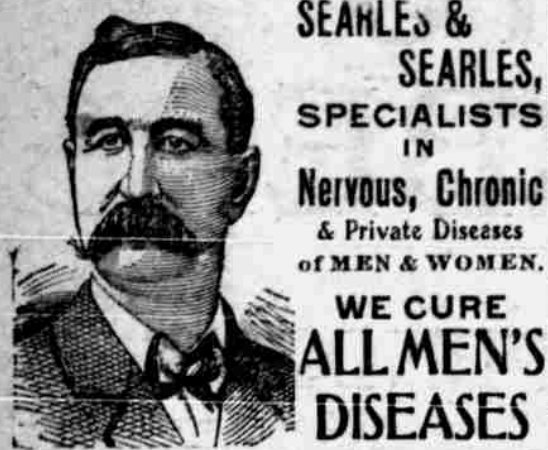


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RICHARD LE GALLIENNE

Life Sketch of the Popular Poet and Novelist

Mr. Richard Le Gallienne is now quite as well known in this country as in England. Indeed he is to all intents and purposes an American author. For the greater part of the year he makes his home in New York. His three latest books have been brought out by New York publishers—R. H. Russell and the Harpers. His American audience is larger in numbers and warmer in sympathy than his English clientele, as has been the case with some other notable British authors, including Thackeray and George Eliot. Finally the freer political atmosphere of this country is better suited to the poet who voiced "The Cry of the Little Peoples" than the close, prescriptive air of England.

Mr. Le Gallienne has published twenty books of prose and verse, and he is only 36 years old. His literary reputation has been well established for a good dozen years in England, and it is not now seriously questioned even by the London Saturday Review, long his redoubtable foe. Yet remarkable as has been Mr. Le Gallienne's progress, until very lately he has felt that he had to fight every inch of the way. A brief sketch is here offered of his brilliant and interesting career.

Richard La Gallienne was born at Liverpool, January 20, 1866. His grandfather was a Guernsey man and a Frenchman to boot, which accounts for the poet's patronymic. With this exception the family was of excellent English stock into which, however, a drop of Irish blood found its way and it may be taken for granted, helped in the making of the poet. Perhaps also it may be held responsible for Richard's democratic proclivities.

The poet's father was a sound business man and determined to make another of his son. Richard was educated at Liverpool College and, in accordance with the paternal program, was at the age of 16 articed to a firm of chartered accountants. So one of the finest and most delicately artistic of living English writers owes nothing to either of the great English universities. Nor did Charles Lamb, it will be recalled, who has also glorified the race of accountants and whose drudgery at the desk's dead wood began earlier and lasted far longer than did Le Gallienne's.

Richard felt he had the literary vocation from the moment of leaving college, but the paternal will prevailed, and so he served seven long, dreary years for Rachel in the office of the Liverpool accountants. But during this time he was zealous in acquiring a literary equipment. Bookkeeping is not incompatible with a mild practice of literature, as Charles Lamb had proven. Young Le Gallienne soon began to test his vocation in the usual way, and even before leaving the chartered accountant he had made for himself quite a literary reputation in North Lancashire. As an example of his early leanings toward singularity it is pointed out that he "raved over" Walt Whitman's poetry to hard-headed Lancashire people who could see neither rhyme nor reason in the rugged lines of the wild man of the west, but who admired Mr. Le Gallienne's genius in perceiving the genius they could not discern underlying the "Leaves of Grass." It is not amiss to recall that Robert Louis Stevenson also professed a great admiration for Whitman and wrote a splendid essay in justification thereof.

The aestheticism of the '80's was not without its influence on the young poet, and indeed he was ere long to be recognized as a leading exponent of that peculiar cult of beauty and hedonism. But while indulging the humors of youth, Le Gallienne with a sagacity for which the critics have not always given him credit, never lost sight of his objective.

Having abandoned his ledgers, he went up to London where for some months he acted as secretary to Wilson Barrett. Then he joined the staff of the Star as literary critic, in which capacity he obtained his first blush of fame. This prepared the way for his genuine literary debut with "The Book-Bills of Narcissus," which, in the estimation of many critics, still remains one of his most charming works. The book at once established Le Gallienne's reputation, which was presently confirmed by his "George Meredith: Some Characteristics," a just and subtle appreciation.

But the things which compelled the world in general to take note of young Mr. Le Gallienne was his happily timed "The Religion of a Literary Man." Denunciatory advertisement on the part of the English clergy helped to make both book and author famous. The most unfriendly critics—and the pack were after Richard in those days—were obliged to confess

that he had "arrived."

This was in 1893 and since that time the world has occupied itself a good deal with Mr. Richard Le Gallienne. Also it is to be said, the world thinks better of him than ever. Though he has published twenty books, he has written no conspicuously bad one, and he has added immensely to the delight of English readers. Few contemporary English writers have been so prolific as Mr. Le Gallienne—Kipling is, of course, a remarkable exception. In spite of this great sum of literary work (to which should be added much journalizing both in this country and in England, lecturing etc.), it cannot be denied that Le Gallienne has shown a corresponding artistic growth. Today his work is firm and mature, proving the full knowledge of life into which he has come, while the delicate fancy, the style exquisite alike in prose and verse, are as alluring as ever.

Mr. Le Gallienne has just entered into an engagement, through R. H. Russell of New York, to supply a weekly literary letter to the principal papers of the country.

Mr. Bryan's Prosperity

The fact that Hon. W. J. Bryan has just completed a home at Lincoln, Neb., is being received with a great deal of pain by a number of papers throughout the north and east. These papers lay particular stress upon the fact that this house has twenty rooms, and that Mr. Bryan is not only a free-silver man, but an energetic opponent of the trusts. They hold to the axiom that any man who sympathizes with the poorer classes should remain poor himself and leave to others the accumulation of riches. It is said that Mr. Bryan has already accumulated between \$150,000 and \$500,000 worth of property, and asserted that his annual income from his paper and other sources is not less than \$50,000 annually.

This condition of affairs is sad, no doubt, but what is the use of protesting? An especially generous Providence endowed Mr. Bryan with more than his share of gray matter, and it is not apparent how these people are to keep him poor. It is true that Mr. Bryan is becoming wealthy without oppressing any one, and that there has never been the least suspicion that one penny of filthy money ever soiled his hands. And it is this that hurts. The plutocratic organs which are pained at his prosperity would have no ill-feeling against him if his money were wrung from the sweat and the suffering of the mass of the people. If Mr. Bryan had, for example, secured his wealth by cornering the stock of coal in some city during the existing blizzard, or had devised some plan whereby small dealers in certain commodities could have been ruined that a syndicate might capture the trade which had been theirs, he would have been hailed as a captain of industry. But that he should coin this wealth out of the gray matter within his skull, and without injury to any of his neighbors, is, of course, inexcusable. It is more inexcusable that he does not change his political views now that he has acquired a considerable amount of worldly goods. But more damning than all else is that he is making regularly the salary of a manager of a great syndicate without oppressing any one whatsoever.

The public will be pained along with the plutocrats at this extraordinary conduct of Mr. Bryan, but their pain will by no means be as acute. In fact they may be willing that Mr. Bryan should continue to prosper, though the more envious will not unnaturally complain that Providence was not more even-handed in its distribution of brains. Mr. Bryan has achieved a notable victory in demonstrating that even at this late day brains are a valuable commodity in the world, and that a man may prosper even yet without oppressing his neighbors and without permitting his conscience to be seared by the acquisition of wealth by furtive methods.

It may be as well to inform these plutocratic organs that wealth is not in itself an evil, but that evil methods of acquiring the wealth is what constitutes the sin, and that they will never be able to convince the world that honestly acquired wealth is a disgrace, while wealth dishonestly and illegally acquired is an honor to the holder. May Mr. Bryan continue to coin wealth out of his brain until he has all that is necessary to his happiness. The pity of it is that most of the great fortunes in this country are not in the keeping of such men as he.—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

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