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methods of Macaulay, or still more of Thackeray: let us judge people by what they did, not by what a Victorian Whig would have done in their places. But this revision of our historical standpoint should be carried all along the line, not merely applied to the more glamorous and entertaining figures of the past. Mr. Fulford has done more than justice to George the Fourth: but how much better the same industry and ingenuity would have been spent in rehabilitating the reputation of George the Third.

CHRISTOPHER HOBHOUSE

## THE LILY

**Lilies.** By H. DRYSDALE WOODCOCK and J. COUTTS. *Country Life*. 15s.

**Wild Flowers of the Great Dominions of the British Empire.** By LADY ROCKLEY. *Macmillan*. 16s.

**Shrubs for Amateurs.** By W. J. BEAN. *Country Life*. 5s.

Here are three books to delight the hearts of all who care for flowers. After the fantasies of a writer whom Mr. Sean O'Casey has recently nick-named the Prince Charming of literature, it is refreshing to come upon three books written by gardeners whose enthusiasms are tempered by knowledge, and whose books are serious, and in one case classic contributions to the literature of horticulture.

The classic is *Lilies*. No book on lilies has appeared in this country since Mr. Grove's work appeared in 1911, and no really comprehensive guide to their cultivation or propagation or history has ever appeared in either Europe or America. The lily, indeed, so far from being gilded, has until recent years been the Cinderella of garden flowers. The publication of any work dealing even in a modest way with lilies is therefore an event, and Messrs. Woodcock and Coutts, fully aware of this, have clearly spared no trouble to make their own book a classic event worthy of the most classical of all flowers. For the lily is and has been for at least as long as 2,000 years not merely a flower but an emblem. *L. candidum*, the Madonna of gardens, occupies a position above all other lilies and all other flowers as being the sacred emblem of a trio of saints, St. Francis, St. John the Baptist and St. Anthony of Padua, and has been known and loved in gardens for countless centuries. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Parkinson knew many lilies of which gardeners to-day are still inexplicably shy, and in the eighteenth century Linnaeus knew and described a dozen species, together with some varieties of martagon. After this came three centuries of famine in lily culture, not broken until the arrival in 1862 "of that bewitching beauty from the far-east—*auratum*, the Golden-rayed lily of Japan," and the revolutionary discovery, forty years later, of *regale*. It was *regale*, easy of culture, exquisite, and above all prolific in seed, that finally changed the attitude of gardeners to the whole genus, leading in time to the foundation of a lily committee under the R.H.S. and probably to the enthusiasm which has inspired this book.

It is a book which no one with half a heart for lilies ought to miss. Reading it, one marvels that men still employ other men to drill for them hideous regiments of geraniums when such treasures as *regale*, *chalcedonicum*, *auratum*, *polyphyllum*, *Henryi*, *speciosum*, and a score of others are no more difficult or expensive to possess. The notion that lilies are faddy is dispelled here once and for all. Many may be cultivated with the ease of delphiniums in the open border, and above all may be raised from seed, *regale*, *Wardii*, *Henryi* and others flowering in two years, *philippinense* and *formosum* often in six months. All this, however, and every other phase of lily culture, is dealt with admirably by Messrs. Woodcock and Coutts. It is not for the reviewer to steal their thunder: he can only echo it with appropriate applause.

Of the two remaining books, Mr. Bean's is a reprint of an extremely handy and well-informed little work, now revised and brought up to date, with new illustrations. Lady Rockley's survey of the flowers of the British Empire, at first sight a pompous and slightly top-heavy work, is in reality a fascinating treatise, with illustrations of Canadian, South African, New Zealand and Australian native flowers that will drive any ambitious gardener either to drink or the nearest shipping office.

H. E. BATES

## SHORTER NOTICES

**The Constitutional History of the Cinque Ports.** By K. M. E. MURRAY. *Manchester University Press*. 12s. 6d.

As interesting as it is erudite, this monograph treats of the Cinque Ports from their appearance in history; through the years of their greatest power in the thirteenth century and the elaboration of their confederacy

in the fourteenth, to the day when their sea service ceased to have value and their ancient prestige became legendary. In the course of her investigation Miss Murray has been able to clear up many disputed points with regard to the antiquity of the rights of the Ports, and of the nature of their confederacy. Evidence is forthcoming that gives weight to many ancient claims; though others, such as that the confederacy resembled that of the Hanse Towns, or that the Ports possessed the equivalent of Palatinate rights, are seen to be without foundation. The power of the Ports was at its height during the Baronial Wars, when the piratical nature of the services rendered made their seamen valued and feared. Miss Murray deals at length with the Courts of Shepway and Brodhull, with the varied functions of the Warden, and with the long-drawn-out quarrel of the Ports with the men of Yarmouth. The book indeed is a valuable footnote to history, and the precursor, one hopes, of the economic story of the Ports, of which we are given many inviting glimpses.

**George Washington: An English Judgment.** By MICHAEL DE LA BEDOYERE. *Harrap*. 10s. 6d.

Count Michael de la Bedoyere opens his story of Washington somewhat unhappily when he quotes an exclamatory remark of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu that the world in which she lived was a "dirty world," and gives it the implication that the world in which Washington lived was cleaner: the "God's Own World" touch which makes so much American history suspect. But he does not labour the point; as how could he when he tells the story of Washington's political life in the post-Revolutionary years? The closing lines of the judgment are perhaps the truest in the book, for with the death of Washington the secret of his greatness perished; that is, of course, if he was great and there was a secret. Count Michael, however, does make a rather dull hero interesting, and in so far as the man was great, what made him great and his memory survive calumny is seen in this biography to have been his fundamental integrity. His attraction for English readers will probably be found in his correspondence, which is quoted freely and makes lively reading. The figure of the Father of his Country is perhaps a little obscured by the historical canvas on which it is painted, but even historically Count Michael has made a threadbare tale as engaging as could be expected.

**Sir George Alexander and The St. James' Theatre.** By A. E. W. MASON. *Macmillan*. 10s. 6d.

Of George Alexander it may indeed be said that he should have died hereafter, for his too early death coincided with a period in the history of the theatre when the steadying influence of his technical efficiency, his shrewd judgment, and his civilised urbanity were most sorely needed.

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