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Books of Special Interest

French Etching

A HISTORY OF FRENCH ETCHING. By F. L. LEIPNIK. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1924. \$12.50.

Reviewed by PAUL J. SACHS Fogg Art Museum

A S a work of synthesis this handsome, richly illustrated volume of 190 pages and 106 plates arrests our attention. A careful reading of and testing of its contents will not, in spite of minor errors and occasional inaccuracies, disappoint the reader who comes to it without preconceived notions of what a work on "French Etching" ought to be, or conceivably might

be. The author, although thoroughly familiat with his material and the whole corpus of French Prints, does not aim to do for the French field what those very best of all catalogues produced by the scholars of the British Museum do in such masterly and authoritative fashion for the patient student of Early Italian Engraving, or Primitive German Woodcuts. Nor does Mr. Leipnik pretend to combine the graceful qualities of a sensitive man of letters with the sprightly originality of a print expert, as only Ivins of the Metropolitan Museum has in recent years taught us to expect whenever he sets his learned and fluent pen to paper. None the less this substantial volume is a welcome addition to the growing print literature of our day. Among the works in English it takes its place alongside of those books of reference that are useful to the specialist, even though obviously designed for the amateur and collector.

In the preface we are put on our guard: -"The principal aim of this book is to serve as a guide and assist collectors in the selection and classification of plates." In spite of the inclusion of a few essays on such interesting figures as Callot, Claude Loraine, Meryon, Legros, Manet, and Forain-in short, the most notable of the French etchers from the Renaissance to our own day,-this is not a volume that most print lovers will care to read from cover to cover at one sitting. It is rather a book to be confidently consulted at the moment of placing some little known treasure into the beloved solander boxes, so that specific data presented clearly and in concise form may be noted on the white mount.

Its well printed pages teem with information about many of the distinctly secondary figures that crowd the stage during four and a quarter centuries. In a word Leipnik aims to do in restricted fashion for France, and for etching only, what Hind in his admirable "Short History of Engraving and Etching" does for all countries in the two fields. Leipnik's book thus serves as a useful supplement to the necessarily too brief accounts of minor French etchers in Hind's standard work.

The book affords ample evidence that a close acquaintance with their works has enabled the author to understand and appreciate the aims of the many artists he lists, but we regret that he fails to make clear to the uninitiated collector by as much as a technical hint how characteristic etched results that he delights in are actually achieved. We stress this because his comments might in many instances apply quite as well to paintings, wood engravings, or lithographs. To be sure, we are warned at the outset. "Some readers," he says, "may expect hints on technical matters. I do not propose to supply them." We venture to believe, however, that in any consideration any consideration n artist some acselves serve to make clear to the novice the means that Callot employed to produce the effect of light. Even in a non-technical work why not mention the fact that Callot used a series of bitings—the very thing for which he was especially important in the history of etching since he was one of the first, if not the first, to establish the practice. The inclusion of a carefully prepared

bibliography is one of the most useful features of this welcome work of reference.

A Royal Road

BOYS' OWN ARITHMETIC. By RAY-MOND WEEKS. Illustrations by USABAL New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1924. \$2.00.

Reviewed by CASSIUS J. KEYSER Columbia University

HERE is a book that will gladden the hearts and brighten the eyes of millions of boys if they get a chance to read it. And they will get the chance if their fathers and mothers and their other teachers discover the book and learn what it really is.

It is not a book of arithmetic as commonly understood. It is not one of those dead and deadening things known as textbooks. It is a living bit of literature based on arithmetic. The author makes no claim to being a mathematician, though it is evident that he could have been one had he so elected. Neither is he a professional teacher of arithmetic. He is an eminent professor of romance languages and literature in a great university. But he was a boy once, is now a father of boys, and, though mellowed with the wisdom of experience and years, he is still a boy at heart. It is that rare and amiable genius that enabled Mr. Weeks to write this book of charming stories for the amusement and education of children, causing them to learn while laughing, and to laugh while learning.

He has thus employed a most important principle of humane education. For laughter is not sub-human like eating and sleeping, for example. Laughter is a human thing.

> O Laughter, divine river of joy, Thou art the blessed boundary line Between the beasts and men.

Nay, laughter is even divine. Did not high Olympus often ring with the laughter of the gods?

I have said that the book is literature; it is literature based on arithmetic, and the manner fits the matter as neatly as the bark fits the tree. There are more than a hundred short stories. The list of their titles is itself a poem—far more galvanic than the Iliad's famous list of ships. Here are a few samples chosen at random: Race between ten boys and a Cinnamon Bear; Opossum eating persimmons; Red mule Absolum; Smile of a crocodile; Dog scratching off fleas; Cats in Catalonia; Moving power of a hornet; The boy, the bull-dog, and the ice-cream; Standing a fraction on its head; and so on, with the range and diversity of a live boy's manifold world.

In each story there lurks an arithmetical problem; it leaps forth to challange the boy just as he finishes the reading. What grappling and battling will result, especially if two boys are playing the game together. Fortunately, not all the numbers mentioned in a given story are essential to its problem for else the boy would not have the delight of discriminating what is essential from what is not. Fortunately, the stories are not so arranged that the problems are presented in the order of increasing diffif his manner of count of drawing culty, for else the book would not be true to life. Neither would it be true to life if count of the ideas devotes ten pages it did not set some problems whose answers are cumbrous and some that seem to be genninety to Callot, uine but are not. The book is profusely em of light which illustrated by Usabal, who has caught its And yet the illuscan not in themspirit of humor and fun.

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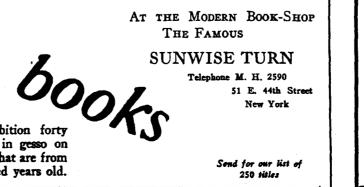
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Harvard University Press 2 Randall Hall Cambridge, Massachusetts



South of Berlin

By Harbor Allen

MUCH is being written these days about the German drama and the German stage, which, according to the most reliable critics of England and America, has outstripped Russia and become "the foremost theatre of the world." The general impression prevails, however, that the German theatre flourishes only in Berlin, the *Wasserkopf* (water-head) of Germany; and that Berlin reveals everything there is to say about the German stage just as New York encompasses everything—or nearly everything there is to say about American drama, and Paris and London epitomize France and England.

This conception is palpably false. While it is true that a large part of the new and ingenious developments of the German stage emerge in Berlin or gravitate toward it, still in cities south of the capital, some of them scarcely more than towns, are living, experimenting theatres which rank among the best in a country where good theatres and good drama are as much a part of community life as bridge and church socials in America. And from these places, which rarely if ever appear as datelines in the newspapers and magazines of the world, arise some of the strongest and most revolutionary influences on the German stage.

Almost everybody knows at least the names of Ernst Toller, whose "Masse Mensch" is soon to be produced in New York; and of Georg Kaiser, whose "From Morn to Midnight" startled America last year and who is having his Tag with a series of successes in the Birmingham Repertoire Theatre, in England. These plays are Berlin products. But how many people ever heard of Max Mohr, Otto Brecht, Ernst Barlach, and Fritz von Unruh, men whose works have emerged south of Berlin, but who are contributing just as decisive and original strokes toward the development of a new and freer drama? Almost everybody in dramatic circles has heard the name or seen the settings of Ernst Stern, Emil Pirchan, and Hans Rohrbach, but some of the real pathfinding in the forest of stagecraft is being done by Otto Reigbert, Walter von Wecus, and Fritz Lewy, who are unknown to foreigners because most of them stop going to the theatre when they travel south of Berlin.

Most foreigners cannot conceive that a city like Darmstadt, for instance, with only 80,000 inhabitants, should have one of the most artistic and progressive theatres in the country. Nevertheless, it is true; true not only of Darmstadt, but also of other provincial cities: Kiel, Königsberg, Düsseldorf, where some of the most exciting and important *premières* of the new German drama are produced. I need scarcely mention cities like Leipzig, Dresden, Cologne, Hamburg, and Munich, for in each of these a national theatre with a wide classical and modern repertoire and an independent stagecraft has become as indispensable as—well, let us say football in an American college.

* *

Munich, a city with 600,000 population, offers a good instance of what is being done dramatically "south of Berlin." Munich has four state theatres and a repertoire which in breadth and diversity is nothing short of a constant wonder. All four of these subsidized theatres are sold out night after night; and in them, during a single week, one can see drama ranging all the way from miracle plays and Euripides to the latest expressionistic gymDream," and "As You Like It" get at least one performance a month. Of the heavier Shakespeare plays "Macbeth," "Othello," "The Merchant of Venice," "Hamlet," "King Lear," "Julius Cæsar," "Romeo and Juliet," and "Richard II" are brought out from the scenery magazines more or less regularly.

The Germans call Shakespeare "our Shakespeare;" and, indeed, the plays one sees in Munich are scarcely an Englishman's work. I fear the Munich Oberregisseur is unaware of the epithet "gentle Shakespeare." Here they seize him heartily with both hands—not without affection, to be sure—and they gallop him through a process which converts him into a burly, plump, lively German. They inject into him a genial German Gemühtlichkeit and a lusty German conviviality. He is not necessarily the worse for the treatment—I am trying to be fair; but, I must admit, to the American observer he is vastly changed.

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The Shakespearian comedies are nearly always done up in slap-stick style; the inn scenes are explosions of turbulent, drunken mirth; the heroines are buxom deutsche Mädel; such characters as Shallow, Slender, Elbow, Don John, and Grumio become grotesque, with straggled wigs, cracked and falsetto voices, scarecrow gestures, and billposter costumes. In short, they are depicted as genuine Elizabethan buffoons, probably as Shakespeare meant them to be, for he knew well enough the taste of the groundlings at the Globe. But though they may be Elizabethan, and genuine, and robust they are a bit painful to the American auditor, brought up on a less boisterous fare of comedy. After all, comedy is a stranger to the native German stage. There are only four great comedies in the whole of German dramatic literature; and neither Lessing, Grillparzer, Kleist, nor Hauptmann succeeded in writing what we, who know Congreve, Sheridan, Wilde, and Shaw, would call a really brilliant and amusing play. The German national character, unfortunately, is too devoid of that healthy skepticism and that detached self-criticism

which produces subtle, satirical comedy. In the more sombre Shakespearian dramas, the Munich theatres are less disturbing, but also less convincing. Critics throughout Germany today are lamenting the lack of actors who can perform the classic plays in the traditional German classic style. First of all, the times are unheroic and inappropriate; and secondly, most of the actors have been broken by the last two decades of drably conversational plays, problematic and Sudermannic. Consequently, "Macbeth," "Othello," "Hamlet" are read with a faltering rhythm and artificial pathos, and are suffused with a note of martyrdom and self-pity which vitiate their tragedy.

Schiller's "Don Carlos," "Maria Stuart," "Wilhelm Tell," "Cabale und Liebe" and "Die Ræuber" fare little better than Shakespeare, as far as the classic style is concerned; though they are sometimes rescued by the tenderness and charm of Fraulein Emmy Pregler and Frau Hagen. Gœthe is seldom produced. It is Germany's great tragedy that the Gœthe spirit has been partially---if not wholly---replaced by the Hitler spirit. The openmindedness, the tolerance, the understanding of the Sage of Weimar is hard to find in the reich today; in its stead is a blatant, bigoted, insolent Hitlerism which alienates and antagonizes the foreigner, however much he may be prepared to sympathize with Germany's very actual suffering.



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From page 215:

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"'Oh, yes, I've heard of it,' he said. 'Any good?' . . .

"Then he turned to the chapter heads in the table of contents, and looked them over. 'Oh, yes, I must get that and read it,' and then he added: 'The table of contents is about the best guide I know of to a book. It beats the critics for me, as to whether I want to read it or not.'"

Here is a list of the chapter titles of TWICE THIRTY. Judge the book by Theodore Roosevelt's method.

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THE CHILD WITH THE INQUIRING MIND MY FRIEND, THE TRUCK DRIVER

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nastics of Ernst Toller, Georg Kaiser, and Eugene O'Neill; or opera sweeping all the way up from Gluck to Pfitzner and Strauss.

As for the Munich repertoire, Shakespeare is far and ahead the most popular author on the program. Schiller, in number of productions, is a poor second, although the stormy declamation, the passionate, self-pitying heroism, and the yearning for freedom in such characters as Karl von Mohr ("Die Raüber") and Don Carlos ("Don Carlos") are dear to the heart of the German audience in these sombre, troubled times.

Within a single week of the present season in Munich as many as five different Shakespeare plays have been produced. The regisseur seems to have a special fondness for the minor Shakespearian comedies, which accounts for the staging of "Much Ado About Nothing," "Measure for Measure," "Comedy of Errors," and "Love's Labor Lost." "Twelfth Night," "The Merry Wives of Windsor," "The Taming of the Shrew," "A Midsummer Night's Shaw is never absent from the Munich

repertoire, and with a certain class of theatre-goer, "the smart-set," is always popular. In the past winter I have seen here his "Pygmalion," "Katherine, the Great," "Arms and the Man," "Mrs. Warren's Profession," "Captain Brassbound's Conversion," "You Never Can Tell," and "Androcles and the Lion." Translated into German Shaw loses much of his quick, glittering stab, but he is still more amusing than the native plays.

Oscar Wilde is also a popular foreign author; and strangely enough, old Kit Marlowe holds the boards with "Edward II" and "Tamburlaine." Eugene O'Neill is soon to be added to the list of Englishlanguage authors with "Kaiser Jones," "Anna Christie," and "Der Haarige Affe" (The Hairy Ape).

From this account it will be seen that the real glory of the Munich theatres lies in the courage and the high standard of their repertoire. WHEN TOM WENT TO FRANCE

YOUR NEIGHBOR AT AN ENGLISH TABLE THE MAN WHO SAW THE SEA

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