

The World of Rare Books

By FREDERICK M. HOPKINS

MUSEUM AT MAINZ

A QUARTER of a century ago printers from all over the world met in the beautiful city of Mainz, Germany, to celebrate the fifth centenary of the birth of Gutenberg, the inventor of movable type and the first printer to use it. At this celebration a memorial was discussed, which took shape June 26, 1900, in the founding of the Gutenberg Museum. It grew rapidly and seemed destined to become a repository for everything connected with Gutenberg and the art of printing. The whole civilized world appeared to be interested in the idea.

In 1914 came the World War. This cut off all interest outside of Germany. Ten years of war and the bitterness of reconstruction nearly eliminated German interest. Two or three years ago came the report that the museum faced destruction. At this critical juncture, a little over a year ago, the chairman of the committee of the New York Employing Printers' Association, Edward E. Bartlett, while visiting Europe, became interested in the re-establishment of the museum on the pre-war basis.

On returning home he interested not only his own association in the museum's plans, but also the Grolier Club and the American Institute of Graphic Arts, and the enrollment of patrons outside of these organizations followed. It is now proposed to publish an international memorial of printing to which eighty experts, representing more than a score of Continental and American countries, will contribute. Elaborate plans for carrying out the original idea of the museum through international cooperation is in full swing and America can be depended upon to do more than her part.

At present the city of Mainz is preparing for the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the museum. A representative exhibition of the finest specimens of German printing during the past quarter of a century is about to be opened. This will be preceded by a meeting where Dr. Erich von Rath, president of the commission for the preparation of a complete catalogue of all known incunabula, which is now being compiled, will deliver an address connected with the subject.

The Gutenberg Library, which aims to possess books in every language dealing with Gutenberg and his invention, can only be

completely successful through the cooperation of all nations. It should receive the support of printers all over the world, not only in admiration of the first master printer, but as a tribute to the art of printing which has been such a wonderful factor in the progress of the human race.

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SALE OF GWINNETT SIGNATURE

AMONG the new high records made in the auction room in the season just closing, that of the signature of Button Gwinnett, Signer of the Declaration of Independence from Georgia, at Henkel's, in Philadelphia, will hold an important place. It has been pointed out that this signature, attached to a mortgage, brought \$14,000, or \$1,000 for each of the fourteen letters,—a price that has no close parallel. The story of this dramatic event and the soaring prices of signers' autographs was recently told in a full page article in the New York Times. Here is a paragraph:

"When the Gwinnett mortgage was put up the atmosphere grew tense. All the experts knew that the last Gwinnett to be

sold brought \$4,500, so no one was surprised when a dealer, Charles Sessler, started the bidding at \$5,000. Then Dr. Rosenbach, another well-known dealer, threw a bombshell by raising the bid to \$6,000. Then a battle royal began. Sessler had bid \$13,500 and Rosenbach had countered with \$14,000. Then Sessler dropped out. Dr. Rosenbach sold the document a month later to Charles F. Jenkins of Philadelphia, whose collection was lacking only the Gwinnett." The price paid is said to have been \$15,000."

RISE IN RARE BOOK VALUES

IN the current number of *The Bookman's Journal* is given a list of twenty of the most valuable unique books lost to England at the recent dispersal of the two additional parts of the Britwell Court Library at Sotheby's. Many of these treasures came from early-nineteenth century collections, like the Heber, and the prices of those days compared with prices now make an illuminating commentary on the extraordinary rise in rare book values in the last century. For instance, the lowest priced item of these twenty was Thomas Phaer's "The Regiment of Lyfe," London, 1544, black letter, bought for 1s. 6d. at the Thomas Caldecott sale in 1833, which sold for £65. The highest priced item, T. H.'s "Oenone and Paris, A Poem," London, 1594, a plagiarism of Shakespeare's "Venus and Adonis," was also bought at the Caldecott sale for only 16s. and realized the handsome price of £3,800. So far as it has been possible to trace the original cost of these rarities the highest price paid was £6 6s.

NOTE AND COMMENT

ERNEST DRESSSEL NORTH, one of the best known rare book dealers in this country, located for many years at 4 East 39th Street, has removed to 587 Fifth Avenue, the heart of the rare book business in this city. Mr. North intends to reduce his stock and specialize more than ever in rare and valuable first editions.

English booklovers and collectors take the loss of their literary rarities very philosophically. *The Bookman's Journal*, which is in close touch with this class, can speak for them with authority. It says: "The only long-sighted view regarding the passing of some among our literary treasures to the book cupboard of Uncle Sam has already been expressed in these columns. The renewed outcry, however, of those who predict our entire denudation of rare volumes makes imperative the reiteration of that view. No one can deplore the securing by a country comparatively young in cul-

ture and in tradition of books that are not unique specimens. Our regret is naturally keen when unique. . . . copies leave our shores; but it must be remembered that of over 90 per cent of the literary rarities bought from us our national collections hold fine examples, and that the occasional unique item is usually generously available for our study. American literateurs—critics, bibliographers, students,—are making excellent use of a great proportion of their acquisitions from us. And are not such acquisitions—although removed from their spiritual homes—still in the family!

A cablegram from Mainz, Germany, states that the Gutenberg Museum is the recipient of a gift of \$5,000 from the United States for the extension and support of the edifice founded in honor of Gutenberg, the first printer from movable type. The American donation was handed to the directors of the museum by Dr. Stempel of Frankfurt in behalf of the American committee which collected the funds, representing well-known publishers and printers.

The New Books

(Continued from page 901)

Poetry

- SPRINK OF FLIGHT. By Marion Combs Smith. New York: Harold Vinal.
THE HARP OF FATE. By William F. Kirk. Small, Maynard.
THE BANQUET AND OTHER POEMS. By Frances Fletcher. Dorrance. \$2.
RICKETY RIMES OF RIG. By Richard Atwater. Chicago: Robert O. Ballou. \$2.
DARTMOUTH VERSE 1925. Portland, Maine: The Mosher Press.
WELLESLEY VERSE. Edited by Martha Hale Shackford. Oxford University Press. \$2.
NEW POEMS. By John Drinkwater. Houghton Mifflin. \$1.25.
AZRAEL AND OTHER POEMS. By Robert Gilbert Welsh. Appleton. \$1.50.
SELECTED POEMS. By W. H. Davies. Harcourt, Brace. \$2.
SONNETS AND POEMS OF ANTHROPO DE QUENTAL. Translated by S. Griswold Marley. University of California Press.
A GOLDEN TREASURY OF IRISH VERSE. By Lennox Robinson. Macmillan. \$1.75.
POEMS. By Susan Clay. Chicago: Ralph Fletcher Seymour.
TWENTY POEMS. By William Barnes. Duffield. 75 cents net.
TWENTY POEMS. By Robert Stephen Hawkes. Duffield. 75 cents net.
SIR GAWAIN AND THE GREEN KNIGHT. Edited by J. R. R. Tolkien and E. O. Gordon. Oxford University Press. \$2.50.
AMERICAN MYSTICAL VERSE. By Irene Hunter. Appleton. \$2.
WINGS TO DARE. By Grace Hoffman White. Portland, Me.: Mosher Press.

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MURDER TALE CREATES SENSATION READERS GASP AT GRIM QUIZZ

Always Suspected Book Was Thriller, Say Pub- lishers; Author Has Old Crime Story Record, They Admit

Late this spring the reading public was confronted by a book known only as "Afterwards," by Mrs. Belloc Lowndes. This book described itself as a mystery story of unusual interest. Readers were startled to find that this description was altogether true.

Expressions of opinions are obtainable from several sources. "One of the most satisfactory tales of the season," said the *Herald-Tribune*.

"'Afterwards' is an entertaining and well developed yarn," stated the *Times*. These opinions come as no surprise to the publishers.

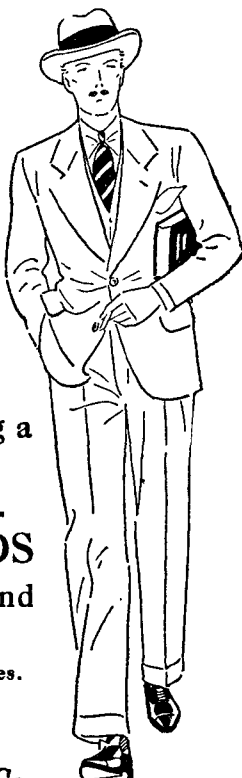
"Even if we had not read 'Afterwards,'" they announced this morning, "Mrs. Lowndes' past actions would have led us to expect this result. Back in 1914 the *Public Ledger* called her book, 'The Lodger,' a work of art, while the *London Morning Post* said 'Mrs. Lowndes has produced an almost flawless little masterpiece of horror.' The fact that the setting of this latest book of hers is post-war London, and its characters younger members of the smart set and would-be smart set, is no reason why she should have abandoned the field of her other successes. We are afraid that Mrs. Lowndes is an incorrigible spreader of terror."

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The Phoenix Nest

WE certainly put our foot in it when we said that the title of *A. S. M. Hutchinson's* novel, "One Increasing Purpose" was from Tennyson's "In Memoriam"—and we deserve what we get for our carelessness. Why on earth we wrote "In Memoriam" instead of "Locksley Hall," and then let it stand, is just one of those sweet old mysteries! * * * *Mary Eleanor Roberts* writes from Philadelphia that we are too young to know our Tennyson, but when she adds, "You couldn't fit 'One increasing purpose' into the metre of 'In Memoriam,'" does she mean those three words or the full line, "Yet I doubt not through the ages one increasing purpose runs"? If she means the three words, "One increasing purpose," you certainly can fit them into the metre,—viz:

*And one increasing purpose runs
I doubt not all the ages through
Each sparkling like a drop of dew
In long processions of suns*

—which we made up, and isn't very good! * * * *Lincoln MacVeagh* thinks we may have been spoofing, and says he is just republishing "Ladies Whose Bright Eyes," by *Ford Madox Ford*, and if he advertised the title as coming from "Locksley Hall" would anyone correct him? "It might be a good test of your contributor's belief that Tennyson is coming back." * * * The Reverend *A. C. Dixon*, who recently died, declared the Darwinian theory to be "the greatest known menace to civilization," and *Thomas Dixon*, his brother, affirms the Darwinian theory in his latest novel, "The Love Complex." He believes "love at first sight" to be one of the animal survivals in man. * * * Well! Well! * * * We certainly congratulate *Joe Auslander* on his "Sonnet for *Amy Lowell*" in the July first *New Republic*,—as fine a tribute to Miss Lowell as we have seen. * * * The Atlantic Book and Art Corporation of New York will have two novel children's books ready in the early fall. They are Magic-Picture Books, and by means of little paper dolls that can be cut out from the last pages of the book, and inserted into each page from underneath, the book permits the child to invent ever new stories. The books are books and toys at the same time. The drawings are by *Ernest Kutzer*. * * * We have been reading with great interest the 60th Anniversary number of the *Nation*, full of fine and deserved tributes to a grand fighting periodical. * * * *Herbert Quick's* autobiography will be out this autumn. It is now running in the *Saturday Evening Post*. Quick began "One Man's Life" last year soon after he finished "The Invisible Woman," completing his midland trilogy. * * * Quick was once Mayor of Sioux City, and cleaned it up politically; he was also an agriculturist and a lawyer, as well as a statesman. * * * We saw *Doug Fairbanks* the other night in "Don Q, Son of Zorro," and pronounce it the best film in which we have ever seen him, though we understand that "The Mark of Zorro" was even better. "Don Q" brings again to memory those talented romancers, *K* and *Hesketh Pritchard*, who wrote the original stories on which these films are based. They were monstrous good yarns! * * * "News and Views of Borzoi Books," in speaking of the fact that the Censorship Committee for Los Angeles Public Schools cut out from lists of books submitted for the libraries of the Los Angeles high schools about fifty

books including some classics, speaks of their excluding among others *Sir Richard F. Burton's* "Anatomy of Melancholy." And how about *Robert Burton's* "Arabian Nights"? * * * The Committee also excluded, amid many, *Laurence Sterne's* "A Sentimental Journey," *Joe Hergesheimer's* "The Three Black Pennys," *Tomlinson's* "London River" and *G. B. Stern's* "The Matriarch." * * * It is to laugh! * * * We read the first instalment of the life of *Edgar Saltus* by his third wife, in *Harper's Bazar*, and found it most interesting. * * * *Gabriel Wells* has got out a brochure on "The Tennessee Cause Célèbre." He tries to weigh in an even scale the pros and cons of the issue involved in the Scopes trial. * * * All Shelleyites will find in the July *Scribner's* an unusually good sonnet on *Shelley* by *Nancy Byrd Turner*. * * * * * "Brave Earth" and "Seibert of the Island" are good end of June novels. The latter is by a young Missourian who has already achieved a following by writing serials for *Adventure*. He has a highly colored and graphic style. * * * And another good poem in *Scribner's* is *Virginia Moore's* "Escape." In fact the magazine is lucky to have two such poems as hers and *Miss Turner's* in one number. * * * We hear that there is to be a Russian translation of "Arrowsmith," and that the book will also appear in the Tauchnitz edition. *Sinclair Lewis* and his wife are now residing for the summer in the midst of infinite acreage at Katonah, N. Y. Their son *Wells*, a young man of charm and sprightly fancy, is also in residence at that spot. * * * A friend has now introduced us to "Thoughts of a Postman" by *Manly Ritch*, published by the author in 1923 in Greenwich, Connecticut. We have found enjoyment in his verses,—and listen to him exhort prospective purchasers!

*My book pleased President Coolidge,
Postmaster General New,
Many other men of letters,
And some of the fair sex, too;
One-twenty-five per copy
Is the price, sent C. O. D.;
I'd like to have you write this line:
'Ritch, send your book to me.'*

* * * Mr. Ritch is a real postman. * * * *John Drinkwater* has edited with introductions a series of Little Nineteenth Century Classics, published by Duffield. Now ready are "Essays," by *Harley Coleridge*, "Twenty Poems," by *Robert Stephen Hawker*, and a like number of poems by *William Barnes*. * * * The "Letters of *Rosa Luxemburg* to *Karl and Luise Kautsky*" have been brought out by *McBride*. They reveal the spirit of the most brilliant of Europe's revolutionists, who fell in the early days of the German revolt. * * * In "The Earth Speaks to *Bryan*," *Henry Fairfield Osborn* desires the Great Commoner "to observe and hear for himself the great truths which the earth so clearly proclaims," and he dedicates his book to "John Thomas Scopes, Courageous Teacher, who elected to face squarely the issue that the youth of the State of Tennessee should be freely taught the truths of Nature and the fact that these truths are consistent with the highest ideals of religion and conduct. The Truth shall make you Free." * * * Everyone interested in the controversy will find an unusually clear statement of facts in Professor Osborn's little book. * * * And so, for the present,

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