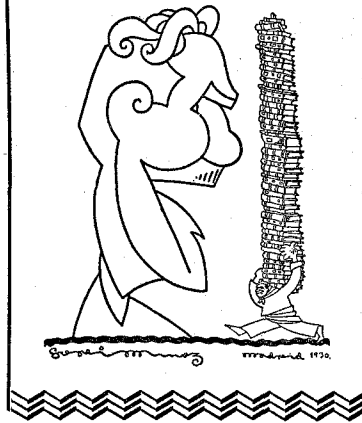


# THE LITERARY LANDSCAPE

by

HERSCHEL BRICKELL



IF THE Landscaper's memory is not up to one of its old tricks, it was De Quincey who saw no use in writing books unless they were written with one's heart's blood. The remark has not infrequently bobbed up while your literary scout was engaged in his pio-

neering, and it came to mind again a few days ago when he was reading what V. Sackville-West had to say about her experiences as a reviewer of fiction. A few months ago Miss Sackville-West, a novelist of talent and a critic of intelligence, in addition to being the wife of Harold Nicholson, one of this department's favorite authors, undertook to review some half-dozen novels a week for an English periodical. She has now announced that the discouraging feature of her work is the pitifully small number of books she reads that really matter.

The Landscaper suspects that a thrill of sympathy went through the breasts of all the veteran reviewers who read Miss Sackville-West's animadversions. Miss West was speaking of fiction only, and it is in the field of fiction that the greatest discouragement exists. One suspects that the principal difficulty is the

relative ease with which something resembling a novel may be written, and the relative ease with which such things may be published. Of course, there are far worse ones unpublished; if Miss Sackville-West really wishes to become downhearted she should under-

take to do reading for a publisher. Perhaps she has already, but if so the chances are that she has been called upon to judge only winnowed manuscripts. A few months of sifting out the grains of wheat from the mountains of chaff that encumber those literary granaries, publishers' safes, would probably convince her, as it has some of the rest of us, that what the world really needs is a good deal more illiteracy.

## *Why Do They Do It?*

EVEN if we all suddenly decided to take De Quincey's saying seriously, which we will not, since most fiction is written for the money that is in it, and not because the author's heart has ever bled a drop, we should have enough bad novels; there would still be many left that would be worthless because their authors, however serious in purpose, knew nothing of the technical aspects of fiction

writing. Much of the trash of which Miss Sackville-West speaks, and with which all of us who make our living from books are sadly familiar, is born because people who for one reason or another enjoy reading feel that they must write. Fortunately not all the people who enjoy music feel that they must compose, or worse still, play, and not all the people who enjoy looking at pictures try to paint. But writing is different; every one can write, and unfortunately every one who can write decent English, and a great many who can not, find encouragement somewhere.

This is somewhat beside the original point, however. Miss Sackville-West is not thinking in terms of the hundreds of thousands of words written in every so-called civilized country every year which will never see the light of day, and which have no more serious effects than spoiling the dispositions of publishers' readers, a grouchy enough lot, at best — ask any author — but in terms of published novels, and in her case, of the cream of published novels since she reviewed a selected group. This very week-end, the Landscaper's eye has been wandering up and down the bookshelves to see what volumes may be removed before his own library changes its residence, and he was fairly appalled by the long rows of fiction that may be spared without any compunction. This fiction has been saved from thousands of volumes; most of the novels seemed important at the time of their publication. But of what use are they, and why keep them? Far too many of them wear the dejected air of yesterday's newspapers.

### *Where Is The Work?*

ALL this has a direct bearing upon one of the sorest spots in book publishing and bookselling at the present time, namely the overproduction of fiction, and the printing by all publishers of too many books that should have been left in the manuscript state. This is a hard sentence for authors, to be sure, and unemployment is so general that one can not very well suggest they would be better off at work. Of course, one of the additional difficulties which Miss Sackville-West probably recognizes, is that not very many of the novels that really matter find a sufficient market to make them at all profitable; the piffle goes over big, even though it is forgotten within a few weeks or months. There are some hopeful signs on the horizon, however. A good many publishers have reduced their lists for the current autumn, and a good many more will be making cuts next spring. The plain truth of the matter is that not nearly enough good books, either of fiction or non-fiction, are being written to keep all the existing publishing houses supplied, and this inevitably results in the production of a great deal of inferior work, and what is worse, perhaps, in encouraging more people to write.

Every once in a while some one, usually an author at heart, complains bitterly that our materialistic civilization does not pay a sufficient honor to the artist, who is inevitably forced to move away in order to be happy and to get his work done. The Landscaper suspects in this highly cynical moment that if a country blessed — or cursed — with very

nearly universal illiteracy ever started idolizing all the people in it who thought themselves artists, the whole civilization would go quickly to smash. There are no illusions about the superiority of artists to other people in the Landscaper's battered bosom. He has known and enjoyed the companionship of too many other kinds of people to be bowled over by the manifestation of some slight talent for stringing words together, or playing some musical instrument badly, or adding to the world's crowded store of mediocre painting or sculpture.

### *There Is No Remedy*

ASIDE from the reduction in publishers' lists, which will continue so long as trade is bad and end abruptly as soon as "prosperity" is with us again, the Landscaper has no suggested remedy for *cacoëthes scribendi*. Perhaps when the psychiatrists have made the world over, and the John B. Watsons, Bertrand Russells, and so on, have solved all our social problems in an exact and mathematical manner, we shall all be so perfectly adjusted to our environments that there will be no conflict to make writing necessary. The entire literary output of the country will then be lyrics of joy and happiness, in the Edgar Guest manner.

Speaking of the advantages of illiteracy, there is probably no one who has ever travelled in Spain and had contacts with the people who has not been impressed with their superior qualities. Very few can read or write. But the following picture by Salvador de Madariaga in his recent *Spain* (Scribner, \$5) is not too much exaggerated:

It will be noticed that the people, i.e., the popular classes, north or south, east or west, possess qualities of wisdom, of heart, of manners, which the visitor is used to connect with the cultured or well-to-do levels of society. The usual test — illiteracy — breaks down in Spain. Illiterates speak like Seneca, think like Blake, and behave like Louis XIV. A composure, a quiet assurance, covered with respect but not oiled with subservience, a genuine fellow-feeling, a quick sense of dignity yet free from susceptibility, suggest that the Spanish people are endowed with a natural notion of equality springing from a deep sense of fraternity.

This is an excellent book of Madariaga's, a compact and comprehensive history of Spain and a survey of the present situation. One may not agree with all his conclusions, but there is no escaping the brilliance of his intellect, and how the man does write English! His style, in an adopted language, amounts in itself to genius.

If the Landscaper may be permitted to ride this hobby a few more leagues, he would like to report on another book about Spain, which so far as he knows has not been published in this country, but which is available in an English edition. This is Lord Derwent's *Goya: An Impression of Spain* (Methuen), an excellent book on that curious Aragonese painter, whose real greatness has not even yet had its recognition. The last chapter is called "Reflections," and beneath a difficult style there are concealed some really remarkable thoughts about Spain. One of these passages follows:

Is it for nothing that, still today, your beggars have a ducal air; that you dare to have beggars at all, when you have skyscrapers? Must we cry at you, in despair, that you are the only civilized country in Europe that still keeps a personality? And that, not because you are not properly civi-

lized, but because whether you are or not, you will never change, it will always be possible to come across God and the Devil hand-in-hand in your highways? You are Anarchy itself; for nothing rules you but Catholicism, and even that you have twisted to suit your temper. And whence are you this Anarchy? Because behind your genuflections, your lovely manners and your remoteness, looms the new God you have always worshipped; the Individual, on handshake terms both with God and Devil, and in this case, Heaven be praised, a trifle crazy; Man himself, full and free. Crazy, be it at once understood, in the best sense; the sense of Quixote — but not of Quixote alone; Quixote accompanied by Sancho Panza.

### *Motoring In Spain*

THERE is one more book on Spain that deserves at least a few words, and then the subject will be dropped. It is *The Roads of Spain*, by Charles L. Freeston (Scribners, \$3.75). Perhaps the news has not spread so far as it might, but Spain has built a wonderful system of highways in the past five years, or less, and motoring is as comfortable there as in any country in the world. The Freeston book describes a complete tour of the country, covering more than 6,000 miles, and will prove a practical guide to any one who wishes to undertake such a trip. The Landscaper's dream remains a tour with a donkey and a blue cart, but he would not refuse an automobile ride. So much of the best of Spain is away from the railroads that motoring is really an ideal way to see the country, and since there are relatively few cars there, it is much safer than in most parts of the world, notably our own United States. The Patronato Nacional de Turismo has done wonders to open Spain to the outside world, and is ready to help visiting motorists at any time.

Indeed, there may be hot-dog stands lining the main arteries of traffic by next spring. . . .

Returning to the subject of fiction, the Landscaper can not say that the market of the moment offers very many books to relieve the feelings of people like Miss Sackville-West. There are a few novels of importance at hand, perhaps a dozen, and some others that should interest those who are willing to experiment, but on the whole the output is not too high in quality. Some better prospects lie ahead, however, and there is every reason to believe that the autumn will at least run ahead of the past spring.

### *A New Lehmann Novel*

THE thousands of readers who enjoyed Rosamond Lehmann's first novel, *Dusty Answer*, two years or so ago, will be interested in the news that there is a new book by this author available. It is *A Note in Music* (Holt, \$2.50). Written in the same beautiful style that made the first book so notable, it relates the stories of several married women. Its primary appeal will be to women, as was the case with *Dusty Answer*, but there should be men who will find what Miss Lehmann has to say on the deadening effects of matrimony quite interesting. Those readers who enjoy good writing will also find pleasure in Edwin Granberry's third novel, *The Erl King* (Macaulay, \$2), an atmospheric story of a section of Florida little known to the rest of the world. Mr. Granberry's *Strangers and Lovers* will be remembered with pleasure. *The Erl King* is remarkable for its sustained mood; a novel that has more than a little of the Poesque

quality, and somehow reminiscent of ballad literature. Of these two novelists it may safely be said that they are both born writers; there is nothing synthetic about their ability to put words together.

François Mauriac's *The Family* (Covici-Friede, \$2), published in France in two volumes and now translated into English in one by Lewis Galantière, is an important novel of family life by one of the best-known writers of fiction in Europe. Its two parts are called *Kiss to the Leper* and *The Matriarch*. It is unlikely to please the majority of American readers, but it is a book of very genuine power and penetration, and one that in the present short season should not be overlooked by those who are seeking intelligent new fiction.

### *Our Professional Amateurs*

EXCELLENT journalism in fictional form is John R. Tunis's *American Girl* (Brewer and Warren, \$2), which is the account of the rise to fame of a female tennis champion. This was first written as a short story, where it attracted much attention, and was then expanded. Mr. Tunis is one of the leading exposers of the evils that riddle so-called amateur American sports, and he appears to know what he is talking about. The atmosphere of the book is quite evidently authentic, and there is no reason to doubt that its bitter attack upon the bunk that surrounds amateur champions is amply justified. The only game of the day that has not been proved to be overloaded with bunk is the revival of backgammon, and there are probably people already who can manipulate

the dice in the cup. Judging Mr. Tunis's book as reporting, which it is, he has done a good piece of work, and all who like debunking will enjoy it. It will not upset the customers, however. Look at boxing.

Two other recent novels from abroad that are worthy of attention are Italo Svevo's *Confessions of Zeno* (Knopf, \$3), a satire in psychological methods of the times, with a wealth of bitter and biting wisdom in its Proustian pages, and *The Trap* by Delfino Cinelli, a recent winner of the important Mondadori prize in Italy. The Cinelli novel is published by John Day with an introduction by Carl Van Doren. It tells the story of the operations of a triangle in the Middle Ages, and is a shortish novel of a good deal of strength, although it will hardly find its way to the best-seller lists. Svevo is dead, so that he will not have the pleasure of reading the glowing and deserved reviews of his book that have appeared in the American press.

### *A Tale Of The Old West*

FRANK B. LINDERMAN, whose *American* attracted a good deal of attention early this year as an authentic picture of life among the Indians of our West, is the author of a novel of Western life, *Morning Light*, which the John Day Company have just reissued. Its original title was *Lige Mount: Free Trapper*, and it concerns the fortunes of this same Mount. It is a real contribution to the lore of the West, and as honest as Mr. Linderman's earlier story of *Plenty Coups*.

If the Landscaper were going to perform the invidious task of selecting from the present accumulation



of novels those that very definitely do not matter, high on the list would come *Beau Lover* (Liveright, \$2.) by Carman Barnes, author of that famous novel, *Schoolgirl*. *Beau Lover* is piffle, and disagreeable piffle, since the impression that it leaves is that girls think of virtually nothing but sex. This seems to the Landscaper to be somewhat exaggerated. Miss Barnes's first book was widely read for its supposed pornography, of which there was really very little. There are a few frank passages in the new book, but nothing really objectionable. There are other titles that belong with *Beau Lover*, too, and perhaps it is unfair to single out Miss Barnes's work when it has such strong competition, but the principal theory of this department is that its space belongs to books that are worth reading, so the others will go unrebuked.

### *Another Dollar Series*

ONE of the most interesting of the recent efforts to stimulate book-buying by price-cutting has now reached the public in the form of paper-bound novels, published by Simon and Schuster. These are called Inner Sanctum novels, and to date there are eight titles, including *Casanova's Homecoming*, which has just this moment fallen under the displeasure of that protector of the morals of New Yorkers, Mr. Sumner. *I Am Jonathan Scrivener* by Claude Houghton, *The Earth Told Me* by Thames Williamson, *Red Snow* by F. Wright Moxley and *Fifteen Rabbits* by Felix Salten are among the more promising titles in the series. The books sell for \$1, and will be bound by the publishers for another dollar. They are well printed on good paper,

and do not have the look of mass-production about them that makes some of the other dollar-book experiments distasteful. It is much too soon to say how this experiment will work out, but there is intelligence back of it, and the advertising of it has been honest and in good taste. Another of these experiments is that of Coward-McCann, who are publishing several first novels at \$1.50, under the general title of Premier Fiction. Only one of these has the Landscaper read, Marie Stanley's *Gulf Stream*, which is a rather interesting story of mixed blood in the South, although it suffers somewhat from the lack of life-blood in the characters. If it is an indication of the general character of Premier Fiction, however, the publishers may justifiably claim that they have reduced price without cutting quality, for in an ordinary season \$2.50 would have been asked for this book, whether it was received or not.

### *Drug Stores Are Well Stocked*

THE drug stores are swarming with other lines of dollar books, most of them of no conceivable importance except as merchandise. How large their sales have been is not easy to determine at present, but on the whole, it is with this sort of stuff that the market has been glutted, and the Landscaper is unable to see how overproduction of second-rate fiction is going to be helped by speeding up the overproduction, even though new channels be opened to take care of the flood.

The prospects for readers are a good deal brighter in the field of non-fiction, to which we shall now turn. The Landscaper has thoroughly en-

joyed, for example, Emilie and George Romieu's *Three Virgins of Hawthorne* or *The Lives of the Brontë Sisters* (Dutton) a clear, readable and sympathetic story of one of the strangest families in all literature. There is some amusement to be had, perhaps, in a reference to THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW contained in a letter to Williams, the editor for Smith and Elder, who was such a good friend to Charlotte Brontë.

### *Cheers for a Reviewer*

CHARLOTTE wrote:

THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW is worth reading. There is no mincing the matter here. What a bad set the Bells must be! [It will be remembered that the Brontës' first books appeared under the pseudonyms of Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell] And what appalling books they write! Today, as Emily appeared a little easier, I thought the REVIEW would amuse her, so I read it aloud to her and Anne.

As I sat between them at our quiet but now somewhat melancholy fireside, I studied the two ferocious authors.

Ellis, the "man of uncommon talents, but dogged, brutal and morose" sat leaning back in his easy chair drawing his impeded breath as best he could, and looking, alas! piteously pale and wasted; it is not his wont to laugh, but he smiled half amused and half in scorn as he listened.

Acton was sewing, no emotion ever stirs him to loquacity, so he only smiled too, dropping at the same time a word of calm amazement to hear his character so darkly portrayed. I wonder what the reviewer would have thought of his own sagacity if he could have seen the pair as I did.

Vainly, too, he might have looked round for the masculine partner of "Bell and Company!" How I laugh in my sleeve when I read the solemn assertions that *Jane Eyre* was written in partnership, and that it "bears the marks of more than one mind and one sex."

This is of interest to Brontë-ites.

### *Some Books About America*

ONE of this department's favorite sub-headings, as its regular followers all know by this time, deals with books about the early days of our country, books that are in every sense American. There are several of these on hand this month, among the most entertaining — at least for those readers who do not mind bloodshed — Robert M. Coates's *The Outlaw Years* (Macaulay, \$3). The subtitle, *History of the Land Pirates of the Natchez Trail, 1800-1835*, may serve as a further indication of the material in the book. This is added for fear someone may think Mr. Coates is writing about contemporary Chicago, or the United States under Prohibition. Mr. Coates retells the tales of the Harpes, of John Murrell, who dreamed of an empire made of freed slaves; of Joseph Hare, Samuel Mason and many another worthy. There have never been darker and bloodier days in the history of this country than this period, and Mr. Coates spares his readers nothing. Considerably less bloody, but filled with color and interest, is Robert L. Duffus's *The Santa Fé Trail* (Longmans, Green), which is another volume that all collectors of Americana will want, although its interest is by no means confined to this class. It makes very clear how much we owe the Spaniards in at least one section of the country. Mr. Duffus has done his usual excellent job of research for the book.

Another of the new books that is as distinctly American as Will Rogers is Will James's *Lone Cowboy: My Life Story* (Scribners, \$2.75), with illustrations by the author.

Will James is one of the Landscaper's weaknesses, maybe because he can draw horses so well; at any rate *Lone Cowboy* is right at the top of the list of this month's recommendations, a well-told story, filled with interesting anecdotes of the West that is going so rapidly, and with a lot of good drawings. Mr. James continues to write in cowboy lingo, which helps to give his book the right flavor, and his pencil has not lost its cunning. The earlier chapters dealing with his orphaned boyhood are charming and touching. Altogether, a mountain peak in the present literary landscape. . . .

### *The War Goes On*

PEOPLE continue to ask themselves when the rush of war books will end, and the answer continues to be Not Yet. English publishers' catalogues indicate that the rush will not have subsided on the other side before the turn of the year, anyway, if then, and a good many of the new English volumes will find their way here, although it will take a temerarious publisher to try to get away with any war books here any time soon.

One of the newest importations is *A Brass Hat in No-Man's Land* (Cape and Smith, \$2.50) by Brigadier-General Crozier, which is a matter-of-fact account of war from the point of view of a hard-boiled British officer. Its author has behind him a long and distinguished military career, and while his book has created more or less of a sensation in England, where the British Legion's nerves are beginning to be a bit tender, there have been none to dispute its facts. General Crozier knows

that war is a very bloody, disagreeable business, which a lot of people have been suspecting for a long time, and he adduces plenty of evidence to support his contentions. The book will not create the sensation here that it did in England, naturally, but for those who are still interested in the war as it was really fought, it will prove very much worth while.

### *A Stefan Zweig Biography*

WE SHALL have to lean heavily upon the miscellaneous classification for the rest of this survey. There are many books on many subjects awaiting attention. Oddly enough, in this day of biography, only one of the species is at hand, Stefan Zweig's admirable study of *Joseph Fouché* (Viking Press, \$3.50), another translation by Eden and Cedar Paul. Zweig subtitles his book: *The Portrait of a Politician*, which is a bit savage, considering all the different kinds of scoundrel his French subject was. There are plenty of drama and human interest in the story of Fouché's stormy career, so filled with violent ups and downs. The leading figures of the various periods covered by Fouché's career appear in the book, including Napoleon, Robespierre, Louis XVIII, Talleyrand, and Lafayette.

At a time when the Russian question is again to the fore, the revision of George Varnadsky's fine *History of Russia*, published by the Yale University Press, is of especial interest. First published in May, 1929, the book had three printings before its revision. It has now been brought as near down to date as possible, and contains an introduction by Michael Ivanovich Rostovtzeff. The



price is \$4, and the book is a compact history of Russia from its beginnings down to January of the present year.

### *A Life Of Adventure*

LOVERS of adventure of all kinds will not have to look any further just now than *Water and Gold* by Lewis Stanton Palen, the life story of Charles G. Hedlund, a Finn, who started life as an orphan chimney sweep, and who is now living not far from New York with his family, a contented mechanic. In between, Hedlund ran away to sea, where he went through shipwrecks, fights, illnesses, and every other kind of trial. Also, he landed on the African Gold Coast, and hunted gold until he became involved in the Boer War, and found himself eventually in prison. All these adventures he has told to Palen, who, it will be recalled, helped to launch Ferdinand Ossendowski, and who knows how to tell a story. Hedlund has crowded as much adventure into his life as is known by a thousand ordinary men in these effete times. This is probably a very good place to mention G. Gibbard Jackson's collection of yarns about the oceans, *The Romance of the Sea* (Stokes), which deals with clippers, steamships, warships, submarines, mysteries of the sea, and so on. It is a sort of hodge-podge, but the boys who like salt water will enjoy it.

The very practical help that the Guggenheim fortune has been to the progress of aviation gives unusual interest to *The Seven Skies* by Harry Guggenheim (Putnam, \$2.50), a collection of articles on various phases of present-day flying. A large, solid and scientific study of handwriting is *Experiments with Handwriting* by

Robert Saudek (William Morrow, \$5), a book designed to be some practical use to all whose business it is to judge men and their mental states. The volume has been published in nearly every country of any importance, and from samplings the Landscaper has made of it, seems to be an eminently sensible contribution to graphology, free from the bunk side of this semi-science. E. Beresford Chancellor's *London's Old Latin Quarter* (Houghton Mifflin, \$4.50), is a charming book about the Tottenham Court Road neighborhood, when it was a sort of English Montmartre a hundred years ago.

### *Untermeyer Anthology Revised*

FOR lovers of poetry there is a revision of Louis Untermeyer's *Modern American Poetry 1830-1930* (Harcourt, Brace), an admirable critical anthology, which now includes selections from the works of Robinson Jeffers, Langston Hughes, Archibald MacLeish, Merrill Moore, Joseph Moncure March, Allen Tate, Hart Crane and others, in addition to expanded sections from the works of some of the older poets. Harcourt has also published Carl Sandburg's *American Songbag* in a popular edition at \$3.50, the original price having been \$7.50. This is a wonderful collection of American songs that should be in every home. There are plenty of selections for tight parties, as well as songs to be sung in sober moments. Admirers of Edwin Arlington Robinson will be interested in Charles Cestre's *An Introduction to Edwin Arlington Robinson* (Macmillan, \$1.75), an expansion of lectures first given at Bryn Mawr by the distinguished French professor.

A few more novels have made their appearances since work was begun upon this chapter of the Landscape, and since by next month there will be many books to write about — from advance forecasts a number of really important ones and perhaps even a few written in heart's blood — it may be as well to clear the decks at this time. A curious piece of experimental fiction, which would have definite value as a psychological document if its highly tricky style did not make it difficult to read, is Emily Coleman's *The Shutter of Snow* (Viking, \$2.50), which relates in prose that is direct from the school of the noted and now defunct magazine *transition* the experiences of the author while in a hospital for the insane during a period of two months following childbirth. It has a nightmareish quality. At the other extreme is a new novel by John Buchan, *Castle Gay* (Houghton Mifflin \$2.50), which is an addition to a series already familiar to many followers of Mr. Buchan's pleasant yarns. Many familiar characters, such as Hunting-ton, McNab, and others take part, and the whole business has a fine Stevensonian ring. No experimenting here. . . .

### *A Novel About Washington*

QUEEN ANNE'S LACE by Frances Parkinson Keyes (Lippincott, \$2) is the story of the rise of a country girl and her husband in Washington society and politics, related by one who knows the game from the inside and who has managed a reasonably complete picture

of the scene at the national capital. This is for those who like such things; unfortunately, one of the Landscaper's many blind spots has to do with politics, and Washington society has always impressed him, from what he has heard and read of it, as about as stupid as anything in the known world. There are many people, however, who sit up nights worrying about the riddle of the Ambassador and the members of the Supreme Court, which not even Mrs. Emily Price Post has been able to solve.

There are the usual number of detective stories available, but they have long ago become almost too numerous to do much about, except that one might mention *The French Powder Mystery* by some one who calls himself Ellery Queen, and who wrote *The Roman Hat Mystery* last year. It is published by Stokes and is unusually good.

The Landscaper has recently had the pleasure of examining some of the newer volumes in Everyman's Library with the gay and attractive jackets that resulted from a prize competition carried on by Dutton. Among the additions to this invaluable series is a two-volume edition of Rabelais, which has been released after one year in the customs, this being just one more evidence of the stupidity of the censorship, since many editions of Rabelais are in the market without restrictions. The Urquhart-Motteux translation, in which most of us first read Rabelais, is used. There is a large number of excellent new titles in the series.

# The Reader's Turn

*A Department of Comment and Controversy*

## Life Extension

*Doctor Eugene Lyman Fisk, Medical  
Director of the Life Extension  
Institute, takes issue with  
a contributor*

I NOTE with amazement and satisfaction, in Mr. T. Swann Harding's discussion of *Science and the Span of Life* in the August issue of THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW, that I should be missed. I had not thought this possible!

Following closely upon this agreeable statement, however, I find some extraordinary misstatements that trouble me—not because they affect me personally but because of their possible adverse influence on human life and human destiny.

If the propaganda for periodic health examinations were merely an individual matter, confined to me personally or to the Life Extension Institute, I should not pay any attention to Mr. Harding's statements, but inasmuch as leaders in medicine have agreed that periodic health examinations constitute the greatest advance in modern medical science and the greatest hope of controlling the rising death rate in middle life and later, Mr. Harding's cynical and superficially inaccurate characterizations of this particular measure and its results constitute an affront to the modern medical profession.

No public good is going to arise out of spreading the notion that periodic health examinations merely disclose fallen arches or ingrowing toenails. If Mr. Harding wishes to come to the Life Extension Institute and undergo such an examination, we would be glad to accommodate him; and unless he is a superman we are sure that more than this will be found.

It seems to me that a writer who assumes to guide the people in a great journal like yours, on questions fundamental to human happiness, contentment, and well-being, should be more careful as to his facts. The most cursory examination of the literature on life extension would reveal what has actually been found on these periodic health examinations. Perhaps the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company is merely amusing itself by

extending the privilege of these examinations through the Institute to several millions of people, and perhaps its expenditure of nearly a million dollars a year in this work is a mere gesture. However, I do not think any level-headed person would view the situation that way.

We have had reactionary critics questioning our figures, but whatever may be thought about the actual reduction in the death rate among those taking periodic health examinations, we well know what we have found in the course of these examinations, and this is where Mr. Harding makes his gross misstatements.

I can pass over his reference to "professional rejuvenators" because the matter is far bigger than my own personal interest in it. If he wishes to characterize as professional rejuvenators those promoting this work in the five county medical societies of Greater New York, I believe they would have something to say to him in answer.

Mr. Harding's remarkable discovery that man pays a price in diminished longevity for his differentiation, as compared to lower organisms, has been reiterated many times by me; but nowhere have I said anything on the platform, in the public press, or in magazine articles that would justify him in fixing upon me the prediction that old age should begin at 500 or 600 years. Reporters and magazine writers have wept bitterly because I have refused to make any prediction of any kind. Not knowing what science is going to do in the future, it would be impossible to make any definite prediction as to the ultimate extension of human life. It is, of course, true that I have contended for the principle of the non-fixity of the death rate and the non-fixity of the life cycle. Mr. Harding seems to have dipped into much of my literature and taken many of the facts I have collected, but he twists them around and places me in a false light.

I have been in the public eye so many years, have written so much and engaged in so much public controversy, that I can not get excited over misstatements regarding myself, my opinions, or my work. I am taking up this matter only because it affects the general propaganda for periodic health examinations, which I regard as the best hope of the public in the situation recently revealed by unquestioned authorities as to