

The Saturday Review

of LITERATURE

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

VOLUME I

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 1925

NUMBER 39

The Critical Tight Rope

WHY do reviewers and readers so often disagree? Authors answer profanely, publishers bitterly, reviewers with contempt. And all are usually, though not always, wrong. For reviewers are more honest than authors suppose, and, as a rule, more perspicacious than readers believe, and sometimes better able to judge of the absolute merits of a book than the man who is selling it.

Unfortunately for peace in the literary world, "absolute merit" by no means tells all there is to tell about a book. We read books to pass the time, we read for timely or topical interest, we read to suffuse some immediate emotion of our own, we read because the book tells us what we want to believe is true; and all of these desires, if satisfied, can make a book seem interesting and good, even as a religious prepossession or a dislike of dialect can make other books unsympathetic to individual tastes. We know what we like, and rightly hate to be told that it is unworthy.

It is the business of the reviewer to consider these prejudices and discount them. Neglect them he cannot without seriously damaging the news value of his review. And if there is a difference between criticism and reviewing it lies in this—that the reviewer is concerned with all three elements of time, the circumstances of the present as well as the past and the future, whereas the critic's business is to estimate literature with special reference to its permanent values. That is why reviewing is so precarious, and good reviewing so difficult. Its audience is in the present, and yet the present changes even while the writer writes. Therefore, like a mariner who looks at sky and sea before going below to plot his course, the reviewer must frankly ask, will this book be liked or disliked *now* and by *whom*, before raising more fundamental questions.

And yet his chief job is to decide according to his lights what a book is really good for or bad for, and if he does not do this he is at best a news writer or a gossip, at the worst a toady to the public, a scavenger among reputations, or a dull blunderer. When readers disagree with him it is, one admits, quite frequently because he is wrong—in so delicate a profession what human being equipped with prejudices of his own and blind, like all of us, to special excellences and special defects, would not be wrong occasionally! But more often, if the reader spurns his critic, it is because their aims do not meet; the one is asking "Why do I like this masterpiece or hate this boredom in cloth covers?" the other "Should it be liked?"

And yet the fault will always be charged to the reviewer, for who has the heart to scold a reader warm with enthusiasm or kindled with dislike. Authors, especially, can stand anything but indifference to their books. The obstinate reviewer will continually refuse to walk his tight-rope with an even balance between permanent and immediate values. Down he jumps into the present and praises or condemns with most uncritical forgetfulness of everything except what they are likely to say in reading clubs or bookshops. Or, more often, over he topples on the other side, and reviews Miss Poppett's novel, Mr. Brunderum's essays, or Professor Digit's new biography as if he were writing exclusively for Aristotle, Erasmus, and Mr. Spingarn, and did not give two whoops whether the unfortunate volume were read by ten living people or ten thousand. Even in reviewing one needs a dash of imagination in the dish of scholarship.

Red Flag

By LOLA RIDGE

RED flag, waving over Spartacus
Red cloth stripped from a gladiator's loins
To flutter in the milk-warm wind along
the roads of Capua,
Red Flag, shaken like a bloody hand in the face
of kings.
Red clout stuck on a spike—
There flaunting gay as a red rose pinned
On a beggar's cap in London Town,
Or clenched in a maimed hand . . .
A red and a white rose smashed together . . .
Red shoots mauled and trodden yet ever sprouting
afresh
Till the lopped staff blooms again,
Red flower of the barricades—
First over the scarp and last left lying
Like spat-up blood upon the snow,
When ice-fangs bristle in the cooled-off guns
And dawn creeps in between the forepaws of the
silence
That crouches above the dead—
Red light burning down the centuries,
Red fire dwindling to a spark . . . but never out . . .
Gleaming a moment on Bunker Hill,
sinking
a blown-out flame,
leaving a deeper grayness . . .
Red flag, over the domes of Moscow
Gleaming like a youth's shed blood on gold,
Red flag, kerchief of the sun—
Over devastation I salute you.

The Princess Far Away

By THOMAS BEER

IN 1906 a California lady guilelessly presented a mere acquaintance to William James at Palo Alto. Then she sat miserably praying for an earthquake while this creature bullied the psychologist for anecdotes of his brother. Compliments fell in a warm drizzle on the superb old gentleman. He heard how simply too cute for words his brother's novels were and how wonderful it must be to have a brother who knew all the aristocrats in England, and how refined Henry James was, and again how refined Henry James was. The lady led the nuisance away and returned to make her apologies. "Oh," said Dr. James, "Henry's refinement may be had, you know, at two dollars a volume. Refined writers always collect admirers of that quality." A horrible earthquake, induced by prayer, arrived too late to do any good or perhaps to rebuke his heretical comment on the Jacobeans. He shouted, "Go it!" to the convulsion and magnificently continued to be William James, one of the most charming, the most neglected of American writers.

This passion of the candidly vulgar for the notably refined has already dowered Mr. Van Wyck Brooks with admirers who defend him against the mildest inferential criticism in turgid letters beginning, "How dare you," or, in one instance, "You dirty bastard." So this review commences with what—in logic—should be its conclusion. Mr. Brooks has certainly written the most important literary study* signed by an American since "The Ordeal of Mark Twain." His style more and more tends away from the slightly repetitious, evangelistic tone that marked parts of his earlier writing. He, moreover, has spiked the guns of the Jacobeans in advance. It has been customary for these exquisitely adjusted natures to protest any attack on their "Master" by saying that the assailant is not fitted to comprehend the Great Lesson. "The Pilgrimage of Henry James" forbids that defence on every page. This is not the final book on Mr. James, but it is the book which has been needed for years and, independently of its subject, it happens to be a composition of extraordinary merit—sagacious, witty, and engaging.

Mr. Brooks begins with the elder Henry James, an intelligence suspended in the void of provincial America, disappointed with Europe, everlastingly laborious in criticism and, naturally, without an audience. He had wealth, on the scale of that time, and could roam with his offspring through Europe. New York tired him; he could move to Boston where, as Mr. Brooks may not know, he was secretly called "the Chinese Mandarin" by young irreverents on account of his ceremonious manners. There he received Louisa May Alcott, in January of 1865, a remarkable month in which she had made all of seventy-five dollars by her writings. She went to dine with him and her journal notes that she was treated "like the Queen of Sheba." Henry James, Junior, had written a notice of her "Moods" for the *North American Review*. "Being a literary youth," says the journal, "he gave me advice, as if he had been eighty and I a girl. My curly crop made me look young though thirty-one." What advice? It didn't seem important to Miss Alcott in 1865. In 1882 when Henry James was most important to the writing world, she told Fanny Hedges what the literary youth had ordered: she

*The Pilgrimage of Henry James. By Van Wyck Brooks. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1925.

This Week



A Noble Cosmopolitanism. By *Kuno Francke*.

One Who Played the Game. By *Sir A. Maurice Low*.

Railroad Policy. By *William J. Cunningham*.

A Portrait of Shelley.

The Hawk's Nest. By *George Sterling*.

Helmholtz in English. By *Christine Ladd-Franklin*.

Next Week, or Later

The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge. Reviewed by *Max Farrand*.

Cole's "Life of Cobbett." Reviewed by *Harold Laski*.

Published by Time Incorporated,
Publishers of TIME,
The Weekly News-Magazine

was to go to Europe at once—on that \$75—and study European society. . . . The princess faraway of the young man's mind had already robed herself. She glittered in the novels of Balzac. She swam in glory outside the windows of street cars bearing Henry James, Junior, toward Cambridge over unkempt meadows, past barren houses. She danced in the talk of John LaFarge at Newport. Presently Henry James had taken his own advice; he had gone to study European society.

Rome, Florence, Venice. "His æsthetic sense had seemed for the first time to live a sturdy creative life of its own. Yet something had always been amiss there." Then, naturally, Paris. Wasn't the heart of letters beating there? The Olympians received the respectful, dark young man. He was permitted to gaze, to hear. Turgenev, Flaubert, Zola, Guy de Maupassant were viewed and studied. He had come to Paris to stay, and stayed less than a full year. "There was something so harsh and metallic about these naturalists who dissected the human organism with the obscene cruelty of medical students, to whom nothing, or rather everything, everything but art, was common and unclean, whose talk savored only of the laboratory and the brothel." Well, life in New York, Boston and Newport, life in the cocoon of ceremonious tenderness that wrapped the James family, hadn't prepared him for this. "Ah, one's tender dreams of Europe, the soft illusion, the fond hope—was this what lay behind the veil?" I step forward with correlated evidence. A friend of the Newport period appeared in Paris. James was charmed to see him but couldn't dine with him. Guy de Maupassant had asked him to dinner for that evening. Dr. Ledyard was beginning dinner alone in the Hotel Meurice when James came in, agitated and pale. He had been let in to the young romancer's flat and—would Ledyard be sure not to tell the family?—and De Maupassant was with a naked woman in bed, at six in the evening! Yes, there was that behind the veil. "And how his heart leaped at the thought of England, England on any terms!"

England, one imagines, fairly loomed in her fascinating respectability. There might be laboratories and brothels up the side streets of that fogged immensity but, thank God, one wouldn't have one's face rubbed in them! "Washington Irving's England, with all that had piled up the soft legend in the years between . . . Tennysonian meadows . . . timbered manors . . . The names and places and things which, in the far exile of one's infancy, had become for one values and secrets and shibboleths." The Princess had proved a little—well, not quite the lady in her Parisian dress. He would hunt her where Irving had so memorably found her. There was the Channel boat—"pour porter monseigneur a sa dame lointaine"—to the soft legend desired by his own softness. For soft he was, although Mr. Brooks courteously leaves the saying of it to William James who wrote from England: "Harry has covered himself, like some marine crustacean, with all sorts of material growths, rich seaweeds and rigid barnacles and things . . . under which the same, dear, old good innocent and at bottom very powerless feeling Harry remains caring for little but his writing, and full of dutifulness and affection for all gentle things"—a charming person, a rather weak person, protected by an income from the ordinary lot of writers and protected by his one passion from much else.

Mr. Brooks states the whole case for the art of Henry James with an ample appreciation. He is not bothered by the recurrent estimate of James as incapable of creating character; he even pauses to praise some sketches such as Millicent Henning and the Turgenerative *cavaliere* in "Roderick Hudson" which to coarser mortals carry not a shred of reality. James did create character in "The Portrait of a Lady," "The Bostonians," "The American" and "The Princess Casamassima." Are these puzzled, wistful Americans cramped in provincial Boston or wandering curiously through Europe merely "selves" of Henry James? Mr. Brooks presents the view in his fifth chapter and plays admirably with it for the conviction of those to whom the idea may be new. But he holds rightly that James was the first American novelist "to challenge the herd instinct, to reveal the inadequacy of our social life, to present the plight of the highly personalized human being in the primitive community." So, having done fullest justice to the achievement Mr. Brooks passes to the point of the collapse: the success had been basically a deployment of the

America and the Americans known by James. James now "subscribed, as only a probationer can subscribe, to the codes and scruples, the conventions and prejudices, the standard (held so lightly by everyone else) of the world he longed to possess," and, "in adapting himself to this world he was to lose his instinctive judgment of men and things; and this explains . . . the gradual decomposition . . . of his sense of human values."



It is here that I must differ from Mr. Brooks. He admits throughout his book that Henry James was inexperienced in life. That timidity which shows to such an exquisite advantage when James came to draw the little girl of "What Maisie Knew" had, in long passages of "Roderick Hudson," in "The Author of Beltraffio," and in "Georgina's Reasons," thrown this avowed realist, this consummate observer back on the resources of his enormous reading. Mr. Brooks has never written fiction and I fancy he has never read much of the fashionable trash of Victorian times. On September 13, 1913, Mr. James was talking to a bored, respectful group about that fiction, the stuff which amused him on the beach at Newport, "the novel so inevitably to be found on steamers." He was asked whether he recalled Whyte-Melville. Oh, certainly! And what jolly books they were! He remembered names—"Kate Coventry," "Good for Nothing," "The Interpreter," "The Brookes of Bridlemere"—the impeccable taste, of course, singled out what was most intelligent in the Scotch cavalryman's list. Such jolly rubbish and "so right in feeling . . . so sympathetic with much that is best in English life." He spoke with quite an emotion, gentle and grave. I doubt that he had looked at a novel of Whyte-Melville in thirty years . . . This nothing was a thoroughpaced hunting gentleman, born in 1821, bred at Eton, who heartily respected any junk that was English. His novels sold tremendously. Even his Tennysonian verses had their vogue and nowadays when the programme of a bad concert announces Tosti's "Good By, Summer," you are hearing some Whyte-Melville.

In an absent moment James once mentioned a "fictitious writer." My contention, offered here with every known variety of diffidence, is that Mr. James was everlastingly driven to replace his own limited imagination by a subconscious cross reference to something once read, and that what Mr. Brooks calls the decomposition of his sense of human values was nothing other than a revelation of what was fictitious in the man's knowledge of human action. He was scrupulous, honest, and sensitive. For all his illusions and small snobberies there was nothing sham in Henry James. He would not, wanting a scene of passionate love, turn hastily to the nearest volume of Guy de Maupassant. He tried to imagine Isabel Archer's phrases as she sends Goodwood from her and the reader is suddenly slammed on the nose with, "As you love me, as you pity me, leave me alone!" He tried to imagine the Byronic tar of "Georgina's Reasons" telling his gaudy wife that he can ruin her and out comes, "I could damn you with one word!" under which Frank Norris once wrote, "Whee!" in the copy of a friend.



Where did this stuff come from? Let the literary Breasted dig in the remains of George Whyte-Melville. He will also come face to face with some ghosts related to the Princess, some scenes of aristocratic life as imagined by a placid hunting squire akin to peers whose ideational quality at fifty years was about one-twentieth of that shown by Mr. Glenway Wescott at the age of twenty-four or Mr. Thomas Boyd at twenty-six. This treacle had passed into him as a lad and, in moments of miserable speculation over situations utterly beyond his "sensations of society" it sweated out in a coating of extraordinary English, in amazing delicacies and permutations of style.

It is in "The Author of Beltraffio," published when Henry James was forty-one, that his inherent weakness declares itself. I wonder, when the personal charm of Henry James has a little receded, just what posterity will make of this American week-end guest in whom the great novelist Mark Ambient, his wife, and his sister so briskly confide, who pauses in the height of the catastrophe to record the compliment paid to himself by

Miss Ambient? And from what horrid reservoir of juvenile fiction did James draw up Dolcino, the child who is allowed to die by its—I can't give Dolcino a sex—mother so that it won't be corrupted by Ambient's ideas? And what were the ideas of Mark Ambient that drove his wife to this infanticide? We are discussing a novelist capable of "The Portrait of a Lady," who asked that his fact be judged before his form, who had already said, "I aim at the clearest presentation of motive before all else." On his own valuation, then, is there a fact in "The Author of Beltraffio"? Is not here, already, the Henry James who would become the endless apologist of himself, incapable of understanding the society with which he had cast his lot and supplying its motives by fantastic vulgarities which, at last, Mr. Brooks has ruthlessly described: "Glance at these stories. Do they 'correspond with life . . . life without rearrangement'? A man procures as a private preserve an altar in a Catholic church . . . A great author dies in a country house because he is afraid to offend his hostess by going home . . . A young man breaks his engagement to marry a girl he is in love with in order to devote his life to the 'intention' of a great author . . . A young man who is described as 'a pure, passionate pledged Radical' agrees to act against his beliefs, stand as the Tory candidate, and marry a girl he dislikes in order to keep his family estate. . . . The reason we find these stories so oppressive is that they do not follow the lines of life . . . It is intolerable to be asked to regard as 'great' the Lion who is so afraid of his hostess, or as honorable the young politician who changes his party to save his house, or as worthy of our serious attention the lover who prefers his furniture to his mistress. Reset in the key of satire all these themes would be plausible; but James gathers grapes of thorns and figs of thistles. Traits of the self-conscious guest in the house where he had never been at home had fashioned with time the texture of his personality . . . and behind his novels, those formidable projections of a geometrical intellect, were to be discerned now the confused reveries of an invalid child. For in his prolonged association with people who had merely glimmered for him, in the constant abrogation of his moral judgment, in these years of an enchanted exile in a museum world—for what else had England ever been for him?—Henry James had reverted to a kind of childhood." In that state of maturely infantile egotism he played with wraiths, with Captain Yules, Madame de Vionnets, and Merton Denshairs; and through the shades of his aquarium mounts perpetually one gleaming fish—this neglected author, this genius who hasn't been petted enough, understood enough, called "great" enough in that illusive and elusive England altering around his waning reputation.



"There comes a time," said Bill Nye, "when a grown man walks around himself, one night, and says, 'Oh, is that what you are?' and kicks the cat." Henry James may have kicked the cat; he may have given it some milk . . . Well, he aged and didn't like "Madame Bovary" any more. It was provincial adultery. Anna Karenina's whoredom in the great world was better reading. The Princess had taken a stubborn clutch on his soul. Richard Harding Davis's little paper on a quiet Paris street was so charming, so "right in feeling" but why should he spoil his account of Carnot's funeral by mentioning the panic of the soldiers when a grandstand collapsed or the greasy papers floating in the wake of the stately procession? The journalist was still amused in 1912 by that wistful reproach against veracity . . . And away from this society of his museum world just what did he approve? Constance Woolson and Henry Harland's imitations of himself, of course, and the styles, the felicities of the new writers. But subject? "Bah," said Joseph Conrad across a shoulder to Alfred Knopf and me, "James did not know what Stevie was talking about! It was beyond his limitation." What did he really like in Stephen Crane's work? "In The Third Violet," he dictated to Mr. Willis Clarke, "we have our boy coming to the right thing." The chatter of artists; a pretty, rich girl sought by a poor young painter; charming pictures of lakes and hills. That was the "right thing."

Softness, social differences, clever prose . . . Was this world outside the somewhat indefinite ter-

(Continued on page 707)

A Fine Talent

THE LITTLE KAROO. By PAULINE SMITH.
New York: George H. Doran. 1925. \$2.

Reviewed by BROOKS SHEPARD

IT is a very startling thing to blunder all unwarned into so fine a book as this. Who ever heard of Pauline Smith? Who, for that matter, ever heard of the Little Karoo? Who, learning that it is a great plateau in Cape Colony, cares to read a mean-looking little book of short stories about it—even though Arnold Bennett may have prefaced it?

The reviewer began reading it because he is honorable and conscientious, and friendly to Smiths who hope to be writers. He skipped Bennett's introduction, because he is not very friendly to Bennetts who have forgotten how to write, which cannot be said of John Bennett, but has been breathed of Arnold. But he finished the first story, "The Pain," with that incredulous delight which must have thrilled the first man who ate an oyster; for surely "The Pain" is one of the really great short stories. "The Sinner" is very nearly as fine, and the remaining six stories, though of uneven merit, are of a very high order.

It is difficult to say whether Pauline Smith has sought to capture and preserve the feeling of this remote district and its patient humble people, or whether in writing of these folk she has all mankind at heart. Probably the first. Her childhood was passed in the Little Karoo, and her mind was packed, during the impressionable years, with the sound and smell and color and feel of it. One doubts that she has said to herself, Lo, I will be a Universalist. She is utterly un-self-conscious, and she withdraws herself almost uncannily from the action of her stories. And she has succeeded overwhelmingly in breathing life into the Karoo, with its remote farms and hamlets, its laborious journeyings in a rumbling ox cart, its stern, sober, simple, shrewd men and women, its utter detachment from the world and civilization—especially this detachment, the Karoo's completeness in itself, economic and ethical; but she has succeeded also in picturing the man and woman in each of us, so that the people and the country of which she writes with strange brooding pity seem only incidental to her brooding upon mankind, and the Karoo is only her name for the world, conveniently isolated for sympathetic study.

Arnold Bennett speaks of her "strange, austere, these days, because we are unaccustomed to a simplicity that almost hurts in its directness and accuracy. We had it in "Maria Chapdelaine," likewise a tale of humble honest people, beautifully told; it is found in "The Growth of the Soil"; but it is a tool which English craftsmen have forgotten how to use, though its power is immense. These lines, taken almost at random from that exquisite love story, "The Pain," tell of the arrival of old Juriaan and his sick wife at the new hospital at Platkops, after their long, painful journey from the little farm in Aangenaam valley:

It was the matron who, half an hour later, found the ox-cart at the steep steps. The matron was a kindly, capable, middle-aged woman who spoke both English and Dutch. Juriaan, holding his soft, wide-brimmed hat in his hand, answered her questions humbly. He was Juriaan Van Royen, seventy-five years old, working lands on Mijneer van der Wenter's farm of Vergelegen in the Aangenaam valley, and in the cart there, in a nest that he had made for her of the feather bed and pillows, was his wife Deltje, seventy years, come to be cured of the pain in her side. . . .

The matron turned from the old man, so wild and unkempt, so humble and so gentle, to the patient, suffering, little old woman seated with her bundle on the feather bed. With Juriaan's help she lifted Deltje out of the cart, and together the old couple followed her up the steps to her office. Here she left them, and in that quiet darkened room they sat on a couch together like children, hand in hand. They did not speak, but now and then the old man, drawing his wife towards him, would whisper that she was his dove, his pearl, his rose of the mountains, and the light of his eyes.

Her "strange, austere, tender, and ruthless talent"! Austere in that Pauline Smith stands always aside, watching life as it goes by, interpreter and not participant. Tender, yes; infinitely tender and sympathetic and comprehending, toward men and women alike. Ruthless? Not for an instant. She is like Hardy; a brooding pity breathes from every page.

Bennett writes: "I . . . had to answer many times the question: 'Who is Pauline Smith?' I would reply: 'She is a novelist.' 'What are her novels?' came the inquiry. 'She hasn't written any yet,' I would say, 'but she will.'"

This may be. But it is no small feat to compress

into a few small pages the material of a novel, and still convey a sense of time and space and growth and significance; and this is what Pauline Smith has done. Novelist or no, she is a great short story writer.

Scrupulous Fiction

YOUNG MRS. CRUSE. By VIOLA MEYNELL.
New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1925. \$2.

Reviewed by LOUISE BOGAN.

THE form of Miss Meynell's stories is not the swift skilful *conte*. Her figures never appear to be thrown off by chance from a mind working at a brilliant but distorting speed. She has, rather, a patient vision that constructs from partial aspects, themselves in no way remarkable, her characters and their scene. Every moment is clean and credited, as though she knew these people not only in the brief moments of her story, but quite surely at all other moments in their lives.

The effect of much modern writing depends upon a heightening of, rather than a direction in emphasis. The characters are caught into the action by some tangible spurt of fancy that wastes the emotional content, so that they appear breathless and spent. Miss Meynell gauges her work more carefully. The situation is often presented below its own level. Yet the result of this understatement is the spectacle of a grief too grievous, and of ecstasy become burdensome. Her men and girls



Original water color portrait of Percy Bysshe Shelley, found in an old frame of about 1850, and called by Mr. Forman the "Williams Portrait."

Reproduced by the courtesy of Mrs. Murray Crane.

actually embody the young passion for which requitement or loss is absolute.

This art is built straight upon reality,—reality observed with such precision that perception not usually given to the physical eye seems to be involved. Miss Meynell notices the gestures, the inflections, the turns in manner and speech by which people betray themselves, the slight signs which Ibsen marked, from behind his unread newspaper, during long hours in cafés. She tracks down the strong hypocrisies of the human heart, which hide it even from itself, and bares, with the least effort need, the mind's dim illogical associations between unrelated things.

In certain stories, "Young Mrs. Cruse" and "The Girl Who Was Liked," Miss Meynell works in the stripped form of the anecdote. Everything is observed from without, with complete simplicity. The young wife whose spirit without resources consults any subterfuge in order not to be alone, the girl who descends by imperceptible stages from her first full young charm to the fixed professional popularity of a hotel-keeper's wife, are presented with implicit irony. The same method, made more gentle, in "We Were Just Saying" can show the agony suffered by a sensitive girl, who must listen to a terrible secret recounted in the presence of the totally deaf woman whom it most concerns.

"The Letter" and "Pastoral" are moved more directly by the rise and change of emotion. The young farm girl in trouble hears night and day from her parents the facts she must write to her lover. But when it is written, the letter does not speak of the bitter reasons she has heard so often. The girl in "Pastoral," stricken quite helpless with

grief over a faithless lover, marries a busy farm-owner, the first man who appears after the tragedy. She is beginning to come alive in her new bustling surroundings, to see a world somewhat freed from apathy and despair, when unexpectedly her first lover returns. She yields to the thought of going away with him almost automatically, without any consciousness of guilt. Yet as she goes about with her husband on his hurried errands along country roads she begins to protect herself against the realization of his future betrayal and loneliness. By the plans which she lays for his life when she will be with him no longer she keeps herself up to the last moment from the knowledge that she will not go away.

The stories throughout are brightened by a series of lesser observations. Miss Meynell knows the exact light of the turning seasons, the feeling of late autumn afternoons, of early winter mornings: "The day began in the quite dark night." The pregnant girl, for whom the countryside, once flat to her quick feet, suddenly has become full of gradients that take the breath, the lovers who meet in secret at night in the fields and lie quietly to escape notice while all the time they remained there a dog "was barking at the utmost note of fury and danger,"—these become episodes more real than pages thick with rhetorical blood and tears.

The ordered logical objectivity which Chekhov demanded when he said that short stories should be written in the form of news dispatches loses its rigor under this fine light of intuition. These people are not the projections of Miss Meynell's own consciousness. They have been placed outside, yet well within the light shed by this scrupulous and tempered mind.

True Jane Austen

SANDITON. By JANE AUSTEN. New York: Oxford University Press. 1925. \$2.50.

FIVE LETTERS FROM JANE AUSTEN TO HER NIECE FANNY KNIGHT. The same. \$7.

Reviewed by AMY LOVEMAN

LOVERS of Jane Austen will rejoice in the fragment of a novel which is now for the first time issued in full, not merely because "Sanditon" holds in embryo the qualities that have made her finished works classics of constantly growing fame but because of the divergences as well as the similarities that make it an interesting supplement to her other tales. Here, roughly blocked in, to be sure, but none the less delightful because still inchoate are figures in fundamentals as nicely discriminated as those of her earlier books ("Sanditon" was in process of writing at the time of her death), as surely pilloried on the shafts of her gentle irony, as convincingly represented in the setting of the English countryside. Here again are the amazing versatility that from a restricted sphere could draw types similar in kind but as sharply set off the one from the other as the personalities or real life, the clear-sighted observance of society that noted its foibles yet had charity for its weaknesses, the bubbling humor that laughed at absurdities and ridiculed pretensions. Here again, as in "Emma," is a study of valetudinarianism, as in "Pride and Prejudice," of the patroness, and as over and over in the works of Miss Austen, of egotistic manhood and good-tempered, sensible young womanhood. The figures of the story are outlined, rather than elaborated, to be sure, and the narrative that develops the portrayal through the play of small happening and discussion is unpruned and unpolished, but "Sanditon" is indubitably of the essence of Jane Austen's genius.

No author, perhaps, more triumphantly illustrates the fact that the creations of genius are of no time but of all time than does Jane Austen. And nowhere in her works is there better exemplification of the fact than in "Sanditon" with its Mr. Power, the real estate booster, as vividly realized in Jane Austen's imagination as in the actuality of an American Zenith. Here is Miss Austen on the Babbitt of her story:

Sanditon was a second Wife and 4 Children to him—hardly less Dear—& certainly more engrossing.—He could talk of it forever.— . . . The Sea air & Sea Bathing together were nearly infallible, one or the other of them being a match for every Disorder, of the Stomach, the Lungs or the Blood; They were anti-spasmodic, anti-pulmonary, anti-sceptic, anti-bilious & anti-rheumatic. Nobody could catch cold by the Sea, Nobody wanted appetite by the Sea, Nobody wanted Spirits, Nobody wanted Strength.—They were healing, softening, relaxing—fortifying