

fully effective in her hands; they retarded rather than sped her as she thought. At least our reading is made slow by such unnecessary artificialities as "yearneth," "in the purple gloaming," "young lads a-chasing," "parsons a-praying," and "children their kites a-flying"; and our attention is distracted by mechanics everywhere. Miss Cather could hardly write a book that was not distinguished, and "April Twilights" is distinguished by feeling and observation; but a poem like Spanish Johnny reminds us of The Song of the Lark, and the reminder is fatal.

MARK VAN DOREN

## Mountain Climbing

*The Call of the Mountains. Rambles Among the Mountains and Canyons of the United States and Canada.* By Le Roy Jeffers. Dodd, Mead and Company. \$5.

MOUNTAINEERING today has become not only a great sport, but also largely a geographical science, since to what originally was little more than a "do and dare" proposition have been added topographical, geological, meteorological, and other investigations, sometimes on a large scale, such as we find in the recent attempts on Mt. Everest. The 1921 expedition in that field surveyed over 12,000 square miles of unknown country. Interest in this direction has developed so greatly in latter years that numerous clubs have been formed having for their chief object the climbing of mountains and the study of them. Through their activities some peaks are now intimately known from tip to toe and annual assaults are being made on others still defiant.

Mr. Jeffers belongs to a number of these clubs and is an enthusiast in the sport. Following his profound interest he has organized the strictly mountaineering clubs and the affiliated societies into a group which is known as the Associated Mountaineering Clubs of North America, comprising some fifty societies. Mr. Jeffers is secretary and librarian with headquarters at the New York Public Library, where he is gathering for this group a special library of mountaineering, which is also for public use. The author is himself an expert climber. He has tramped in every important region of this country and Canada. One of his notable achievements was the first ascent of Mt. Moran (12,100 feet), a precipitous peak of the Teton Range in Wyoming, which he accomplished by a continuous effort of nearly thirty hours. Yet he holds that it is not a difficult climb provided one knows the route.

His descriptions are lucid and interesting; often poetic. He is thoroughly in harmony with nature and it will do the flabby "tired business man" a world of good to read this book and aspire to follow some of the paths it so well describes. There is always a hill somewhere to climb.

"Only sympathetic and joyous communion with flower and tree, with bird and animal, and with the eternal mountains," declares Mr. Jeffers, "can supply an infinite need of the soul . . . the spirit is awakened by the voice of living things, and it reaches out in every direction to learn the meaning of life." This suggests the attitude of John Muir and John Burroughs. Mr. Jeffers indeed approaches nature with the same reverent admiration which was so marked a quality in them. Naturally he is devoted to John Muir, and he gives a chapter to that lover of mountains, who never carried a gun and was companion with bird, beast, and craggy peak.

California he styles the most alluring of all the States and terms it "The Land of Heart's Delight" with which few will disagree: the Californians themselves sometimes modestly declaim on this line. The Yellowstone, the Yosemite, the Canadian Rockies, the Grand Canyon, Zion Canyon, Brice Canyon, in fact every important feature of the country, all are described from actual observation. Nor does he neglect our Eastern mountains, some of them very beautiful and imposing. Mt. Washington, Mt. Marcy, Slide, and Katahdin come

in for their share of admiration. In spelling the latter name he follows the Appalachian Mountain Club in using Ktaadn. Ktaadn is not more "Indian" than Katahdin, and as the pronunciation is practically the same, with Katahdin far more agreeable to look upon, it seems preferable. The various stocks of Indians (over sixty different languages) used sounds frequently difficult to express in our alphabet, so for general use we cannot refine these sounds too much by using accents and inverted letters and by leaving out vowels, or consonants either, in an attempt to express the native sounds with precision. To try to reproduce the "click" that is common in the Navajo language, for example, would be disastrous. So it will be just as well to eliminate Ktaadn. It serves no useful purpose and the use of it is perilously near pedantry.

The last chapter in this attractive volume is the Call of the Sea, illustrated by several interesting photographs by Mr. Jeffers and his father. The book is handsomely illustrated throughout, emphasizing the author's assertions as to the scenic beauties of North America, and it may earnestly be recommended to all those who imagine that the Wild West begins at Buffalo and that all the magnificence of nature is confined to Europe.

FREDERICK S. DELLENBAUGH

## Seeing Crooked

*As We See It.* By René Viviani. Harper and Brothers. \$3.50. *Die Mobilmachung der Russischen Armee 1914.* Von General Serge Dobrorolski. Berlin: Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft für Politik und Geschichte.

VIVIANI, Prime Minister of France at the outbreak of the war, wrote "As We See It" as a reply to the Kaiser's memoirs. He has an easy time making hash of that gentleman's self-justification, but he gets into trouble when he attempts to defend all of his own policy, and Russia's into the bargain. He makes his case worse by citing the description of the Russian mobilization recently published in Serbia and in Germany by Dobrorolski, former chief of the mobilization division of the Russian army, for by citing parts of that pamphlet he deprives himself of the excuse of ignorance of the rest of it. Without that excuse there is little left but to conclude that Viviani does not want to tell the whole truth.

It is easy for Viviani to score on the Kaiser. The Kaiser's own annotations on the Foreign Office dispatches are ample discredit of the excuses of the memoirs. But the time has passed to write in the vein of "J'Accuse." Viviani gnaws on old bones. Since the war-time story of the Potsdam Crown Council of July 5 has been proved a fabrication Viviani produces a new story and by repetition almost convinces the unwary reader that he has reestablished the old. He must know that the premature *Lokalanzeiger* report of German mobilization had nothing to do with the Russian mobilization—Count Montgelas's researches have proved that the report did not reach Petersburg until after the fatal order had been given—but he elaborates upon the old theme for pages and pages. He sets the Russian mobilization many hours too late and gives a version of its significance utterly at variance with that reported by Dobrorolski and Sukhomlinov; he gives in quotation marks a garbled text of an Austrian telegram (page 189), and completely mixes up events in other places (as on page 202); he says that the last-moment attempts of the Germans to restrain Austria never reached Berchtold, which is false.

Austria has a black score indeed, and Germany's record is far from white; French spokesmen should be content with the facts. The Germans, Austrians, and Russians have opened their archives to the world, and discovered most incredible deceit, ignorance, and readiness to accept war. It is time for the French and British to open their archives; not otherwise can they convince us. We want the records, not self-excuses and abuses of the other fellow, and we know that the rainbow

books of 1914, Allies and Mid-European, were falsely edited.

General Dobrorolski gives us an important chapter of the record. He contradicts in detail Sukhomlinov's story of the midnight telephone conversation in which the Czar countermanded the order for general mobilization, and three high officials decided to disobey him. It is for Sukhomlinov to reply. But Dobrorolski's version is no more palliating for the Russian general staff. It pressed for war; it had no doubt of the fatal meaning of general mobilization. Once this was ordered, he says, "a modification was not possible. The prologue of the great historical drama had begun." After July 25 "war had been decided, and the flood of telegrams between the governments of Russia was only a *mise en scène*." Sazanov was optimistic up to July 28; on that day he made a right-about-face and had the Czar sign the mobilization orders which went out two days later. The Czar recalled the order for general mobilization when it was already on the machines on the evening of July 29; on July 30 Sazanov again induced the Czar to make the proclamation. He thereupon telephoned Janushkevich, Dobrorolski says, and instructed him: "Give your orders, general, and then disappear for the rest of the day."

It is not a pretty thing to think upon: this fear lest something might happen to avert the imminent war. Viviani quotes Dobrorolski liberally, but he omits this story. L. S. G.

## Books in Brief

*Stavrogin's Confession and the Plan of The Life of a Great Sinner.* By F. M. Dostoevski. Translated by S. S. Kotliansky and Virginia Woolf. Hogarth Press. 6 shillings.

Dostoevski's fitful prose and loose, all-embracing plot construction are magnified in these fragments. Students of his work and those interested in the mechanism of fiction will find intriguing material in this book which contains three hitherto unpublished chapters of "The Possessed" and the sketch of a novel that he did not write. To all others it will furnish an additional exhibit of the imbecility of the Czarist government which suppressed these papers.

*Public Relief of Sickness.* By Gerald Morgan. The Macmillan Company. \$1.50.

Sickness has always made a strong appeal to the sympathy and imagination of all people. With the development of civilization the relation between sickness and poverty has become more apparent. The financial margin in most families is not sufficient to tide them over a long illness, especially if it involves the wage-earner. The result is that there have been many experiments and more suggestions as to possible solutions. Mr. Morgan discusses the present chaotic situation in this field in the United States with clarity and fairness. He gives particular attention to the legislative proposals in the States of New York and Illinois. Mr. Morgan has some very interesting suggestions for the solution. Probably he would be one of the first to admit that there are possible flaws in his argument, and that a final solution of this problem will only be evolved as a result of actual experiences. Those interested in health insurance, health centers, and state-supervised medical service will find food for thought in Mr. Morgan's book.

## A Poetry Prize

Mrs. Alice Hunt Bartlett, editor of the American section of the *Poetry Review* of London, offers a prize of \$50 in competition for a sonnet on the sea. The competition will be open to writers in all parts of the world and will close not earlier than July 25. Manuscripts should be addressed to Mrs. Bartlett, 27 West 67th Street, New York City. The envelope should be marked "Sea Sonnet" on the upper left-hand corner. No manuscripts will be returned.

## Drama

### Little Plays

*King Arthur's Socks and Other Village Plays.* By Floyd Dell. Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.50.

*Five One-Act Comedies.* By Lawrence Langner. Stewart Kidd Company. \$2.

THE short plays in these two volumes belong to a period which, though but a few years behind us, is already taking on a legendary tinge. The period was that of the last years of the war, the first years after it. The Washington Square Players and the Provincetown Players were producing those bills of one-act plays from which so much that is fruitful and of permanent importance in the American theater derives. And nearly all the authors of the plays and all the directors and actors were living in Greenwich Village and the young of both sexes in all parts of the country were turning eyes toward Greenwich Village as a Latin Quarter, a place of life and art and of experimentation in life and art. Some day an historian of American literature will chronicle that whole movement from those first days that must have had so much of freshness and courage and poetry about them to this later and probably decadent time as it is so bitterly described by Mr. C. Kay Scott in "Sinbad."

Mr. Floyd Dell, far enough from the Village today in both body and spirit, declares that these plays are the memorials of an intellectual playtime in his life. I am not so sure but what he wrongs his own past. The first three plays in the volume are indeed thinly and even feebly Shavian. But "Legend" has in its brief compass both power and vision, and so has "Enigma." "A Long Time Ago" and "The Rim of the World" have both truth and imaginative reach, which is a rare combination, and both "King Arthur's Socks" and even "Poor Harold" are closely observed and cleanly and decisively written. In all these plays problems are raised and forms of dramatic writing essayed that were richly worth further cultivation. Today Mr. Dell seems to look back upon those problems as those of a cruder period both in his life and in American letters. Perhaps there was something of mere weariness in that. "Enigma" strikes me as deeper and more telling than any similar passage in his novels, "King Arthur's Socks" as both gayer and more veracious, and he has quite abandoned the imaginative adventuring so happily illustrated in "The Rim of the World." It is a pity, at all events, that a talent so varied and so strong should be quite lost, as apparently it is, to the American drama.

Mr. Langner has stuck to his guns. No long play of his has yet reached the stage. But that will probably happen in due time. Meanwhile, as one of the directors of the Theater Guild, he remains at the center of our dramatic activities. His talent, at least as it is exemplified here, is drier than Mr. Dell's, more firmly directed in its activity, less rich perhaps but more securely cultivated. These comedies deal with the relations of the sexes under circumstances that mean the denial of many ancient taboos. The point that Mr. Langner makes very effectively and deftly is that the essential problems remain quite the same with or without the taboos and inhere in the nature of such a being as man in such a society as he has, from that very nature, to live in. But Mr. Langner has a very free and flexible intelligence and a solid gift for comedy that is not less amusing for being quite serious at its core. Hence these plays are both stimulating and gay. The comic spirit is in them—the permanent comic spirit that laughs at the foibles of mankind because it is concerned for a saner world. The best of Mr. Langner's plays is the last, the little tragi-comedy called "Licensed." In it passion is added to intelligence and indignation to wit. In three acts—the material quite suffices—this action would both sting and soar and be a worthy rival to such a play as "Rain."

LUDWIG LEWISOHN