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sign of dismantling, and the place acquired a semi-permanence. How often, in passing, I have been surprised by its brocade of shadows! Beyond the glare of the West End this corner was lit like a cheerful bonfire. On summer evenings, the voices, the music, the crack of rifles, the note of a horn blown repeatedly were irresistible. Crowds came and went. A dart transfixed a playing card, horses soared majestically over the field of heads. When it rained, the organ continued to play among the empty swings, uttering its melancholy and barbaric chant; occasionally a shout was echoed along the lane of booths; and as the water dripped, a man's head would rise out of a tent, and children, watching from the street, would press forward expectantly. It was a poor place as fairs go, but the only one of its kind I knew.

In memory, it illuminates, too, with a strange poignancy—like a puppet scene—the dinginess of so many makeshift corners: the East End marshes, the railway stations, the familiar scaffolded lots: those areas that form so large a part of our total impression of London.

I am reminded of an old haunt by Mr. Thomas Burke's little book of London memories. He has lived, I believe, forty years or so in London, and in this volume he gathers some personal recollections and surveys the changes of the last half-century. It is a modest, friendly address to the reader, assuming that he would take pleasure in the attitude, for example, of Gay's *Trivia: or the Art of Walking the Streets of London*; the real sights, he says, can only be seen by the traveller on foot. The crowds, the shops, street markets, a hundred forgotten squares and alleys, railway bridges, the backs of wharves, rare glimpses of the river and the canals—these provide him with the pictures and casual encounters which otherwise he would miss. And London, of course, is almost inexhaustible for the pedestrian who enjoys this sort of townscape.

Mr. Burke divides his impressions under a number of headings—"People," "Shops," "War," "Entertainment" and "Streets"—and discusses the alterations he has noticed in his own time. Mechanical traffic, arc lamps and concrete have, of course, brought about some obvious changes; there is perhaps less individuality in manners as well as dress; most of the old London "villages" have lost their distinctive charm; the cinema has displaced the music-hall, the loud-speaker the street-crier; and so on. Mr. Burke takes an unashamed pleasure in the backward glance, though he does not think by any means that the changes have been for the worse. He has a particular affection for London south of the Thames, and gives us a charming picture of old Clapham, where he was born:

By my own observation, and vicariously, through the talk of parents and grandparents, I have a hundred years' memories of Clapham, and it seemed to me then that the Clapham of those old houses and gardens was outside the time-action which was tinging all the rest of that suburb. It was, I felt, my grandfather's Clapham, preserved behind the modern High Street by some alchemy of his, so that he could show it to me. To some extent it was, for amid all the bustle of a main-road suburb one was constantly meeting, as one can meet to-day, isolated patches of the hamlet atmosphere. Side by side with the tramcars you could then see "the squire of Clapham" (Mr. Thornton, I think) riding horse-back round the Old Town; and the cottage to which my grandfather took his bride was still in occupation and unaffected by the "electric railway" or any other progress. Within two minutes of the High Street was a farmyard (Denny's) from which children, as though in the heart of the country, fetched milk in the afternoons; and off the streets of little villas one could find an occasional hedgerowed lane leading to another street of little villas.

He goes on to say that "some of the names of Clapham families"

of the town, of the "real London," which, of course, everyone else has hitherto missed. And he finds it in a lamp-post or a cat sniffing round a dustbin.

There is, however, in his present volume, less of this "spirit" of London—and his writing is very much better without it. He obviously prefers the streets south of the Thames to those north of it; partly because he was born there, and partly perhaps because the squat buildings give one a sense of space which is rare in the central and northern districts. But there are few parts which he does not know and recall with pleasure. *London in My Time* gives on the whole a more accurate picture of London in its various aspects than M. Morand's *Londres*, which appeared recently under an English title. Those fogs, delightful as they were, and brown as an old master, belonged to a London of fifty years ago. Mr. Burke, though he lacks Morand's brilliant descriptive gift, is more homely and more truthful.

G. W. STONIER

THE STORY OF GARDENING

The Story of Gardening. By RICHARDSON WRIGHT. *Routledge.* 15s.

First impressions of *The Story of Gardening* are a little intimidating: a five-hundred page volume, shiny paper, text-cuts, a summary of garden art and tendencies since the year dot, and the whole weighing as heavily in the hand as a lump of Midland clay. It seems very nearly in the school "nature-book" class. It is in fact much better than this. As for weight, *The Story of Gardening* weighs far less, for instance, than Marie Louise Gothein's very teutonic, very sumptuous *A History of Garden Art*. It is also far less expensive. It is certainly not so exhaustive, but it is probably exhaustive enough for the man who is generally concerned more with what onions to sow next spring than with the gardens of Byzantium. And the writing itself is surprisingly light, almost friendly. It deviates at times, perhaps necessarily, into the encyclopædic manner, and Mr. Richardson Wright has here and there exercised that peculiarly fruity style ("rugged fellows and petulant queens and the shadowy ghosts of gods and goddesses and of shy spirits") which gardening writers very often seem to regard as their special privilege. Otherwise he gives an undogmatic and straightforward history of civilised gardening from the earliest Asiatic gardens down to the great ages of English gardening and the present era of ladies' garden clubs in America. The great ages of gardening are all covered: the gardens of China and Japan; the formal water gardens of India and Persia; early Greek and Roman statuary gardens; Italian and French and Spanish formal and terraced gardens; the tulip gardens of the Dutch; and finally some excellent chapters on American garden history. The English section covers from the sixteenth century down to the influence of Gertrude Jekyll, from the knot gardens of Bacon's time (as good designs in taste, he snorted) down to that curious piece of English hypocrisy the local flower show, at which the prizes continue to be won largely by gentlemen who have never raised a plant or sown a seed.

H. E. BATES

ANTHOLOGIES

The Minor Pleasures of Life. Selected and arranged by ROSE MACAULAY. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.

The Major Pleasures of Life. Selected and arranged by MARTIN ARMSTRONG. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.