

**THE PAGEANT OF ENGLAND,  
1900-1920, A JOURNALIST'S  
LOG OF TWENTY  
REMARKABLE YEARS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649189991

The pageant of England, 1900-1920, a journalist's log of twenty remarkable years by J. R. Raynes

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**J. R. RAYNES**

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A JOURNALIST'S LOG OF  
TWENTY REMARKABLE YEARS

BY

J. R. RAYNES

THE SWARTHMORE PRESS LTD.

72 OXFORD STREET, LONDON, W. 1

1920

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*This above all, to thine own self be true,  
And it must follow, as the night the day;  
Thou canst not then be false to any man.*

DEDICATED

TO ALL

MY FRIENDS

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IT is usual, I think, for an author to dedicate his first book to some close friend who has had a conspicuous influence upon his life. This book I dedicate to all my friends, beginning with my parents, to whom I owe an overwhelming debt; to my devoted wife, to whom my debt is not a whit less; to my schoolmasters, and to a wide circle of kindly and helpful friends in several towns of England. This is their book, and of their fashioning. I gladly acknowledge my vast indebtedness to the goodness of those whom I have known intimately. They have embraced all classes, all parties and all creeds, and in all these I have found good intent and great earnestness.

In this Pageant of England, told as I have seen it unfold during these twenty very remarkable years, I have sought to keep as close to recognized truth as possible. That is to say, I have omitted expressions of view which I hold to be true, but which others would oppose as fallacy. Where it has been essential to express views, they are mine, and of no party creed. The truth may be tame, but it is eternal. It is out of exaggeration that contradiction springs and sectional animosity is aroused by rival camps indulging in extremities. Something is wrong with England, and its social grievances need righting. Thousands of young men who fought for England are leaving England, and we need them all. In a pastoral chapter a description of rural England is attempted, and in such fair regions, which I have ventured to call Colonial England, there is room for new towns and new developments. City

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life is congested and artificial, and a hopeful sign of the year is the rising of numerous garden suburbs. We are moving more surely than some may realize towards better times. I have used the example of the tapestry weavers, who only occasionally get a glimpse of their picture, as an illustration of what has been taking place these twenty years. A great design is being worked out, and to all the weavers with tangled threads my story is dedicated. May they all clearly realize that a new England is emerging, and that its form will be enriched by public service, not by thoughts of self. The heart of England is sound, and its tone is healthy. We have a reputation for "losing every battle but the last" and the last in this case is the winning of the Peace. Many specifics are offered :

So many prayers, so many creeds,  
So many paths that wind and wind ;  
While just the art of being kind,  
Is all the sad world needs.

Lastly, this volume is dedicated with affection to all my colleagues of the Press, that gallant army of five thousand cheery "Nujjers," who have progressed while they have recorded progress. I have said very little about the Press, for this volume is not introspective, nor personal. When I shyly began in journalism there was no National Union of Journalists, no guaranteed wage, no guarantee of anything, not even of next week's work. The outward Bohemianism of pressmen, which revealed itself in unconventional dress and traces of snuff and a partiality towards whisky is dying away, but it is replaced by a mental Bohemianism of a new generation, thrice precious, and it will yet result in a revolt against "stunts" ordered for full operation against certain persons or ideas by one or two monopolists who control circulations running into millions. Newspaper enterprises have been bought up, editors changed, and policies re-moulded to capture public opinion for an aspiring group. This is not in the interests of journalism, nor of public life. The truly independent Press is not yet evolved, and organized Labour, which dilates about the "kept" Press,



has not evolved any other type. Probably the great reliable Press of the future will emerge from the extension of the freedom of the Press to all opinions and all possible information, and the abandonment of feverish "stunts" to stimulate artificial circulation. The modern newspaper is a wonderful production, and in the last five years it has recorded almost daily events and statements of world-wide importance and of permanent value. I should be an ingrate if I failed to add that my personal experience has been one of remarkable freedom in the Press. For eight years now I have known no dictator or controller in the slightest form, beyond the Press Bureau and my own conception. From the Press Bureau we were inundated with instructions and reminders, hundreds of them, during the war period. Some of them were disquieting, to be read and burned with fire, and the contents disclosed to no living person. The censorship certainly went beyond bounds of necessity and wisdom. It touched not only things military, but industrial and even political, and it was enforced by extraordinary vigilance and smart penalties upon offending newspapers. It imposed a new and irksome phase upon journalism, and greatly added to the anxieties of those who had to retain familiarity with countless restrictions.

It is my great hope that the numerous facts, figures and dates given in this volume, cloaked as kindly as possible in incident, story, and comment, will be more than acceptable to large numbers of young journalists, teachers, social students and others who will always have to study the greatness of these twenty years, during which motor transport has been evolved, the turbine discovered, the aeroplane devised, and the cinema added to our diversions. It is essentially the period of the ascent of women to full citizenship, and also it is the period of the bursting of the storm-cloud so long expected in Europe. If some readers should feel a lack of fascination in the civil history of the war period, I would remind them that its extraordinary changes are too recent to be viewed in correct perspective. Ten years hence, I hope, they will be looked back upon with astonishment, and the record will reach its true value. In the main, the task of compiling

this book has been delightful, but I cannot forget that thousands of fine young men who were in their cradles when I began newspaper work are in their graves to-day. They gave their lives for you and for me, and we are left to see the swallows and the June roses come again. They died for freedom, and the great call floating over the channel in the path of the rising sun every morning is that you shall live for freedom, and take the noblest part of which you are capable.

New houses are going up, new ideas finding expression and new hopes are being uttered. The next twenty years will reap or lose the reward of a great sacrifice. "Your castles are in the air," wrote Thoreau, "that is where they should be; now put the foundations under them." We have reached the time of foundation building, and all who lend a hand are my friends. To all of them I respectfully dedicate this volume.

J. R. R.

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