

Speaking of Books

A New Literary Department

Edited by FRANCES LAMONT ROBBINS

What Everybody Is Reading

THE books in greatest demand are usually those most discussed. The following list is compiled from the lists of the ten best-selling volumes sent us by wire by eight book-shops each week. These particular book-shops were chosen because we think that they reflect the tastes of the more representative readers. These shops are as follows:

New York—Brentano's.
Boston—Old Corner Book Store.
Rochester—Scrantom's Inc.
Cleveland—Korner & Wood.
St. Louis—Scruggs, Vandevort
& Barney
Denver—Kendrick Bellamy Co.
Houston—Teolin Pilot Company.
San Francisco—Paul Elder & Co.

Fiction

"Jalna," by Mazo de la Roche. Little, Brown & Co. A clannish family in Canada survives the potentially disrupting love affairs of several members. If you like a good story, peopled by startling and brilliant caricatures, you will enjoy it. Reviewed November 2.

"Adam and Eve: Though He Knew Better," by John Erskine. The Bobbs-Merrill Company. You will find this an entertaining satirical tale dealing with the first companionate and the first Mr. and Mrs. marriages. Reviewed last week.

"Death Comes for the Archbishop," by Willa Cather. A. A. Knopf. This imaginative biography of a French missionary bishop to the Southwest is fine in spiritual concept, rich in beautiful description and moving characterization. Reviewed October 26.

"Kitty," by Warwick Deeping. A. A. Knopf. A young wife's struggle against her dominating mother-in-law for the possession of her husband, set in post-war England. You will enjoy it if you like a machine-turned story with humor and wholesome sentiment. Reviewed last week.

"The Vanguard," by Arnold Bennett. The George H. Doran Company. Reviewed below.

Non-Fiction

"Trader Horn," by Alfred Aloysius Horn and Ethelreda Lewis. Simon & Schuster. The romantic story of an ancient adventurer, full of poetry, guileless wisdom, action, information, and color. Reviewed November 16.

"Bismarck," by Emil Ludwig. Little, Brown & Co. This splendid biography by a master craftsman is unhesitatingly recommended to any one with a taste for solid reading. Reviewed November 9.

"Our Times. America Finding Herself," by Mark Sullivan. Charles Scribner's Sons. This, the second volume of a social history of our times, is full of information and entertainment. It is especially valuable in presenting a study of many elements which have gone to form the present American attitude toward life in general. Reviewed last week.

"We," by Charles A. Lindbergh. G. P. Putnam's Sons. The young hero's story of his life is a direct, simply expressed, and often moving account. It deserves a permanent place among boys' books. Reviewed August 17.

"Napoleon," by Emil Ludwig. Boni & Liveright. You will find this engrossing biography a fine foot-note to the Napoleonic period. Reviewed November 9.

The Vanguard

THE writer of sober realism, the serious novelist, here turns his hand to light fiction, and the hand which we are accustomed to think of as supremely deft has become heavy, if the fiction is not. The Vanguard is a yacht, the perfection of motor yachts. Its cuisine as described causes the reader's mouth to water; its appointments make him sick for a cushioned steamer chair facing a sunny sea. It belongs to a multimillionaire, a bullying, swearing product of the Five Towns of pleasant

memory, who has made himself owner of newspapers, mines, cinemas—everything that can be bought. For the ultimate purpose of settling a quarrel with his wife, he abducts a rival millionaire, this time a gentleman who owns something that he wants. A young woman whose charms, although they fairly leap at the reader from the page, have been unwept and unsung, gets herself carried off on the yacht at the same time. A pleasant sail along Mediterranean coasts and a visit to Rome end with the quarrel settled to the satisfaction of all concerned, the rival millionaires satisfied, and the young lady engaged.

We all remember our delighted reading of the Five Towns novels, and most of us are old admirers of Arnold Bennett's skill at satiric fantasy. "How to Live on Twenty-four Hours a Day" and "Buried Alive" are books to read and ponder and laugh over again and again. So it is with a feeling of stupefaction that this reviewer puts down "The Vanguard." The book is gay throughout, and downright funny in spots. It starts off with a good dash of excitement. It pictures pleasantly enough the taming of the millionaire boor, and the capitulation to feminine charms of both the urbane and the vulgar financier, and of the various secretaries, stewards, wireless operators, etc. It contains some wise and spicy comment on humanity in general. A book by Arnold Bennett could do no less. But what of it? Why should he have bothered to write a book which, according to the jacket, will "delight and thrill" when P. G. Wodehouse could have made it much funnier and A. E. W. Mason could have made it much more exciting. "The Vanguard" is called a playful and witty romance. It is playful. It is witty. It is a romance. And the Literary Guild chose it for its December book. A puzzled reviewer can say no more.

Have You Seen These ?

The Basket-sellers' Ancestry

THE STORY OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN. By Paul Radin. Boni & Liveright.

Until six years ago, every August an Indian couple came to sell baskets to the summer colony of a little fishing settlement down in Maine. They were very old people, brown, dirty, scrupulously



What are magazine editors looking for ?

Yes, what do they want in a story? What makes the difference between a printed rejection slip and a check of acceptance? Good ideas—true-to-life characters—correct technique.

Those are the three things that magazine editors look for *and find* in the stories and articles they print.

Those are the three essentials to writing success that can best be developed by newspaper training. For proof—consider the scores of "best-selling" authors who began on newspapers. Their ideas and characters are drawn straight from the vivid life they lived. And correct technique comes natural to a man who has written under expert criticism.

And writing is not the only field in which men and women with newspaper training excel. The alert, disciplined mind which a newspaper office fosters is a potent success factor—anywhere. Business executives and public men are constantly looking for the right kind of man or woman with newspaper training.

Real Newspaper Training—by the New York Copy Desk Method

Expert criticism is the keynote of the Newspaper Institute of America's new method of home instruction. In the N. I. A. you work on actual assignments. Every sentence you write is *individually* edited and constructively criticized by the Institute Copy Desk. A group of New York newspaper men with 182 years of experience behind them are responsible for this instruction. You learn to write *by writing* (little theory, much practice) just as if you were being broken in on a great metropolitan daily. An intensely practical course for every man or woman with literary ambitions.

Interested? Then you'll be even more interested in our fascinating Writing Aptitude Test, that tells you in advance how greatly this course can really improve your style and increase your pleasure in writing. Fill in and mail the coupon.

Newspaper Institute of America
25 West 45th Street, New York

Newspaper Institute of America
25 West 45th Street, New York
James McAlpin Pyle, Pres.
Send me, without cost or obligation, your *Writing Aptitude Test* and further information about writing for profit, as promised in Outlook Dec. 28th.

Mr. }
Mrs. }
Miss }
Address
(All correspondence confidential. No salesmen will call on you)
45L237

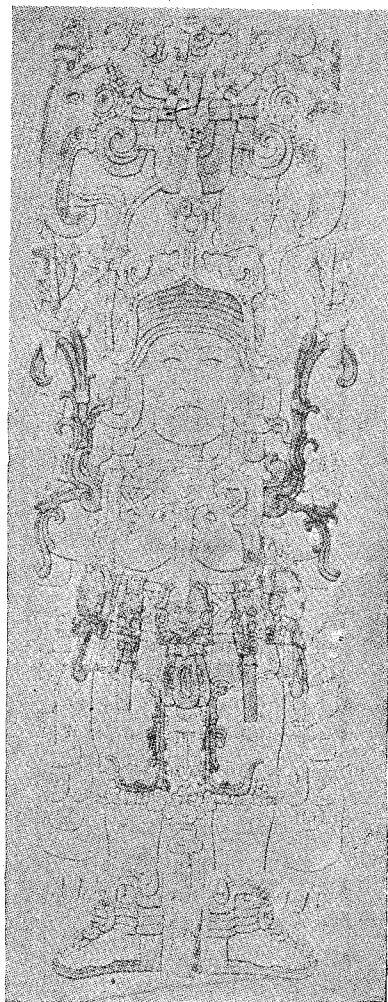
polite. Their baskets were delicate and sweet-smelling. The new children peeked around corners when they came to the door; the summer dogs barked. When they stopped coming, the postmaster said: "They're dead. There aren't any Indians in Hancock County any more—but I've got Japanese baskets from the five-and-ten."

Old broken Indians selling baskets, tamed Indians shooting up Buffalo Bill's Deadwood Coach, make-believe Indians out of Cooper and Grinnell; unless you are an anthropologist or a home missionary, that is all you know about the only native American. His last days in North America, bloody and awful, his enslavement by Spaniard and Frenchman, the breaking of his spirit by Anglo-Saxon—this you know. You know the horrors of the Spanish conquistadors in Mexico, of the Creek massacre on the plains. But of the long and brilliant past, the rise and flowering and decline of civilizations which shade back into antiquity, you know nothing.

Dr. Paul Radin, an anthropologist and a genuine scientist, does, in two recent books, much to enlighten you. In "The Story of the American Indian," following a popular narrative style with perseverance only occasionally cumbersome, he tells of the Amerind races which built up great empires and complex civilizations from their shadowy beginnings to their sharp ends. He speaks only briefly of the conclusions arrived at by science as to the racial beginnings of the Indian, fixing upon the Mongolian invasion as the determining factor in the physical, temperamental, and psychic make-up of the race. In elaborate and vivid detail, using much source material, he traces the culture of the North American tribes through the Mound Builders back to the Mayan civilization of Yucatan, which touched and influenced all the primitive peoples to the north; while the lines of the South American cultures are shown to converge upon Peru, the socialized state.

The quotations of original Indian chants and aphorisms which this book contains give it the quality of an anthology as well as of a popular history, and as such it supplements Dr. Radin's other recent book on "Primitive Man as Philosopher" (Appleton), in which much material from original Winnebago Indian sources is quoted, which shows the Indian intellectual as a moralist and philosopher capable of flights of independent thought which cover a wide range and which establish the existence of an intellectual class among people regarded as savages.

With the addition of two anthologies of Indian poetry, an amateur of aboriginal American culture might make Dr. Radin's books the nucleus for a good library. "The Path on the Rainbow" (edited by G. Cronyn, published by Boni & Liveright, and possibly out of print) was the first collection of Indian poetry



Courtesy Boni & Liveright

A Maya decoration in which the resemblance to Chinese art is apparent

(From "The Story of the American Indian")

in which the images, thoughts, and metrical arrangements of the Indian were re-expressed in English verse. Hartley Alexander in "God's Drum" (Dutton) has attempted the same thing.

If every civilization contains in its flowering the seeds of its own decay, Dr. Radin makes very plain how obviously true this is of the Indian races. It is possible, after reading these books, to speculate for one's self upon the picture. Looking at the art and poetry of the Indians, one wonders if they may not be the products of an already effete Oriental civilization, bursting into temporary vigor with the infusion of new, entirely savage blood and falling into quick decay—old wine in new bottles. But this, please, is only the hesitant guess of a reviewer whose Indians, until now, were

old, dirty, and scrupulously polite and sold baskets until they died and the "five-and-ten" took over the trade.

"Seventeen" in Seville

THE BULLFIGHTERS. By Henry de Montherlant. Lincoln MacVeagh, the Dial Press.

Alban de Bricoule was being prepared for his first communion when his grandmother gave him a juvenile edition of "Quo Vadis," but he skipped all about St. Peter and became a Roman at heart. His paganism remained entangled with his Catholicism. His mother sent him to Lourdes, "where he could mix with the litter-bearers and derive some spiritual benefit," but he was "a constant nuisance to the litter-bearers." "He was carried away by the thought that he was a great sinner as well as a great Christian." Fortunately, Alban saw a bullfight, and Lourdes knew him no more. "This bullfight was second of the great revelations of his youth, or rather of his life. The first had been the revelation of paganism through a book intended to instruct, the third was the revelation of the flesh through the heart." This Latin Willie Baxter learned to "play the bulls," and went to Spain as an amateur of the sport, in the same spirit "that he was later to go up to the front for the first time." In Seville his *Frühlingserwachen* was accomplished somewhere between the violences of Wedekind and the absurdities of Booth Tarkington's adolescent. Alban, melodramatic, a bit ridiculous, a bit pathetic, is still *distingué*, and at the end magnificent.

Alban's passion for the bulls is interwoven with his love for Solidad, even as it is with his faith. He sees *los toros* against a rich background of history and mythology, even identifying the god Mithra with Christ. "The fight is an incantation, a rite, a nuptial dance;" "in the silence the bell of the cabestro rang as though for the elevation." To Alban the blood of the slain bulls attains a mystical significance, and when the beast is *in extremis* Alban is reminded of the Blood of the Lamb. Likewise when meeting Solidad he notes that "at the bottom of her short skirt—her petticoat showed golden red, like the raw wound of a bull."

This study of a sensitive boy at a period when his enthusiasms approach hysteria is lightened by the author's humor where it might easily fall into an exploitation of morbid tendencies.

We are told that Henry de Montherlant has been a bull-fighter, but such statistics are unnecessary to prove the authenticity of his Spanish landscape