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# THE BOOKSHELF

## ACCIDENT

By ARNOLD BENNETT

Accident! How often we see that word screaming out from the headlines of a newspaper! How often we apply it to everyday happenings! Looking at it one way nearly everything happens by accident. It was an accident that Alan Frith-Walter should have boarded the same train as his son and daughter-in-law. It was an accident that he found them quarreling. Then the train wreck came as a climax of a series of accidents. In fact, Frith-Walter found himself surrounded by accidents, mental, physical, and otherwise.

In this story Arnold Bennett writes about commonplace happenings but makes them interesting by probing into them psychologically. He takes an ordinary trainload of human beings and makes them seem as romantic as any characters of fiction, by telling their thoughts and emotions. Alan Frith-Walter is a typical business executive so engrossed in routine details that he has failed to see the deeper things in life.

His secretary is to him a mere machine, efficient, accurate, and valuable—but on the train he finds her to be very human and quite attractive. His wife Elaine, whom he thought of as good enough but rather uninteresting, he finds to be still the charming girl that he married, although these charms were covered by a crust formed from many years of married life with a business man.

He finds also in his former business opponent, Mr. Lucass, many qualities that are not thought of usually in connection with an aggressive commercial executive. The way in which Mrs. Lucass treats her husband adds a touch of pathos until one sees that her spouse would be unhappy if her eternal nagging did cease, and then the situation becomes humorous. Alan compares his life with Elaine to what it would be with Mrs. Lucass and decides that his lot is not so bad after all.

The author's portrayal of the actions of a trainload of people as they pass the scene of a bad accident is so lifelike as to make one think he is there himself listening to the comments of the agitated travelers as they speculate on their own chances of reaching their destination without a mishap. Their excited outcries and involuntary shudderings are very real.

These situations have been woven into a fine, slightly ironical, humorously tolerant story of human adjustments. Mr. Bennett here has tempered realism with an interpretative quality which places *Accident* among the best and most unusual of his novels.—R. M. E.

## SHANTY IRISH

By JIM TULLY

In this story Jim Tully tells of the life of his people, the "Shanty Irish," who had come to this country hoping to find wealth and happiness but had been driven eventually to small farms where they lived, literally in Shanties, eking out a bare existence from the ground which had long since been worked out.

Yet they were a cheerful race despite the trials

and tribulations that they came up against one right after the other.

He tells of his grandfather, old Hughie Tully, who spent most of his time in the saloon and could drink any of the habitués of the place under the table.

His mother died of sorrow coupled with illness brought on partially by the arrest and conviction of her brother on a robbery charge.

He knows the character of the immigrant Irish because he is one himself. He writes of them in an interesting and entertaining manner.—R. M. E.

## RAIDERS OF THE DEEP

By LOWELL THOMAS

Lowell Thomas, the author of *Count Luckner, the Sea Devil* and *With Lawrence in Arabia* gives the reading public another engrossing biography. Rather, this is an anthology of biographies of the German submarine commanders who harassed Allied shipping during the late war.

While there is still a trace of feeling on this side of the pond regarding the ethics of unrestricted submarine warfare, we feel that this book will receive a great welcome from the adventure-loving. Without a doubt, the annals of history contain no similar exploits or adventures entailing as much danger except, perhaps, the doings of wartime aviators.

The author tells of the more important naval men who entered the submarine service, beginning with the redoubtable Weddingen, who sank the British ships *Hogue*, *Aboukir*, and the *Cressy*, the first warfare on the sea that convinced the world of the importance of the undersea boats.

The book, although just a series of boat-sinkings, is really fascinating. One may readily understand the feelings of these men who, perhaps not agreeing on the ethics of sinking vessels without warning, were merely obeying orders. It is surprising, too, to read of the gallant acts of these men.

Local events always are the most interesting, and for this reason we feel that the chapter telling of the raids on the American coast will be the ones to receive most attention. The first sub to cross over was the U-151, which did quite a bit of damage in the way of sinking ships as well as laying a cargo of mines in the Delaware Bay.

A perusal of this book gives quite an insight into the activities of this particular branch of the German Navy and is very enlightening on some well-known occurrences, in particular the *Lusitania* incident. It is a book of adventure as well as a record of the war.—M. L. A.

*This Strange Adventure* by Mary Roberts Rinehart is a story of a man cruel to his wife almost to the point of inhumanity. She tells here of an irresponsible man and the woman who suffers through his misdeeds.

A new book which should be of interest to Ohio Staters is *The Queen's Husband* a drama in three acts by Robert Sherwood. This is known on the

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campus as the latest production of Strollers, who did it well.

Another of the peculiarities of that unknown author S. S. Van Dine comes to light. The key word in the titles of each of his books so far has been of six letters. They are the *Canary Murder Case*, the *Greene Murder Case*, the *Benson Murder Case*, the *Bishop Murder Case*, and now in preparation is the *Scarab Murder Case*. We suppose there must be some psychology to the six-letter title which we have missed in our study of this subject (psychology). Incidentally we might add here that we have just seen the all-talking screen version of the *Canary Murder Case* and that it quite lives up to our mental picture of the story, formed from reading the book.

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