

the other countries is automatically protected here. At present, an American writer must obtain foreign rights by publishing in a Union country, usually in London.

At the time of drafting our first international copyright law of 1891, copyright was made dependent on manufacture here. Such restrictions are not in accord with the agreements of the Union. American printers felt that a manufacturing clause was necessary to protect their interests, but in practice it has been found that books are likely to be manufactured here if there is a market for a sufficient quantity; if there is not, no amount of restriction will induce manufacturing. It is expected by those now favoring copyright change that the printers will take this broad point of view.

In Europe, on account of the differences in language, the problem of conflicting selling rights on the same book has raised but few difficulties. Paris does not publish books in German to be sold in Leipzig; and Leipzig does not publish books in French to be shipped to Paris to compete with the French edition. But, in planning for the successful marketing of a book in the English language, the author wants active publishers, if he can get them, in England, the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. It is, therefore, very important that he shall have the power to assign, and his publishers to enforce, restricted territorial rights. The American publisher of English authors can hardly be expected to look cheerfully on the plan, proposed in the new bill, which would permit the American market to be served by editions from London and Toronto as well as by his own, especially after he has carried the burden and expense of promotion.

Publishers point out that a basic

privilege of copyright is to give the owner the exclusive right "to print, publish and vend" such a work, and that this exclusive right to vend means nothing if the market is open for any edition which may be made elsewhere. They point out that while the English or Canadian author will not be *obligated* to arrange for an American publisher, and while he can cover the American market through his London publisher, still his privilege of assigning American book rights should not be invalidated by American legislation, particularly as such a ruling would certainly mean fewer books sold in this country.

The American publishers hope that the new bill with its many improvements will be enacted, but that careful consideration will be given to these points. A disaster to American publishing will certainly be of no advantage to either authors or reading public.

#### A PLEA FOR THE SYMBOLIST

AS long as life continues to be depicted in literature, just so long will its exposition in anything approaching impressiveness require symbols. Words, of course, are symbols, and so, too, are images. But there are other symbols. There are symbols of atmospheres, symbols of urges, symbols of desire, symbols of human intents and defeats, symbols of mystical approximations. The shears of Delilah are a symbol and the Dove flying from the Ark is a symbol. In reading the literature of any single season in America, how often do we find a novel that understands the strength, the majesty, the intellectual force, the infinite power of suggestion that may be induced by the supreme use of symbols? There is vast room for improvement here, room

for the author to fling his thoughts and conceptions up on stronger wings than an uninformed and meticulous realism that is accurate enough but no more. It would be difficult to find a masterpiece that is not based upon symbols, the terms of which have more or less passed into the daily parlance of our speech.

If the younger American novelists — most of them so informed, so excellent, so keenly reactive to the sensations of life about them — could more fully circumscribe their pictures of contemporary life in symbols it is to be suspected that their work would reach infinitely higher planes than it does at present. It is true enough that some of these younger writers sense the power in the symbol, understand that more may be conveyed by its use than by reams of precise naturalism in prose. But they do not carry it far enough. They are too intent upon a photographic recreation. They should retain this effective approximation of reality but, at the same time, they should inform it with a symbolic value. Only in this way can literature be lifted from parochial standards into a universal category.

### THE IMMORALITY OF ANONYMITY

SINCE Margot Asquith came to these shores to follow up the triumph of her literary indiscretion, there have come into being — and have since passed out — “Dusters” and “Mirrors” and “Recollections”, censored and otherwise, which, like children born of unknown fathers, have made the neighbors nudge and wink. In some cases the content of these nameless utterances could be accused of ex-

citing neither nudge nor wink. It was throughout of high moral rectitude, immaculate save for the little tang of suspicion engendered by that word “anonymous”, which, biographically speaking, has come to connote the unsavory. It conjures up pictures of sneakings down backstairs, of smugglings out by servants, of eyes at the keyholes of lavatory doors, of furtive jottings on the cuff under the meagre light of street lamps, of watchful lurkings in the club o’ nights in the hope of overhearing something good, of dawn spyings in the corridors of country houses: and then at last the trading for thirty pieces of silver. . . . At least “Margot” had the courage of her indiscretions.

It seems to us that self revelation, confession, is the only excuse for anonymity; though, paradoxically enough, the psychology of self revelation seems to make not for a screen but for a megaphone. The unsigned revelations of the *faits et gestes* of others, living or dead, seem to us to be altogether inexcusable, to be indeed an adult reproduction of the manners of those questionable urchins who scrawl on the school door, “Billy Jones loves Susie Smithers!” and then run away. The adults call it literary biography, or recollection, or reminiscence. We call it the immorality of anonymity and invert our thumbs.

### THE GREAT BOOK OF THE WAR

TO the thirteenth edition of his “Gallipoli” John Masefield writes an introduction that is honest, clear, forceful. He explains that his description of the great campaign was written frankly as propaganda, that it is a mere sketch. He refers the reader to the authoritative books on the campaign.