

Foreign Literature

German Plays

JUAREZ UND MAXIMILIAN. By FRANZ WERFEL. Vienna: Paul Zsolnay Verlag, 1924.

VINCENT. By HERMANN KASACK. Potsdam: Gustav Kiepenheuer, 1924.

KOMODIE DER VERFUHRUNG. By ARTHUR SCHNITZLER. Berlin: S. Fischer, 1924.

DIE GEGENKANDIDATEN. By LUDWIG FULDA. Stuttgart: J. G. Cotta, 1924.

GEWALT. By ERNEST LISSAUER. Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1924.

DAS LEBEN EDUARDS DES ZWEITEN VON ENGLAND. By BERTOLD BRECHT. Potsdam: Gustav Kiepenheuer, 1924.

Reviewed by A. W. C. RANDALL.

MOST drama is in one sense historical, but it is remarkable how many German plays there have been in the past six months or so which deserve the description in the stricter meaning of the word. The mere rendering of historical facts was probably not the first intention of the writer of any of the six above-mentioned most important examples, but in every case the result is a useful pendant to the history-book, an imaginative illumination of the bare events which, without this aid, would fade from the memories of most of us. Franz Werfel, for instance, has "fixed" for us the character of the ill-fated Emperor Maximilian of Mexico, and of the subordinate actors in that Hamlet-like tragedy, in a way that no prose-rendering of the facts could do. In this penetrating, moving study we seem to live through those days when the idealistic Emperor, under pressure of his advisers, countenanced the shooting of civil prisoners and thus gave the last most serious shock to the unsteady edifice of his rule. Cajoled, flattered, misled, and yet a man of whom, in the last resort, it could be said that his character was his fate, Maximilian finds himself inexorably confronted with the Mexican national will as incorporated in Juarez, a figure who, although never on the stage, is made familiar to us and becomes one of the protagonists of the drama. As everyone knows, the Emperor, being at length captured and condemned to death, finds even the intervention of Garibaldi with Juarez unavailing. The closing scenes are of remarkable pathos and beauty, particularly when the faithful medical attendant, Basch, offers Maximilian a drug, which the Emperor proudly refuses. This is a finely written historical tragedy.

In "Vincent" Herr Kasack, whose dramatic and poetical gifts deserve to be better known outside Germany than they apparently are, has taken the two months of Vincent Van Gogh's life at Arles with Gauguin—a peculiarly fit subject for dramatization, so intense a summary is it of a wayward and eccentric but indubitably great genius. The drama culminates with Vincent's departure for Paris. As he parts from his friend—his reason had already given way—he is made by the dramatist to give an inspired summary of his art:

But the great nurse Life will sing to me, when twilight falls across my eyes. The wind has brought such longing to me. Oh, she will sing me a lullaby. There the cypresses turn to dark green, the fields and the vineyards will light up, the corn will rustle, soft like the sea with its little sailing ships going up and down. Oh, the gardens of Arles. My yellow house is all forlorn. All the flowers, the sun-flowers, the yellow flowers . . . from women's hands. . . the yellow flowers sway like suns over the sea. A woman's face will be near me . . . but in her eyes . . . a world whence colour has gone. He gives a cry.

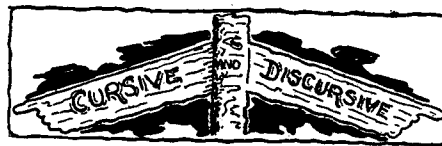
This, too, is an effective dramatization of a well-chosen episode.

From the point of view of conventional stage craft the next two dramatists, Arthur Schnitzler and Ludwig Fulda, are more practised hands, but their method suggests an older, more superficial generation of writers than either Herr Werfel or Herr Kasack. No one would mistake the author of the "Komödie der Verführung" for anyone else but Schnitzler. The amorous intrigue of pre-war Vienna found in him its perfect dramatic historian. The series of intrigues and lighthearted seductions set forth in this play take place in July, 1914, and far away—very far away, but still to be heard amid the badinage, the passionate whispers—there is the boom of the guns. Here is a Vienna Europe will not see again. Ludwig Fulda's subject, on the other hand, is a Germany Europe is very much engaged in contemplating at the moment. He has written a comedy of electioneering in Re-

publican Germany, where husband and wife get themselves, unknown to each other, nominated as rival candidates. Neither is inclined to take off the gloves in the way their respective party organizations desire, but ultimately they are stirred into bitter personalities, only to find that each has a scandal to use against the other. The vituperation Suse and her followers conduct against her husband results in his being assaulted by some violent members of their party. Wifely affection thereupon overcomes electioneering passion and the rival candidates retire. It is an entertaining if rather farcical sidelight on present-day German political conditions.

The last two plays are adaptations—Bertold Brecht's of Marlowe's play, with the sensation heightened, if possible, and the psychology modernized to fit the ideas of one of the foremost younger representatives of the Expressionist school of drama, Ernst Lissauer's of a well known episode in Prussian history, namely, the morganatic marriage of the Duke Leopold of Anhalt-Desau, Frederick the Great's general, with Anneliese Fehse, an apothecary's daughter. So altered and compressed are the facts and the characterization, however, that Herr Lissauer, in accordance with the rules laid down by Lessing, has given all the historical figures new names. Thus the "old Dessauer" becomes the Herzog Ludwig Ernst and the comedy is mainly of the taming of his outrageous temper. It is not a very distinguished work, but its performance seems to have given pleasure to German audiences, who would be familiar, from their school days, with the romantic story on which it is based.

A most important undertaking has just been initiated with the publication of the first two volumes of "Correspondence Générale de J. J. Rousseau" (Paris: Colin), a definitive collection of the letters of Rousseau which is ultimately to fill twenty volumes. The edition was begun under the editorship of Theophile Dufour, head librarian of the public library of Geneva, and has been carried on since his death by P. P. Plan. M. Dufour bestowed upon the preparation of this edition an astounding amount of the most painstaking labor between 1864, when he began his investigations for it and his death in 1922. He made most exact and accurate studies of the letters stored in public libraries and private collections, got access to manuscripts everywhere, and followed up documents that passed through the auction rooms and commentaries upon Rousseau manuscripts.



By THE PHOENICIAN

FOR a long time we have secreted in our desk, not wilfully but because of the condition of our desk, a letter that now comes to light, a letter that passed between two prominent *littérateurs* in the fall of 1923 relative to the merits of a printer of remarkable quality, one *Shmuel bar Aiwass bie Yaqubh Murad de Shirabode* (Americanized to *Samuel A. Jacobs*). He is an Assyrian typographer who makes some very beautiful books. He set up *E. E. Cummings*'s "Tulips and Chimneys" in his shop on Warren Street. The writer of the letter and he kept watches and sometimes at two o'clock would emerge with ink on their fingers into the moonlight and amble across City Hall Square to an all-night eating place. But now the letter:

"Flanked by the chauffeurs and night-hawks who patronize the place in the small hours, he would bring out his copy of *Hafiz* in the original and read it to me, translating as he went, to prove that *Hafiz* was the *E. E. Cummings* of his day. '*Hafiz* is very much like *Cummings*,' he would explain, 'and *Lawrence* is more like *Sadi*. *Hafiz* never used the same form for two poems, and he didn't use any of the conventional forms of the day. And you know'—here *Jacobs* grins, for he had quite a job working out all the problems raised by *Cummings*'s unusual use of spaces, punctuation and lower case—'*Hafiz*,' he says, 'played the same pranks with Persian that *Cummings* does with English, for the same reason.' Then, while the taxi-drivers stared, this priceless printer would intone some immortal line by the bard of Shiraz—*Jacobs*'s home town, as his name shows—and match it with a more comprehensible line from *Cummings*. 'There's something really creative,' he would say. And I agree with him." In *Aesthete* 1925 appears a flagrantly amusing little magazine, probably of brief life, whose first issue is addressed to the editors and critics of New York, and to sundry others. Its leading article is entitled "Little Moments with Great Critics" by *John Brooks Wheelwright*, in which percentages, compiled by a mysterious *Walter S. Hankel*, allot *Mencken*—28.8 per cent, *John Farrar*, one-half of one per cent, *William Lyon Phelps*, one per cent, and *Ernest Boyd*—5.61 per cent

Santayana, *Paul Elmer More*, and *T. S. Eliot* come off best in this tabulation, illustrating the attitude of certain younger writers toward the older critics. Much of the polemic of this number is aimed at *Ernest Boyd* and *Mencken*, and said *Walter S. Hankel* is much in evidence as the new *Frank Harris*. As *Matthew Josephson* so wittily says of him, his editorial genius is unusually pronounced.

As I look over the miserable, warted faces (so like those in the subway!) of all the other noted editors of the land, I am drenched with a vague revulsion.

No one but *Matthew Josephson* could possibly have achieved such delicate irony! His, like *Hankel*'s, is a formidable intellect.

We-el, I wouldn't take that too seriously! Last November *George Sterling* wrote us saying that *Robinson Jeffers*'s poem "Tamar" is "surely the most terrible poem in English. 'The Cenci' is nothing to it." We'd like to see that poem!—*Jeffers* (when there) lives down on Mission Point (near Carmel, California) in a beautiful stone house with a stone tower to it that he built himself, hauling the granite. *Lewis Freman Mott*'s biography of *Sainte-Beuve* (he wrote a former biography of *Ernest Renan*) should prove an interesting volume. It is now available. *Anne Kimball Tuell* has written of "*Mrs. Meynell* and her Generation." Her volume is a critical study of the poet against her proper background.

W. E. Woodward and *Sinclair Lewis* have planned a walking trip through Touraine. *Lincoln MacVeagh* announces a novel of which we have hopes. It is "Moon Harvest" by *Giuseppe Cautela*, a barber in the Pershing Square barbershop in this city. It is the romance of an Italian immigrant, written with turns of phrase possible only to an ingenious discoverer and prodigal user of the riches of a foreign tongue, and it possesses beauty and glamour.

Pascal D'Angelo's "A Son of Italy" and *Louis Forgiere*'s "Reamer Lou" have preceded it, but it seems to us that *Cautela*'s prose is quite superior in texture to either of these. Last Friday evening the *Pictorial Review* gave a dinner to *Mrs. Edward MacDowell*, the first recipient of the *Pictorial Review*'s annual achievement award, in recognition of her work in establishing and maintaining at Peterborough, New Hampshire, a colony where creative artists can live at a nominal cost and work in a congenial environment. We cast our hat into the air when we heard of the award, as we cannot possibly praise *Mrs. MacDowell*'s achievement too highly.

Fourth large Printing

Critics unite in praise of

JOHN KEATS

By Amy Lowell

BLISS PERRY in the *Atlantic*

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MARK VAN DOREN in the *N. Y. Herald-Tribune*

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JOSEPH AUSLANDER in the *New York World*

"There are few pages in our critical literature as rich in psychological reconstruction as those she devoted to 'Endymion.' These may well become the canons of a new criticism, a new technique of interpretation."

EDWIN FRANCIS EDGETT in *Boston Transcript*

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Announcement

A RED LETTER DAY

A year ago the House of Putnam published a delightful book called *THE FABULOUS FORTIES*, by Meade Minnigerode, a young man until then known as a novelist. The book was a study of America between 1840 and 1850. Its popularity was widespread and the expression "Fabulous Forties" came to be a part of the American language.



On February 27, Mr. Minnigerode's second biographical work—*LIVES AND TIMES*—will be published. It includes biographies of four prominent figures out of the early history of our nation. They are *Theodosia Burr*, the remarkable daughter of *Aaron Burr*; *William Eaton*, hero; *Stephen Jumel*, Merchant; and *Edmond Charles Genêt*, citizen. In these portraits, Mr. Minnigerode has drawn not only the character under treatment but has painted in the background as well. Under the magic of his pen, the friends of these people, their ways of living, their houses and their entertainments all appear vividly and with a real sense of life. *LIVES AND TIMES*, like *THE FABULOUS FORTIES*, is an admirable and priceless contribution to Americana. \$3.50.

It is a long jump from *Edmond Charles Genêt* and his times to *Edward, Prince of Wales*, with his love of all that is modern and democratic. The second book on the list is called *A KING IN THE MAKING*, and is written by *Genevieve Parkhurst*, who secured the material for this biography from intimate and authentic sources. Not the least fascinating part of the story are the pictures, many of them appearing here for the first time. In the pages of this biography appear the figures of *Victoria*, of *Edward VII* and many other famous figures of the past. \$2.50.

Two books dealing with the life and the letters of *Mary Putnam Jacobi* give a vivid picture of this leader in the fight for the admission of women into the professions of men. As a young girl she was the first woman student at the *École de Médecine* in Paris and drove the wedge which later brought many women students of medicine. Later she came to America where she married a famous physician and spent the remainder of her life working in hospital clinics and among the poor of the slums. She was one of the great women of the past century and a leader in the movement for the advance of women. The books are *THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF MARY PUTNAM JACOBI*, edited by *Ruth Putnam*, and *MARY PUTNAM JACOBI, A PATHFINDER IN MEDICINE*, each \$3.50. The first is largely in the nature of a biography and the second a collection of her professional letters and contributions to the world of medicine.

THE COPY SHOP, by *Edward Hungerford*, is the novel of the week. It is a fine human story, touched by humor, of a boy who sets out to conquer a great city and a great profession. In the end he finds a girl who is more to him than either the city or the profession. \$2.00.

On the first of March the House of Putnam will publish one of the most beautiful and interesting books of the past ten years. It is *WITH PENCIL, BRUSH AND CHISEL*, the memories of *Emil Fuchs*, court sculptor, bon vivant, and artist.

These books can be had at any bookseller or from PUTNAM'S, 2 West 45th street. Just west of Fifth Ave.

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

Art

ARCHITECTURAL AND STRUCTURAL THEORY AND PRACTICE. By LEON V. SOLON. New York: Architectural Record. 1924.

The modern architect is daring indeed who attempts to use color as an important element in his designs. It is largely the case of the burned child, either in person or by example, for few recent attempts have resulted in anything but grotesque failure. Mr. Solon endeavors to point out a possible avenue of escape by an analysis of the Greek methods of polychromy, architectural and sculptural, and a demonstration of the evolution, in their case, of a definite schematic use of color as a means of decorative emphasis of structural form. By this system confusion of formal values by an injudicious and haphazard usage was avoided, since it was based on a full realization of the difference between the potentialities of color as a means of modifying formal effect and as a means of emotional stimulus.

The discussion is interesting and well considered but contains some curious statements such as: "White is the result of the maximum capacity for light absorption, black the maximum capacity for reflection" which may be due to careless proofreading but are nevertheless somewhat disturbing.

Besides much illuminating information the book offers excellent illustrations and a good reference appendix all of which should be of benefit to architects and sculptors interested in polychromatic problems.

THE NATURE, PRACTISE, AND HISTORY OF ART. By H. VAN BUREN MAGONIGLE. Scribners. 1924. \$2.50.

In two respects Mr. Magonigle's book is formidable. It is the heaviest book for its very ordinary size we have ever held in hand. And by its title it certainly assumes to cover, as they say in the vernacular, an awful lot of territory. After any kind of examination, brief or exhaustive, it ceases to awe, but does somewhat appall.

The fact that it is written to help "the young men and women in high school and college" who are "growing up in virtual ignorance of art as art, as a source of pleasure, as an influence upon life, or as an expression of life"—with a side glance at "the laity at large"—is no good reason why it should be quite so plantigrade and uninspired as it is. It might be argued that if the young Nordics of our schools and colleges are to be wooed away from the pleasures of the joy ride and the petting party, and if our good Rotarians and Kiwanians are to be seduced from the bridge table and the head-set, to understand art as all the things that Mr. Magonigle says it is, the epistle directed to them should have enough life and rhythm and tingle to furnish a counter-attraction. It is, goodness knows, a most difficult thing to take the chronology, the classifications, the factual skeleton of art, and make a buoyant, exciting book of them; yet if one does not do that, why, Reinach's *Apollo* and other matter-of-fact histories of art being available, do anything?

Mr. Magonigle is, if not an original, yet certainly a considerable artist in his own art—architecture; but he is not a writer, he is not modern, and he has no convictions. You can dip into any paragraph in this book and pull out a sentence which is the very essence of the commonplace in expression and of the usual, accepted, oft-repeated in judgment. Everything that conservative historians of art have said, is said over; the judgment on every nation, period, school, and individual artist is absolutely cut to the academic pattern. Mr. Magonigle starts with the cavemen, and ends with Babbitt. He takes pains to assure his readers that the true artist is just an ordinary workman or business man; that any artist who differs from the plain *homo sapiens* is a tenth-rate *poseur*. And, accepting the Impressionists because the academicians have now accepted them (as a defence against the Post-Impressionists) he carefully side-steps the slightest recognition of anything that has been salient in art since Cézanne. His is thirty years behind the time, by the American calendar—fifty by the French. Of all his faults, the one that shows him in the worst light is that the only reference he makes to El Greco is a sneer. His one original thought

is that the Greeks made use of broken color on their sculptured and architectural works. This is a real contribution to thought. Otherwise the book, while quite useful as a history of the bare facts of art, is negligible.

Belles Lettres

LITERARY VESPER. By W. H. BURRILL. First Series. *ALTARS OF ASPIRATION*. Duffield. 1924. \$2.

The literary approach to philosophy makes a very effective sugar coating for a fare which seems to many very flat and unpalatable. People conscious of their need for an attitude toward life have always got it from such poets and fictionists as suited their wants. Professor Burrill brings to the public such a dish, intended for those not in the habit of consciously deriving their philosophic materials from literary sources. In short, "Literary Vespers" is the religious brand of philosophic idealism reduced to terms of Robert W. Service, Edgar Guest and H. G. Wells. Instead of being called upon to follow the mazes of the thought of Josiah Royce, we learn (for instance) of the power of an ideal by reading parts of Rostand's "Chanticleer." Although this may seem too sugary to one used to grappling with such problems, it has undoubtedly been a successful means of feeding those minds whose owners come Sunday after Sunday to the Town Hall to receive the manna from Dr. Burrill's lips.

Unfortunately these essays were intended to be heard rather than read. The semi-lyrical style, undoubtedly effective in oratory, seems confusing and out of place in print. Underdeveloped places in the argument appear in the unsympathetic type, which were probably filled out, or at least glossed over, by their interpretation by the speaker. Thus the works lose a great deal of their effectiveness and value in the transfer from one medium to another. It seems rather too bad that this loss of effect, and the popular nature of the work will almost inevitably keep it out of the lists of philosophic and literary controversy. Its almost Pollyannalike faith in the ideal, and cheerfulness concerning the future, should present an exciting spectacle in combat with prevailing disillusionment and pessimism.

FORUM PAPERS. Edited by BENJAMIN A. HEYDRICK. Duffield. 1924. \$2.

There is gathered into this volume, as a text for college classes in composition, a noteworthy group of essays on various phases of contemporary civilization. With a mind to his prospective readers, the editor has chosen a number of papers on literature: "The Fifteen Finest Novels," by William Lyon Phelps—who interrupts his criticism for such *obiter dicta* as "Tolstoy's practical propositions, such as abolishing law-courts, police, and private property, are insane"; Edward Eggleston's more informal thoughts on "Books That Have Helped Me," from Webster's Elementary through the theological novels, until Thomas à Kempis was discarded for Darwin; Brander Matthews's pleasant gossip "On Pleasing the Taste of the Public," and more precise attempts at formularization, such as "What Is a Novel?" and "A Definition of the Fine Arts."

Another field close to the destined reader is the academic: "The Paradox of Oxford" is a survey of the manner in which the university combines a well-preserved mediæval atmosphere with a modern alertness and accomplishment; "The Ethics of Ancient and Modern Athletics" points to many examples of unfair play taken as natural in the classics, and suggests that his training in sports makes the modern Englishman, if he be "a beast," at any rate "a just beast." More general themes are presented in Santayana's defence of "Young Radicals in America," in President-Emeritus Eliot's analysis of the limitations of popular education, and an attack on immigration written some thirty years ago by the Superintendent of the Tenth U. S. Census. Despite an occasional fault the papers—all frankly personal and at times even partisan—are well written, thoughtful, and provocative of thought—an element of college life that cannot be overstimulated.

(Continued on next page)

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