

MORALS IN MARRIAGE

today, to provide for the complex demands of modern life, is not only one new form of marriage but new forms, adaptable to the diverse tendencies and compulsions of both sexes. All women are not alike any more than all men are, and women today want their *unlikenesses* respected as well as their likenesses. The new woman may not demand as did Gals-

worthy's modern woman, one man as her husband, another as her lover, and still another as the father of her children, but she does demand the right to live her life as freely and as fully as possible; and if she cannot find happiness within the monogamous pattern she will find it in some other pattern more harmonious with the demands of her personality.

III—Let's Face Reality

by HORNELL HART

THE ISSUE narrows down to one of fact. Mr. Calverton maintains that only rarely do people find true life partners, with whom rich living can be achieved in making a home founded on lasting loyalty. He asserts that the typical new woman knows how to achieve sexual excitement outside marriage without interfering with biological and social structures and without having ecstasy turn into misery. I deny these propositions. This issue cannot be decided on the basis of "wish-fulfillment fictions" on the part either of Calverton or of Hart.

Are joyful monogamous marriages rare? A study reported in *Recent Social Trends* showed that, among 7,412 marriages rated by a number of different persons who knew the couples well, 72 per cent were rated happy or very happy and only nine per cent unhappy or very unhappy. Katharine Bement Davis's study of 1,000 married women showed that 87 per cent reported their own marriages happy. Calverton implies that the adulterers were the happy ones. But "unembellished facts" contradict him. Dr. Gilbert V. Hamilton's study showed that only 29 per cent of the husbands who committed adultery had happy marriages, while 64 per cent of those who remained faithful were happy. Of the wives who committed adultery, only seventeen per cent were happy, while of those who remained faithful 54 per cent were joyful in marriage.

These new women who "know how to protect themselves" get into trouble with tragic

frequency, according to "unembellished facts." The illegitimate birth rate has been rising more than 30 per cent per decade. Tens of thousands of babies each year are born out of wedlock, besides hundreds of thousands of painful, costly, and emotionally disorganizing abortions. The United States Health Service reported in 1935 that ten out of every 100 men at the age of 40 are in need of treatment for syphilis, in addition to those who need treatment for gonorrhea. The United States death rate from syphilis in the period from 1930 to 1933 was 2.4 times as high as from 1900 to 1903.

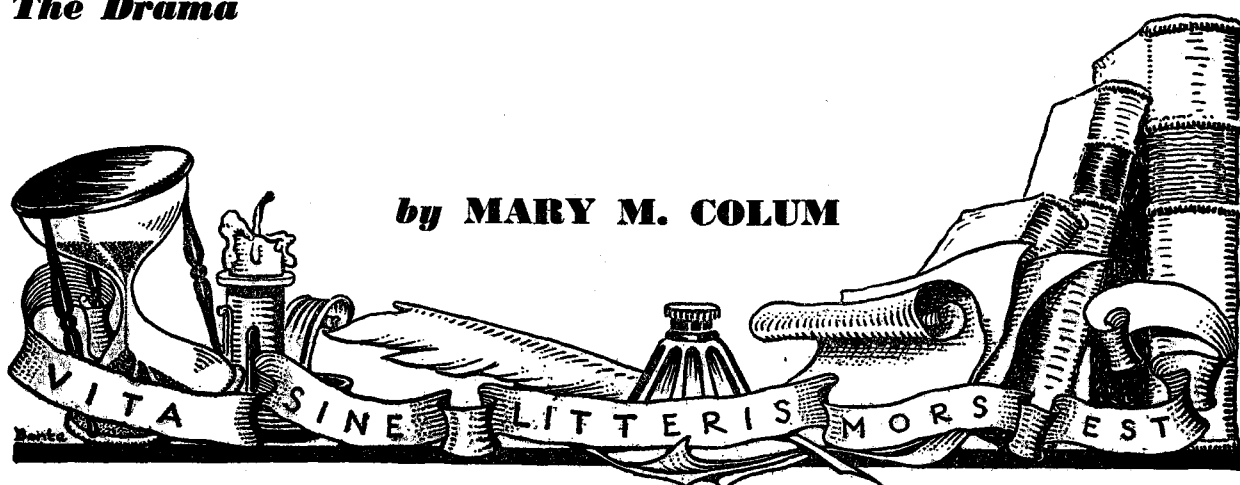
Where are those joyous libertines, to whom Mr. Calverton refers so confidently? Horace M. Kallen (certainly not a reactionary on this subject) recently circulated a questionnaire among radical, drifting, unmarried professional young people. He found that half the women and two thirds of the men admitted intercourse. Only two thirds of the women wanted to be married, and none of the men. Both sexes found their mode of life inadequate and unsatisfying, socially and hygienically. The women were anxious over the dangers of venereal disease and conception. Constant with the average girl was the fear of losing status in the eyes of her lover. "Will he respect me?" she asks, and Mr. Kallen finds it difficult to give an honest answer.

Let those who wish to follow Mr. Calverton and his allies do so freely — but with their eyes open.

Life and Literature

The Drama

by MARY M. COLUM



THERE IS a conclusion that one cannot help coming to when one surveys the theater for the last couple of seasons, and that is that poetry is on its way back to the boards. It looks as if there would be a future for the man who can deal in language, who can give words sounds and wings, who writes other than the slickly commonplace dialogue that is the medium through which nearly all the playwrights express themselves.

When we mention poetry in the theater we come to what might be called the dilemma of the critics and the public with regard to a dramatist — Maxwell Anderson — who has achieved the stunning feat of having in the same winter three plays in verse on Broadway and who for two years running has received the award of the Critics' Circle. Undoubtedly there is, in his case, bewilderment mixed with interest and admiration. Some of the critics, certainly, did not vote for him at all, and among those who voted this year were several whose first choice was another play. The bewilderment of the audience in the presence of his work is not bewilderment before something that is startlingly new or that breaks the previous conventions of the theater; it is that of people who, while they are willing to acknowledge the seriousness and honesty of the dramatist's achievement, have grave doubts as to its actual and potential artistic worth.

It has always been a peculiarity of the more intelligent theatergoers that they are willing to accept a comedy as filling its role if it amuses an audience for a few months or a year; they do

not really expect it to last. But the same theatergoers are likely to ask themselves, in the case of a serious play in verse, how long it is likely to last and not on the boards merely but on the printed page. The very fact that a play is in verse suggests that it is intended to be above the ordinary and that the mind producing it is above the ordinary, whereas the mind that produces a comedy seems somehow, in spite of the Molières and the Aristophaneses, to be like anybody else's.

Now in reality some of the comedy talents on Broadway cannot be equaled in any country in their invention and their abundance; something new has really been done with comedy on Broadway. On the other hand, the verse of Maxwell Anderson's plays is of a kind that could be written by a great many poets — and there are a great many poets in every city these days. It is careful and accomplished, with occasional flashes of inspiration, but generally dragged out too long after the fire is ended.

Maxwell Anderson has diligently studied dramatic verse, and this year he has got away from the obvious Shakespeareanism of *Winter-set*, so that his lines have taken different tones and coloring. But his original faults remain, and these are of a kind that hard work and study cannot get over; they come from a lack of emotional and intellectual intensity. His poetry runs, as it were, a low temperature, too low for an authentic verse dramatist. It is not actually that his speeches are overlong, but they last beyond the duration of the thought