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MY BOOK CHOICE

"Paper Boats," by E. M. Butler (Collins, 16s.).

This is the autobiography of an intellectual woman of ability born in 1885, one of a large family, with adventurous parents, and educated at Cheltenham and Newnham College, Cambridge.

Though she disliked Germans, she concentrated on the study of German, and spent much time in France and Germany.

HAPPIEST DAYS

She says that her happiest days were those spent in the 1914-18 War with Dr. Elsie Inglis's Red Cross unit in Russia and what is now Yugoslavia. After that remarkable experience she never again seemed to find her niche.

Academic life bored her, and when she returned to Newnham as Jubilee Fellow, and shortly afterwards became Professor of German at Manchester, her old friends had gone and she was always lonely.

She declares that she has always been "a dyed-in-the-wool agnostic," and so she had no faith to steer her life or to give here the power to love people she did not like.

STUDY OF MAGIC

She seems to me a rather detached and unsympathetic egoist with queer by-ways of interest which brought her into touch with strange people like Aleister Crowley (whom she found a seedy bore) met when she was making a study of magic.

I enjoyed the sprightliness of Dr. Butler's reminiscences, but I never seemed to get to know her and I would have liked to have had a portrait of her in the book.

I kept on feeling that I was looking at a goldfish swimming in a bowl! She remained remote.