

TWO IMPORTANT NEWSPAPERS

MEMOIRS OF AN EDITOR. By Edward P. Mitchell. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

THE STORY OF AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER. By Richard Hooker. New York: The Macmillan Company.

It would be hard to find a more delightful book than *Memoirs of an Editor*, by Edward P. Mitchell, long time editor of *The New York Sun*. Any well written story of a life is interesting, but the story of such a life as Mr. Mitchell's, by such a brilliant writer as he, is a choice addition to the literature of the country. It carries with it not only the author's personal experiences which, in travel, cover almost the whole of the globe, and in personnel refer to a countless number of prominent people, but also the history of a remarkable newspaper, and, incidentally, of the politics of the country in the last fifty years.

Mr. Mitchell was born in Bath, Maine, in 1854, and his story ranges from childhood to a point beyond seventy years of age. His narrative of his early boyhood is written with all the humor and sympathy of Aldrich or Warner, and makes a charming opening to the more serious part which follows. His family removed to New York in 1860. His memories of New York as a boy recall the visit of the Prince of Wales, Barnum's Museum and its destruction by fire, the fights of rival hose companies, and the Draft Riots, in which his own household was seriously upset by the fact that they had a colored servant whose life was in danger from the mob.

At the close of the Civil War, Mr. Mitchell's father undertook unsuccessfully to conduct a plantation in the South, and from there the boy went to Bowdoin College, from which he was graduated in 1871. He began newspaper work on *The Boston Advertiser*, then a famous newspaper under Col. Goddard. From there he went to Lewiston, Maine, to *The Journal*, conducted by the Dingleys, and had his first sight of *The New York Sun*. After sending it a couple of contributions, which were accepted, he applied for a position and secured it in 1875. From there on it is a story of *The New York Sun*, the remarkable people with

whom he was there thrown into contact, and his own interesting and varied experiences. The personal factor on the editorial page of a newspaper is always a matter of conjecture, unless it reveals itself so plainly as to be unmistakable. Studying *The Sun* at Lewiston, he was impressed by the three different styles in the editorials, and finally learned that, instead of Mr. Dana writing the different articles, there were three other writers. Of one style were the contributions of Francis P. Church, author of the charming little letter written in 1897 demonstrating to a child of eight that there is such a person as Santa Claus; another style belonged to Gen. Fitzhenry Warren, and the third was that of William G. Bartlett, counsel and friend of Mr. Dana. Mr. Dana's personality prevailed all through *The Sun*, as a matter of course. He had a choice vein of humor and the same quality appeared on the editorial page, whoever wrote. His personal magnetism is very evident from the devotion felt for him among all his subordinates. He gathered about him a remarkable group of talented persons, and their loyalty to him and *The Sun* was evidence of the attractiveness of Mr. Dana and of his rare qualities. Mr. Mitchell says of him:

Mr. Dana wrote much less of the editorial matter in *The Sun* than was generally supposed to be his own by the readers of that paper; much less than Raymond or Louis Jennings or Miller or Ogden in *The Times* or Greeley in the old *Tribune*; very much less, certainly, than Henry Watterson in *The Courier-Journal* of Louisville or, probably, Henry W. Grady in *The Atlanta Constitution*. What Dana did write for his editorial page was of that high grade of literary expression which distinguished all his acknowledged productions.

When Mr. Dana was away, the second in command was Thomas Hitchcock, the next largest stockholder in the company, and Mr. Mitchell tells us how *The Sun* missed the great opportunity which *The New York Times* took up:

It was to Mr. Hitchcock, in the temporary absence of Dana, that Sheriff Jimmy O'Brien submitted the Tweed Ring accounts and incriminating documents in the summer of 1871, when O'Brien decided to strike his blow of vengeance. Mr. Hitchcock was naturally unwilling to assume the responsibility; and the sheriff, unable to reach Dana, carried the Ring figures to

George Jones of *The Times*, dumped the bundle and left the office without sitting down.

There is no knowing how many popular phrases originated in *The Sun*, but surely the "office cat" ranks high, and here is how the cat came to be:

One warm night in the Eighties the flimsy telegraph copy of a Presidential message fluttered out of the window and was lost in Nassau Street: "*The Sun* had nothing about it the next morning, and in the afternoon, when Mr. Bartlett called on Mr. Dana, the matter of the lost message was under discussion. The editor remarked that it was a matter difficult to explain to the readers. 'Oh, say that the office cat ate it,' suggested Bartlett." A paragraph appeared next day, creating the cat, and the animal immediately became popular as a polyphage in hundreds of other newspaper offices.

The Sun was backed by many prominent New Yorkers, including Cyrus W. Field, Seth Low and Amos R. Eno, and yet when Mr. Hitchcock went to it, it was "excluded from the reading rooms of institutions like the Century Club". In time, of course, all this hostility disappeared and *The Sun* became one of the most popular newspapers, not only in New York but of the country.

Like Mr. Dana, Mr. Mitchell had a fancy for cranks, which showed early when in college he entertained the famous Daniel Pratt, G.A.T. (Great American Traveler). Pratt was a chronic self-nominated candidate for the Presidency. Mr. Mitchell quotes part of the candidate's oration, but omits the conclusion which used to clinch his demand for the Chief Magistracy. It was: "A goose saved Rome—why should not I," etc. Later, George Francis Train, and George, the Count Johannes, received his special attention. Madame Blavatsky was another peculiar character whom he describes at length. Mr. Mitchell at one time was quite interested in spooks; but, when he found that the ghost of Professor Münsterburg did not understand German, he concluded that further research was unnecessary.

The first great change in the proprietorship of *The Sun*, since Charles A. Dana bought the newspaper from the Beaches in 1867, came on Washington's Birthday, 1902, when it passed into the control of William M. Laffan. At the death of Mr. Laffan, William C. Reick became the chief owner. In June,

1916, Frank A. Munsey purchased the majority stock of *The Sun* Corporation. Paul Dana, who had been editor since his father's death in 1897, retired in July, 1898, and Mr. Mitchell succeeded to that post, which he held until the merger. Mr. Mitchell's comments on William M. Laffan and Frank Munsey indicate an affectionate appreciation of both men. The story of *The Sun* ends with its absorption into *The New York Press* which, subsequently, was merged with *The New York Herald*. *The Sun* was a great newspaper, brilliant and eccentric, but always clear and positive, so that nobody ever doubted where it stood on any important question, and Mr. Mitchell did a large part in making it what it was.

The Springfield Republican, one of the great little newspapers of the country, was established by Samuel Bowles on September 8, 1824, and, in September, 1924, its managers gave a dinner to all connected with it; about five hundred being present. Another detail of the celebration of the one hundredth anniversary was the publication of *The Story of an Independent Newspaper*, by Richard Hooker. There are comparatively few newspapers in the country that are one hundred years old, though there are some much older. But very few, indeed, have always been published in the same place, using the same name, and it is safe to say that *The Republican* is unique in being the only newspaper of this class in the country that, for a hundred years, has been owned and controlled by the same family.

The first Samuel Bowles was a part owner of *The Hartford* (Connecticut) *Times*, a paper which was established in 1817 to give expression to the growing anti-Federal and anti-Congregational sentiment which had been steadily increasing in New England following the election of Jefferson to the Presidency. The sentiment prevailed the next year. It suggests the conservatism of the people of Connecticut that, from the time when the three towns of Hartford, Wethersfield and Windsor united in 1639 in forming the Colony of Connecticut under the guidance of Thomas Hooker, the people had moved along through all the Colonial period, the Revolution, and more than forty years later, without any other Constitution than that of Hooker's Fundamental Orders.

In 1818 they adopted the Constitution, now 106 years old, under which they still live. Mr. Bowles decided to carry into western Massachusetts the same anti-Federal sentiments that he had been advancing in Connecticut, and, borrowing \$400, he loaded his press and type on a flat boat and had them poled up to Springfield.

In March, 1844, the second Samuel Bowles, who was born in 1826, induced his father to begin publishing the daily *Republican*, and it was he who, later in life, gave the newspaper that "independence" which has made it a national institution.

Samuel Bowles, the father, lived until 1851, and, at his death, the whole responsibility of *The Republican* fell upon Samuel Bowles, the second. He was a man of remarkable ability in many ways, of high personal character, and abundant courage and patriotism. He recognized no leader but his own conscience, and the story of the paper carries with it accounts of many clashes. He bitterly attacked and helped break up the Know Nothing Party. He fought the Fugitive Slave Law and carried on many brave fights, some local and some national. He joined the Republican party early, and *The Republican*, beginning with Fremont, advocated the election of every Republican candidate for the Presidency down to Grant's second term.

It was then that Mr. Bowles became especially prominent. He was one of the "Independent Republicans" who went out to Cincinnati to nominate their candidate against Grant. *The Republican* had long urged Charles Francis Adams for public office, first for Governor of his State, and later as the candidate to oppose Grant. It was the general feeling through the country that Adams would be the nominee chosen by the four leading newspaper men, Bowles of *The Republican*, White of *The Chicago Tribune*, Halstead of *The Cincinnati Commercial*, and Watterson of *The Louisville Courier Journal*. When they met, however, the convention nominated Horace Greeley, to the great disappointment of all New England, at least. His nomination was endorsed by the Democratic party and he, himself, was buried by the voters of the country. It is an old story that Isaac H. Bromley, one of the wittiest men produced in newspaper work in the country, who attended the gathering, was asked

upon his return where he had been, and he replied that he had been "out to see the Mammoth Cave—and it did!"

Mr. Bowles was a most inspiring person, and his newspaper was one of the earliest schools of journalism in the country. It is related of him that a young fellow who had applied for a position asked him what his pay would be, and Bowles turned on him with "Sir, you are asking me to pay you to educate you! I am willing to educate you, but not to pay for the privilege of doing so." This incident, however, occurred years ago. Among the well-known graduates of *The Republican* are Talcott Williams, Professor Emeritus of the Pulitzer School of Journalism in New York; Hon. George Harvey, editor of THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW; the late Herbert L. Bridgman, publisher of *The Brooklyn Standard-Union*, and the heads of the departments of journalism in Northwestern University, and the Universities of Iowa, Minnesota, and a multitude of others. Solomon B. Griffin, who was engaged upon *The Republican* from 1872 until 1919, and who for forty years was managing editor, had much to do with the shaping of the policy of the paper, and proved himself one of the great men in New England newspaper work.

On January 16, 1878, Samuel Bowles, the second, died at the age of fifty-two, and was succeeded by his son, the third Samuel Bowles, to whom Mr. Hooker fittingly dedicates his interesting book. He founded *The Sunday Republican*, and made many other changes, devoting his whole life to the newspaper of which he had been put in charge. He was born in 1851 and died in 1915, lamented by a multitude of admirers and friends.

The Republican is now conducted by Richard Hooker, editor and president of the Corporation, and Sherman Hoar Bowles, general manager, both grandchildren of the second Samuel Bowles, Sherman Bowles being a son of the third Samuel Bowles, and Mr. Hooker, a nephew.

CHARLES HOPKINS CLARK.

ASPECTS OF THE CONSTITUTION

THE AMERICAN CONSTITUTION AS IT PROTECTS PRIVATE RIGHTS. By Fred-eric Jesup Stimson, LL.D. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

RECENT CHANGES IN AMERICAN CONSTITUTIONAL THEORY. By John W. Burgess, LL.D. New York: Columbia University Press.

FEDERAL CENTRALIZATION. By Walter Thompson, Ph.D. New York: Har-court, Brace and Company.

AMERICAN STATE GOVERNMENT. By John Mabry Mathews, Ph.D. New York: D. Appleton and Company.

CHILD LABOR AND THE CONSTITUTION. By Raymond G. Fuller; with an Introduction by John H. Finley. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company.

NON-VOTING. By Charles Edward Merriam and Harold Foote Gosnell. Chicago, Ill.: The University of Chicago Press.

AMERICA'S INTEREST IN WORLD PEACE. By Irving Fisher. New York: Funk and Wagnalls Company.

THE MONROE DOCTRINE. By Alejandro Alvarez. New York: Oxford University Press.

A HISTORY OF POLITICAL THEORIES. By Students of the late William Archi-bald Dunning, LL.D., Edited by Charles Edward Merriam, LL.D., and Harry Elmer Barnes, Ph.D. New York: The Macmillan Company.

THE LESSONS OF HISTORY. By C. S. Leavenworth, M.A. New Haven: Yale University Press.

There was doubtless only too much truth, in a certain sense, in the recent remark of Governor Silzer, of New Jersey, that "Americans of today are not much concerned about the Constitution of the United States". Attention of a kind there doubtless is; paid by those who would deform the Constitution under the guise of amendment, or annul it altogether. Such hostility has this year attained an unprecedented degree and extent. In former years issues were raised over interpretation of specific clauses and provisions; by Josiah Quincy, by John C. Calhoun, by Robert Y. Hayne, and others. But it was reserved for the present year to see scores of resolutions for amendments introduced in Congress in a single session, and a nation-wide movement organized and led by two Senators of the United States for an amendment specifically designed to invalidate the entire Constitution. In the midst of such hostility, favorable attention, for intelligent and efficient support and vindication of the Constitution, has been regrettably lacking. The majority of its friends have contented themselves with passive support, while some, through lack of information or