

died at the age of seventy-one. His habit of keeping a diary became a confirmed one—a ruling passion strong even in the jaws of death. His style and method improved as he progressed, and the imposing result was seen in twenty-eight quarto volumes. The pages of these books of manuscript were covered in a way to horrify an editor—that is, on both sides; and the proof seems clear that Mr. Hone was not a public book-maker, nor had any malice prepense against Mr. Bayard Tuckerman, the accomplished man-of-letters who has made the selections which are now in print. Only about one quarter of the mass has been published, after careful editing. Indeed, one feels as grateful to the editor as to the writer of the book.

Without a table of contents, but with a very good index at the close of Vol. II., the Diary begins in the year 1828, on May 18, and closes on April 30, 1851. It is needless to point out all the detail of this brilliant panorama of metropolitan life. One is irresistibly reminded of an opera-box, from which one looks out to see the brilliant people of the metropolis at their best. Mr. Hone was frank in his comments, a Federalist in politics, with strong notions of social orthodoxy, and opinions that were not waxen. One is constantly amused as well as interested in the old fellow's discussion of things. Whether a debate with himself about finger-bowls, the comparative merits of after-dinner tea or coffee, the doings of Andrew Jackson, the personal appearance of Daniel Webster, or the effect of the last new book on public opinion, he is always interesting. He is rarely profound, and indeed the public men who come and go are seen only in outward guise. Nevertheless, the amount of information, of chat and dinner-table gossip, of insight furnished into the social life of a half-century or less ago, is remarkable. In one sense it is a history of New York City. In such a book, the politician, editor, author, actor, merchant, and lady of fashion will be interested, while for the public libraries of the State and regions adjoining, the book is invaluable. As for the 'moral' of such a life, though Mr. Tuckerman may be innocent of pointing it, or of being Koheleth to the millionaires of Gotham, it is plain and forcible. Public-spirited men are sufficiently rare in the most cosmopolitan city on this continent, to make this book something of a tract which may have a very healthful moral influence.

A New York Merchant's Diary *

WE HAVE in this pair of portly volumes a broad outlook upon the social life of the metropolis of America during the second quarter of our century. The author—perhaps unconsciously, as well as posthumously, an author—was one of the characters that were once more common in New York than now, though sorely needed. At forty years of age, Mr. Hone, after a successful commercial career, had acquired what was then considered a competence, and retired from business. Strange as is the story, and eccentric as it may seem to the rich men of the New York of to-day, Mr. Hone did then actually, deliberately and perseveringly devote himself to the public good. In the flood-tide of his powers and prosperity, he took the now apparently incredible course of applying his energies to self-cultivation and the improvement of society. A voyage to Europe only stimulated and enlarged his purpose. Living in a large mansion overlooking the City Hall Park, he became a hospitable host at whose board gathered as guests the distinguished men of America and Europe. He was the host of statesmen, travellers, authors, artists, actors, and eminent men in every department of service and achievement. He served the public as Alderman and Mayor. He was a leader in social enterprises, and a follower of men who loved their kind. He was connected officially or individually with most institutions representing mercantile and financial progress. He saw New York grow from a town of twenty thousand people to a magnificent city of half a million, as the residences crept up from the Park to Twentieth Street. By descent and social connection one of the Knickerbockers, he took great pride in the city whose imperial, catholic, commercial, and cosmopolitan social character had been stamped upon it by the men of Holland's heroic age. His splendid health was broken by a laborious journey to the West in 1847, and in 1851 he

* The Diary of Phillip Hone: 1828-51. Edited, with an Introduction, by Bayard Tuckerman. 2 vols. \$7.50. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co.