

THE AGE
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SHEER BOOKSMANSHIP

CLIFFORD BAX'S MEMORIES

The great strength about Mr. Bax's book is its contents list. There are the names, in this order, and with these epithets, of James Agate, critic and diarist; Stephen Phillips, poetic dramatist; Havelock Ellis, humanist; Gordon Bottomley, poet and dramatist; Aleister Crowley, black magician; Arnold Bennett, novelist-reporter; W. H. Davies, the super tramp; Ernest Rhys and Arthur Symons, representing "the fastidious 'nineties", A.E. (George Russell), the strayed angel; W. B. Yeats, chameleon of genius; C. B. Fry, all-rounder; Graham Robertson, E.V. Lucas, Leon Lion, Allan Bennett, Edward Thomas.

The second strength of the book is the 16 illustrations, which are chiefly photographs, but include also a reproduction of Augustus John's splendid pencil head of Davies. Confronted with these facades, an Australian is astonished at the visible care these British intellectuals take over their appearance. Their care is not merely cosmetic, in the sense of tidiness and decorum. It is adornment. They decorate themselves. They are bedizened (it is the only word) with large rings, special sorts of necktie, huge curly pipes, natty gents suitings.

BEDIZENED.

Agate is all buckskin gloves, stick, field glasses, . . .