

THE UNDERWORLD COURIER

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Book Notes.

A year or two ago Mr. Leslie Chaundy of Dulau and Company of London came to Washington with 18th century English flower prints. He brought to Dumbarton Oaks for your inspection the original water colors by Clara Maria Pope--anemones, ranunculus, peonies and others. They were, as you may well recall, irresistible and are now among the garden and flower treasures. May it be of some solace to Mrs. Chaundy who was here also to remember the response which they received from you at Dumbarton Oaks. (See clipping from the New Yorker, p. 2)

A copy of the MacLeish article from the January Survey Graphic is also enclosed. The book editor has tried without success to refrain from marginal notes indicating "this and this and this!"

Mr. Schreiber of the Goetheana Collection at Yale, having received the Faust brochure acknowledged it handsomely and asked that his thanks be conveyed to you and Mr. Bliss.

Hospitality and Entertainment

On Tuesday, January 21, Mr. Willard Metcalf, Director of the Widener Library, visited Dumbarton Oaks, made a survey of the library facilities, and lunched with Mr. and Mrs. Sachs, Mr. Thacher, Dr. Koehler, Mrs. Clark and Mrs. Sessions of the Library staff, and Miss Segall. Miss Dorothy Miner of Baltimore was also of the party. The occasion served in part as a farewell to Miss Segall, whose last day at Dumbarton Oaks it was. (Miss Segall left for New York the following day to attend the opening of the Brooklyn Museum exhibition of the art of Coptic Egypt, and at the suggestion of Mr. Sachs is taking the last days of the month as a brief holiday before entering upon her duties at the Boston Museum.)

Also by way of farewell to Miss Segall, a tea was given by Mrs. Ethel B. Clark at her home on 30th Street on the afternoon of the 21st. Mr. and Mrs. Sachs and Mr. Thacher were present, and the entire Library staff. Mrs. Bland was joined by her husband for the occasion.

On Wednesday, January 22, a men's luncheon was held by Mr. Sachs for the administrative heads of the Universities and colleges in Washington and Baltimore. Those attending included the Presidents of Johns Hopkins and Goucher, the Chancellor of American University, the Deans of the Graduate Schools of the Catholic



THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

A MAJOR who served in the A.E.F. in the last war once told us that he never fully realized what it was he was mixed up in until his orderly, standing beside him in a trench, received a German machine-gun bullet in the forehead; when that happened, the major knew he was in a war. Such intimate and specific revelations of what is really going on are even rarer in this war than in the last, hardly any of us having been actually on the scene so far, and few of us being even casually acquainted with anybody who is. An exception to this generality is a certain Dr. H. G. Bull, who practices medicine in Ithaca, New York, and who has sent us an account of his correspondence with Dulau & Co., Ltd., one of the oldest book-and-print shops in London.

Dr. Bull's dealings with Dulau & Co., Ltd., began during a vacation trip to England some fifteen years ago, when he dropped into the shop in Dover Street, made a few purchases, met the manager, Mr. Leslie Chaundy, and arranged with Mr. Chaundy to have the shop's catalogues sent to him in Ithaca. Since then, Dr. Bull has ordered from his house in Ithaca, sometimes by cable and sometimes by letter, such items as "The Psalms: frae Hebrew intil Scot-tis" and "a rare volume of the *Ars Parva* of our medical ancestor, Galen," the former at six shillings, the latter at seven guineas. He always received a note of acknowledgment and thanks from Mr. Chaundy, set down in small, beautiful handwriting that was like engraving. Occasional-

ly, Dr. Bull thought the catalogue price of some particular item a trifle high and he would offer by mail to buy it for a lesser sum if it had not been disposed of. In reply to such offers there would usually come a letter from Mr. Chaundy courteously calling attention to the admirable qualities of the item in question and setting a price somewhere between what Dr. Bull had offered and what the catalogue had demanded. Dr. Bull and Mr. Chaundy always reached an agreement sooner or later and there grew up between the two men, and between the shop in Dover Street and the house in Ithaca, an understanding based on mutual restraint and a sort of tacit appreciation of gentility. Late last summer, for example, Dr. Bull ordered by letter a copy of Culpeper's "Herbal" and "a very fine edition of the last letter of Mary, Queen of Scots," and when he sent this order he ventured to remark that Dulau & Co., Ltd., might find it difficult to deliver these items across the Atlantic at such a time. Mr. Chaundy replied that Dulau & Co., Ltd., "have thus far happily been fortunate in not having incurred the loss of a single item of merchandise or correspondence since the declaration of war" and assured Dr. Bull that his order would be carried out as usual. It was

Then, around the end of September, Dr. Bull received a catalogue from Dulau & Co., Ltd., listing "drawings and pictures, many from well-known collections, with a few pieces of old furniture." With the catalogue was a note from Mr. Chaundy mentioning "the extremely advantageous prices of these items." After hesitating over his choice, Dr. Bull finally cabled Dulau & Co., Ltd., ordering a small painting for eighteen guineas. He did not hear from Dulau & Co., Ltd., until the first week in December, when he received a letter not from Mr. Chaundy but from Mrs. Chaundy. The letter from Mrs. Chaundy was as follows:

9 BAYLEY ST.,
BEDFORD SQUARE,
W.C. 1.

Dr. H. G. Bull,
DEAR SIR:

Thank you for your cable ordering a portrait from our catalogue.

The enclosed notice will tell you of what has befallen my husband and our business premises, and I regret that books and pictures have gone too.

Should Dulau's be able to rise again from its ashes I hope we may be allowed to send you catalogues as before.

Yours faithfully
AGATHA M. CHAUNDY

The printed notice was headed "Dulau & Co., Ltd.," with a notation mentioning that the temporary address of the firm was 9 Bayley St., Bedford Square, and it said:

We beg to acknowledge receipt of your communication. Indulgence is asked for the unavoidable delay consequent on the destruction of our Dover Street premises by a bomb on the morning of October 12th. It is with profound regret that we inform our friends of the death of Mr. Leslie Chaundy, who was killed instantly. Two members of the staff, who were the





"His whole family always gets together for his Inaugurations."

the year first used. This attracted the attention of a Mrs. Estelle Schulz, who pointed out that the right date was 1905, and that she knew because she had attended the opening performance. The Guild people found that Mrs. Schulz was right, and also learned that there was only one previous curtain at the Met. That was crimson and lasted from 1883 to 1905. The Guild manfully wrote the purchasers that the twenty-two bookmarks were incorrectly labelled and offered to remount them on correct labels, but so far only ten of the twenty-two have been returned.

The curtain is being cut up into small pieces as orders come in at the home of Mrs. William Francis Gibbs, Guild chairman, a daughter of the late Paul D. Cravath. The Guild had the curtain dry-cleaned and then had the cleaner cut it into six pieces. A sixth

only others present at the time, were rescued, with injuries from which they are expected to recover.

Souvenirs

A FEW weeks ago we reported that the old gold-damask Metropolitan Opera curtain had been presented to the Opera Guild, which planned to cut it up and auction it off piecemeal. We have checked up on the progress of this sentimental enterprise and find that the Guild, modifying its original plan somewhat, is selling curtain cuttings at the flat rate of a dollar apiece. These come in two sizes—two by three inches, and seven inches by ten. The smaller strips, which are supposed to be used as bookmarks, are stapled to a piece of red paper stating that the Metropolitan Opera Guild has prepared this souvenir of the Metropolitan Opera House curtain "to commemorate the golden days of opera," and that the curtain was in use from November 20, 1905, through the close of the 1939-40 season. The larger strips, which you are just supposed to look at tenderly, aren't stapled to anything. As we go to press, nine hundred

pieces of both sizes have been snipped off and snapped up by the public—including twenty of the larger swatches, which went to Willard V. King, an opera lover and retired banker, and one bookmark purchased by William S. S. Rodgers, president of the Texas Corporation, which is now sponsoring the Opera on the air. Mr. King sent nineteen of his swatches to friends; Mr. Rodgers stuck his in a book he is reading. Since five hundred of the pieces sold are of the officially labelled bookmark variety, it would seem that opera lovers, or at least opera-curtain lovers, value functionalism more highly than mere size, which is probably a reassuring thing.

We obtained most of our information about the curtain from Mrs. John DeWitt Peltz, the Guild's publicity lady, who told us that her organization's phrase about the golden days of opera wasn't intended as a crack at the present, or non-Golden-Horseshoe, days. She also informed us, with considerable candor, that the first twenty-two two-by-three-inch cuttings sold were stapled to red paper erroneously giving 1903 as

of the curtain makes a brimming taxicab load. Mrs. Gibbs has had a number of snipping parties, at which the guests, supplied with scissors, tape measures, and cocktails, have included Mrs. Charles Fleck, Mrs. Richard Leach, Mrs. Chauncey Waddell, and Miss Anne Simpson. Between sessions, Mrs. Gibbs' secretary also does a good deal of cutting.

The Guild received one special order it wasn't able to fill. A lady in Tuscaloosa wrote that she'd heard that Lily Pons had always cut a piece out of the curtain in every opera house in which she was appearing for the first time, and that she'd like a piece cut *around* the hole Miss Pons left in the Met's curtain. The ladies couldn't find any hole. The Guild's favorite customer is Erskine Sanford, of Los Angeles, who was one of the Met's curtain boys in 1904 and as such held back the curtain while many stars took their bows. He sent in a dollar and wrote, "I love that curtain as far as it is possible to love an inanimate object." If the entire curtain is sold, the proceeds will amount to around \$10,000. Whatever the proceeds, they

University and of Georgetown (the Presidents of both universities were obliged to decline), and the President and Dean of George Washington University. By a fortunate chance, Dr. Edgar Wind, who was passing through Washington, was able to join the party.

The occasion served to emphasize the desire of Dumbarton Oaks to preserve the friendly and cooperative relations which have been established in the past with these sister institutions.

Less formally, but with the same end in view, meetings have been arranged between Professor Sherbowitz-Wetor and Professor Sachs, and between Father Anselm Strittmatter and Professors Koehler and Taylor. Father Strittmatter and Mr. Taylor were students together in the Graduate School at Harvard, and were delighted to renew their acquaintance.

Inaugural Echoes

(1) Miss Snow: radiant and extrovert (editor's interpretation). What made the glow in her heart and in her eyes was that the Ambassador, on the train, tired--as he must have been--with a multitude of important things on his mind--as he must have had--had got her a place, and such a place.

(2) Mrs. Sessions and Dr. Koehler visited the Walters Gallery on Inauguration Day, which was observed as a holiday by the Dumbarton Oaks staff. Together with Mr. Marshall, Dr. Steindorff, and Miss Miner, they were guests at luncheon of Mr. Rosen. Dr. Koehler was deeply impressed by the St. Denis heads which, after Mr. Ross' restoration, are now on exhibition in the Medieval Gallery. He discussed many problems of mutual interest with Mr. Ross, and was shown Mr. Rosen's laboratory.

(3) E. B. C. started off on that trusty means of locomotion (her two feet) glisséeing under a stand reserved for the messenger boys of some Philadelphia newspaper, under the very tier that just escaped the top of her hat, getting a clear and unobstructed view that just fitted the length of her face, between two tiers. Seeing the President in an open car go down Pennsylvania Avenue to the Capitol and back to the White House, worrying that he lifted his hat so constantly, letting the cold wind blow across the little bald spot on the top of his head; suddenly and unexpectedly feeling a lump rise in her throat and tears in her eyes; this dear America, and what does this all portend? Then, hungry, looking for a place to eat, sitting down, reaching the Roger Smith Hotel formerly the Powatan, saying to the man at the desk: "I am going to lunch here. May I go up to the roof afterwards?" "No," "Why not?" "It's too cold." "But if I don't mind?" and from the roof seeing overhead in the bluest of skies, the bombers; and below, along a polished ribbon of street, between borders of human beings, the tanks, the cavalry, the cadets--again the lump in the throat.

Interoffice Memorandum

See pages 4 and 5.

Messenger Service

On account of ill health we are parting with our little white rabbit, our little, timid, hurried, pink-eyed white rabbit (May I, for once, Mrs. Bliss suggest a change in nomenclature, a rabbit instead of a faun?) and in his stead we will reacquire the services of the young violinist--"Curiouser and curiouser," said Alice"--who was employed in a temporary capacity to assist Miss Rathbone in the great trek of books to the new building.

DUMBARTON OAKS
INTER OFFICE COMMUNICATION

FROM B. Jessims
TO Mrs. Bliss
DATE January 25, 1941
SUBJECT Anecdotal gleanings of B.S.'s
day in Baltimore:

1. Strom is leaving in the Baltimore Museum of Art, where Leslie Cheek and his Board are at work's point. Treide, Perlman, and possibly others, threaten to resign if Cheek remains, and there seems to be all sorts of unpleasantness in the air.
2. Perlman is said to have had a hand in the composition

of the platform of one of the major political parties last year. While the work was under way, Rosen is said to have wired him as follows: "When you get your platform framed, send it to me and I will incorporate it."

(with apologies!)

DUMBARTON OAKS
INTER OFFICE COMMUNICATION

FROM E. B. C.
TO Mr Bliss (confidential)
DATE Jan. 25, 1941
SUBJECT Mr Bliss' diaries

I was disappointed!

And should have known better
than to entrust to any one
but a French workman the
reproduction of a French
delicacy. I hope Mr

Bliss may, nevertheless,
find them of use.

Work in Progress

The Elephant-Tamer silk is being taken to Boston by Mr. Thacher for mounting by Miss Lehr.

Professor Sherbowitz-Wetzor has begun the study of Mr. Shaw's Byzantine coins, of which he plans to prepare a systematic catalogue.

Mr. Metcalf and Professor Taylor have agreed that the microfilming of a small introductory list of essential books still lacking in the library should be undertaken as an emergency measure, in view of the great difficulty of obtaining books from Europe. The Librarian is preparing a list of such books for consideration. (Mr. Metcalf reports that a small table model "reading machine" will soon be on the market at a price not higher than that of a good portable typewriter. This machine may be less frightening to sceptical scholars at the outset than the large Recordak, though it is designed primarily for convenient reading of short lengths of film and hence cannot permanently replace the larger model.)

~~The~~ ⁱⁿ other work in progress is deletion. Full account of this must be reserved until our next issue.

The Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection
of
Harvard University

invites you to attend

A Series of Lectures

by

Professor Henri Focillon

Research Fellow in Residence at Dumbarton Oaks

Professeur au Collège de France

First Series: L'Histoire de l'Art et la Vie de l'Esprit

Monday, February 3 Le Monde des Faits

Wednesday, February 5 . . . Le Monde des Formes

Friday, February 7 La Vie de l'Esprit

Second Series: Les Sources Orientales de la Sculpture
Romane

Monday, February 17 . Byzance, l'Islam et l'Art Roman

Wednesday, February 19 Le Vieil Orient

Friday, February 21 . . . L'Art Roman et le Génie de
l'Occident

R. S. V. P.

Entrance: 1703 32nd Street

The lectures will begin promptly at five o'clock

DUMBARTON OAKS
INTER OFFICE COMMUNICATION

FROM

TO

DATE.....

SUBJECT.....

We should appreciate it if you would kindly indicate which lectures you hope to be able to attend, and return this slip to us at 3101 R Street.

- ☐ Monday, February 3—Le Monde des Faits
- ☐ Wednesday, February 5—Le Monde des Formes
- ☐ Friday, February 7—La Vie de l'Esprit

- ☐ Monday, February 17—Byzance, l'Islam et l'Art Roman
- ☐ Wednesday, February 19—Le Vieil Orient
- ☐ Friday, February 21—L'Art Roman et le Génie de l'Occident

Signature

Focillon lectures invitations, by Brewood

Inter Office Communication pads, by Rubber Stamp