

tinguished; and I wonder just how, without much verbal craft, he has been able to conjure the living presence of the Dowager Empress. Not even Bland and Backhouse, with all their skill and resource, have done it better. In three pages at the end of the ninth chapter, Mr. Beck makes poignantly beautiful a glimpse of Emperor Kuang Hsu, displaced and thwarted by the so-called Benevolent Mother. If the whole book had been written with the simple artistry of that fine passage, it would have been a book indeed.

WITTER BYNNER.

*Santa Fé, New Mexico.*

### The Life of Osler

It is not an exaggeration to say that thousands have been eagerly looking for this biography (SIR WILLIAM OSLER, by Harvey Cushing, Oxford University Press, \$12.50); for, quoting Ulysses, he truly said of himself: "I am a part of all that I have met." Dr. Cushing has performed this labor of love with a surgeon's skill and an artist's insight. Who has not known some once vital life suddenly entombed in a bulky volume, and cried: "Now we know that he really is dead!" But in Dr. Cushing's work it is not an entombment, it is a revivification.

More completely than in any other biography I know, the biographer makes the *tour de force* of keeping a single eye on the subject of his *memoir*. The great of his generation, as well as the lowly, were friends of Sir William; and all were befriended by him; but no other distinguished presence tempts the biographer to sidetrack. Dr. Cushing simply raises the curtain and steps aside, — but though the reader does not see the hand which set the great picture in motion, no workman in letters will be deceived. It is an enormous piece of work, perfectly done.

Dr. Cushing gives the ancestry tersely but adequately. The story of the early wilderness home, the father, the mother, the babyhood, childhood, and boyhood are delightfully described. The sturdy, adventurous Osler stock, full of initiative, religious, intelligent, "wise to what is good", with perfectly simple ideals, somewhat accounts for this famous son of Ellen Pickton and Featherstone Lake

Osler. It was not a spoon-fed race. Sir William's student days at home and abroad showed a genius for life and the joy of life. Heart, soul, and mind seemed to "stand on tiptoe" in these days of his apprenticeship. But after that, he was master. Canada, America, England looked to him during the period of great advance in medical science through which he lived, and he responded with mind and heart. The seeds he sowed with lavish hands grew overnight.

At the opening of the Johns Hopkins Hospital in 1889, Dr. Osler, then under forty, assumed the leadership, organized the clinic, and surrounded himself with brilliant young associates. As you read the story it is with a thrilling sense of being part of the onward movement. His hand is on your shoulder, and you hear him say to you: "Go on." Yet with all his alertness to progress, he advanced from a profound background of living tradition, — only the slag of the past, not the ore, was thrown away by him. So you feel in these pages the beat of incessant activities, but they come from deep sources. It was a life of rapid achievement, yet with an indifference to achievement in the commonly accepted sense. Well might Sir William have said, with Rabbi Ben Ezra: "What I aspired to be and was not, comforts me."

One other figure moves through the pages like a ray of light, — Sir William's only son, a lovely child, a most lovely youth, — and then he passes out with the young dead of the late war. The chill of an arrested spring strikes your heart, and you realize that from that moment Sir William has entered the dark valley, — though he walks in it bravely, even with seeming gaiety and always working for others until his own death on December twenty-ninth, 1919, two and a half years later.

ERNEST BROOKE.

*Baltimore, Md.*

### Roosevelt as Diplomat

ROOSEVELT AND THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR (by Tyler Dennett, Doubleday, Page, \$3.00) will be indispensable to students of events in the Far East during the last twenty-five years or so. It is also the biggest monument to the acumen of Theodore



people and places. No American writer, perhaps, has more thoroughly mastered the technique of turning out a best seller.  
E. C.

*New York City.*

## Mrs. Mason's Daughters

Mathilde Eiker writes about *MRS. MASON'S DAUGHTERS* (Macmillan, \$2.50) as Mr. William Beebe might write about ants, — with the same complete understanding of their springs of action and the same absence of either pity or sympathy, as if they belonged to another species. She does not praise, condone, or explain her characters; she simply presents them. I am wrong; sometimes she is amused by them. But particularly, she understands them. The book covers eight years in the lives of Mrs. Mason and her daughters, a period of which a paragraph on p. 334 summarizes the action:

"Mrs. Mason had borne three daughters. One was a divorced woman; one was the mother of an illegitimate baby; one would soon be a Roman Catholic Sister. All three states Mrs. Mason would have abhorred. All three were projecting Mrs. Mason —"

Of the daughters, Fernanda is the most important. She is an excellent school teacher, dissatisfied with her profession because she craves something more personally satisfying. There are two things she desires, — to write poetry and to experience love. In time she tries both and succeeds at neither. Then she becomes, — rather too easily, — a successful manager of a tea-house and devotes her life to her illegitimate daughter, Jane. The Fernanda of the school-room and the home, where the only bond between the three women who live together is one of birth, is so accurate one longs, at times, to be able to release the thumb-screws. The later Fernanda of the affair with Dr. Mantuan and of the tea-house is more misty.

Throughout this first novel, Miss Eiker shows a structural skill not always found in a fifth. She carries four lives without losing the suspense of any, or wasting an incident. The style is as compact as the structure, and as clear in making its points as a mathematical proof.

Altogether, this book makes one a little afraid to meet Miss Eiker.

LOUISE WHITEFIELD BRAY.

*Cambridge, Mass.*

## Treasure and Magic

L. Adams Beck puts into the mouth of an Englishman born in China the most fabulous, romantic, and yet plausible modern narrative I have read of the Orient (*THE TREASURE OF HO*, Dodd, Mead \$2.00). The whereabouts of a vast treasure, intricately hidden in remote parts of the Empire, are revealed to the Englishman in psychic visions. His experience in recovering this treasure, and at the same time in finding his own Chinese kinswoman as its heir, leads the reader now credulous, now incredulous, through a maze of seemingly supernatural events.

When I had finished the story, I turned back with a sense of awe to the author's initial note in which he says, "The Treasure of Ho is historical, nor have I exaggerated its enormous value. Many of the incidents of this romance are historical also, and the so-called magical events have been seen and authenticated by travelers in the Orient for many generations past and down to the present day." If this be true testimony, Mr. Beck has gathered into these pages material not only of absorbing historical interest but of challenging interest to Western students of psychical research, material which puts Mr. Freud back into the kindergarten.

Says the Blind Man of Huei, "Your men of science have of late made the discovery which has been our daily bread for ages. They teach now that within every man and woman there is a second self. . . . This inner self is wiser than the outer, and yet in some ways more foolish. What is it? Your wise men cannot tell. We know. . . . Within every human body is power, layer below layer of experience and knowledge, and this is allied with the highest and the lowest, and when a man has gained this power, he can do mighty deeds for good and evil."

If Mr. Beck believes what he tells us as to the exercise of this power, and as to the character of superior individuals in China, it is no wonder that he appears to believe without dread in the approaching ascendancy of the Yellow Faith.

If Mr. Beck's literary manner were as important as his psychological matter appears to be, his book would be a doubly valuable document. His style is not dis-