

II

GOLD OF TOULOUSE

BY JOSEPH S. AUERBACH

FEVERED desire to pyrrhic quests is borne
Through circling dust; unprivileged to see,
How rhadamantine fate, by fell decree,
Ordains that deed, aflower with but thorn
And perished leaf—bereft the fair adorn
From temperate mind and reverent knee—
Shall testify the soul's apostasy,
And be of things by rectitude forsworn.

Profane adventure with insensate throng,
Adverse to the Remnant, would old shrines pass
With greedy feet; and, loathful to peruse
Dissuading truth, may sacrilegious wrong
Condone and vaunt, and, for reward, amass
Ill's treasures in the cursed Gold of Toulouse.

JOSEPH S. AUERBACH.

A USE FOR CONTEMPORARY FICTION

BY RUTH SHEPARD PHELPS

THERE is more than one way of reading a novel. The old read critically, comparing fiction with life as they have known it, and either enjoying what Mr. James has called the "emotion of recognition," or seeing in their wisdom that no recognition is possible, that the work is not, as we say, "true to life." But the young read for information. They need to find out about life, they think, and all the things that their elders will not tell them they turn to learn from the novels. It is not merely that age is reticent; many of the things that analytical youth is longing to know about, age has never noticed. It very often happens that age is matter-of-fact while youth is subtle; its spectacles are a generation old, and useless for correcting the delicacies of modern astigmatisms; youth does not trust its reports. But in the great modern writers of fiction, youth recognizes a vision as sharp and inquisitive as its own, backed by much greater knowledge, so that it is not strange if it takes their findings with too great docility.

If, then, the young are reading current fiction in order to find out about life, and if lads of twenty are lending their girl friends, say, *The Dark Flower*, what is it that they are learning? For one thing, it would seem, we must suppose them to be becoming sophisticated beyond all conceivable predecessors in the minutiae of conducting a love-affair. Men and women, it is supposed, have always known a great deal about this matter intuitively, but our well-read young people know it by the book. Not a look, not a word, not a gesture, not a step in the whole beautiful, new-old figure that they have not read about, that they do not know beforehand and recognize when it comes. Never before were there such books for the young to be reading while in the throes of their first experimental young love-affairs, and it cannot be supposed that they will be wholly void of effect. It is like learn-