coronation ceremonies had been finally settled. The neighborhood has understood for a matter of sixty-five years that when there was a king's coronation a Dymoke would put his armor on, carry a long spear and ride into the hall where the king and his courtiers sit, apparently not expecting him at all but really somewhat nervously awaiting the "hereditary challenger." Now that it has formally been given out that there will never be another hereditary challenger, the loss of prestige experienced by the Dymokes is a family calamity.

Nothing was done with the office of lord great chamberlain, for which there are four claimants—the Earl of Ancaster, the Marquis of Cholmondeley (pronounced Chumley), the Earl of Carrington and the Duke of Athol—the court declaring that it was a matter for the decision of the house of lords. The Duke of Somerset will probably carry the robe, although his claim is disputed by several other peers of England. The Earl of Errol will walk in the procession as the lord high constable of Scotland carrying a silver baton tipped at each end with gold and with the king's arms at one end and the Errol arms at the other. The king decided, as there will be no banquet that he needs no royal butler. Three lords claimed the place. The king says he does not need a bowyer for that day nor any armor-bearer. This is disheartening to loyal Englishmen who have waited for half a hundred years to perform the only functions on which their titles to nobility are based. It is perhaps a shock to King Edward, too, to realize that time has severed the ceremonial feudal relations between him and his subjects.

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Ship Subsidy

If Americans can send their produce and products to Europe, Asia and Africa more cheaply in foreign ships than in their own, there is no loss in the operation. Advocates of the ship subsidy bill speak of the tariff paid to ship owners who carry our raw materials to Europe as though it were a loss to the country. If Europe can transport the freight cheaper than we can, the people, under a ship subsidy regime would have to pay the freight plus the loss of carrying it. Last week when the Boston Merchants' association met at the Hub, Senator Hanna said:

"We are building a magnificent navy and shall continue until we are second to no nation. We should also build something for that navy to defend. The amount now paid annually by American merchants into the pockets of foreign ship-owners is two hundred million dollars. No country on the face of the globe could stand that drain but the United States. And why need we stand it?"

Under a subsidized merchant marine system the freight would cost the shipper just what it does now, the only difference is that the people would pay the difference between what it costs the American ship-owner and the European ship-owner to send their respective ships across the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. American sailors will not work for what European sailors receive. Therefore all America must be taxed under a subsidy regime to make up the difference. The scheme is un-American. The people of this country

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