

Foreign Literature

More Proust

ALBERTINE DISPARUE. By MARCEL PROUST. Paris: Éditions de la Nouvelle Revue Française. 2 vols. 1925.
MARCEL PROUST. By LÉON PIERRE-QUINT. Paris: Éditions Simon Kra. 1925.
Reviewed by THEODORE PURDY, JR.

THE posthumous glory of Marcel Proust lends a special importance to the twelfth and thirteenth volumes of his life work, "A la Recherche du Temps Perdu," which have recently been published in Paris, more than three years after his death. In spite of its already imposing bulk, his super-novel is not yet complete and several of the author's precious note books remain to see the light next year as the concluding part under the title "Le Temps Retrouvé." Nor does Mr. Scott-Moncrieff's English translation keep pace with the French publishers, for but six volumes have appeared thus far. Viewing the succeeding and untranslated portions of the great Frenchman's analytical masterpiece, one wonders in what state or under what conditions they will be issued here. Heavy expurgation or reasonably private printing seems to be inevitable. One hopes for the latter since so much of the best in the book as a whole is grouped about characters and subjects generally passed over or entirely tabooed. In any case, thanks to the importers of foreign editions, the original version is even now available in America, together with M. Pierre-Quint's painstaking and yet entertaining study of the author's life and work. The portrait of Proust working in his hermetic chamber, struggling with time and his health to complete his book before death overcame him, is touching and admirably written, and cannot fail to interest any amateur of Proust. The appearance of this, the first biography of the author, doubtless indicates the rise of the inevitable cult, but has any modern writer been more worthy of one?

The first of the new volumes is simple in plan, devoted to a single great experience—loss. For Albertine, having left Proust's nameless autobiographical hero at the end of the preceding "La Prisonnière," is killed soon after in a riding accident. The lover's reactions when she leaves him, his attempt to force her to return, his realization of her death, and the curious effect of the discovery after her death that her long suspected Lesbian past has a deep foundation in truth,—these things are intricately studied with the same indescribable devotion to detail, the same finely wrought prose, the same difficult attempt to convey the last nuance of an emotion to the reader, that characterized Proust's earlier work. The resulting final loss of Albertine, in all truth vanished now for good, since no trace of love for her remains, concludes the first part. It may be definitely said that no single crisis of any sort is more fully treated in "A la Recherche du Temps Perdu." It is difficult to think that even the author, with his mania for revision, could have added or changed much here. On the other hand, the second volume is filled with odds and ends, and shows in its abrupt transitions and incomplete analyses that Proust had not yet polished and finished it, and reduced its texture to the unbelievably subtle level that satisfied him. It resembles the social study of the *Germantes milieu* more closely than anything that has gone before, being devoted to the marriage of Gilberte Swann and Robert de St. Loup, who will be remembered as the first love and the best friend of Marcel in the days before he met Albertine at Balbec. A trip to Venice, out of which a surprising amount of un-hackneyed descriptive prose results, and some comment on the change in St. Loup's character occupy the attention of the indefatigable writer, too, but the best thing in this part of "Albertine Disparue" is the brief account of Proust's feelings when he receives a telegram apparently indicating that his former love is not dead after all, but alive and anxious to marry him. It is then that the complete force of the transiency of his feelings becomes clear. Many of the characters in the first portions of the book appear here in changed circumstances, and a fascination not wholly easy to understand results for anyone who has overcome the initial difficulties of style and the complexity of Proust's method, which makes the lorgnon of Oriane de *Germantes* more important—and justly so—than a European war, and has persevered to this thirteenth instalment of his chronicle, not wholly fortunate if taken alone.

As a whole one seems little nearer the recovery of time promised by the title of

the final section of the work, since a sort of aimlessness has descended on the hero following the disappearance of Albertine. There are a great many loose ends to be brought together. But Proust, the great Proust, psychologist of snobbery and of love, is continually present in everything he has written, revised or unrevised. One can only be thankful for his qualities, for his fine mind and a sensibility surely unequalled by any modern author, for his creative fecundity and above all for the untiring sacrifice of his life that he made to bring this work to a conclusion, however exhausting and unlikely to be rewarded by any measure of public esteem it might be. Yet more, admiration for the man who could conceive such a book is inspired by the latest volumes, and it becomes increasingly evident that this writer, who once seemed in such danger of falling into a limited preciosity, without significance in modern letters, really founded his work on elements more practical than those of the rule book psychologists and more lasting than those of the worldly wise. By combining the methods of the one with his own experience in the field of the other, he has achieved a lasting study of human relationships. Seriousness, tenacity of purpose and scope set it apart not only from French but from most contemporary literature.

Huguenot Annals

LES RÉFUGIÉS HUGUENOTS EN AMÉRIQUE. By GILBERT CHINARD. Paris: Société d'Édition "Les Belles Lettres." 1925.

In this volume Professor Chinard presents an interestingly written survey of the Huguenot migration to the English colonies in America, and of the important share these French Protestants have had in the early development of this country. The study is based on much original research and is fully annotated. It shows the nature of the first tentative attempts made by the Huguenots to colonize the New World, and later how this trickle of immigration became a rushing stream after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. It traces the presence of these French refugees among the Puritans and the Dutch; their establishment in New England, in New York, and in the South, especially in such towns as New Oxford, Frenchtown, New Rochelle, and New Paltz. Of especial interest are the vivid sketches of the more prominent French ministers, and such well-known men as Bondet, Daillé, Lemercier, Rochelle, and the Bernon and Faneuil families.

It must be remembered that while France today is synonymous in our minds with St. Jeanne d'Arc and Lafayette, in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries it stood for Louis XIV and the Massacre of St. Bar-

tholomew in the minds of the American settlers. When the French Protestants began to migrate to the English colonies to a noticeable degree, they were regarded with much suspicion. Though Protestants and in flight from Catholic persecution, they were also Frenchmen and subjects of the king then feared as the greatest menace to the Protestant faith. In this volume Professor Chinard shows how these Huguenot immigrants in the end not only gained the confidence and friendship of their English brethren but also helped them materially in gaining their independence from England—

having had much to do with the sending of French troops and supplies by the grandson of Louis XIV. The Huguenots contributed a good deal also to our culture, and among their descendants may be mentioned Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, Henry Laurens, Elias Bouditot, Bowdoin, Philip Freneau, Whittier, and Longfellow.

This compact study becomes a vital contribution to early American history as much as to the history of the Huguenots in America. It is prefixed by an interesting introduction on "The American Mirage," and appended by a good Bibliography.

DORAN BOOKS

A magnificent reception has been accorded this rapid-fire novel of early America.

The enthusiasm of the booksellers—already reflected in *two large printings*—has been echoed by many famous writers and critics.

“A book of beauty and excitement.” —Anne Parrish

“A stirring piece of narrative writing.” —Charles G. Norris

“A tale full of primitive and barbaric color.” —Floyd Dell

“Exciting adventures—beautiful prose style—a work of art.” —William Lyon Phelps

SPANISH BAYONET

by Stephen Vincent Benét

\$2.00 at all booksellers

George H. Doran Company, Publishers
244 Madison Avenue New York

DORAN BOOKS

M A T E D

A novel
of marriage
and divorce
—and the child
by
Wallace

I R W I N

\$2.00 at
all booksellers

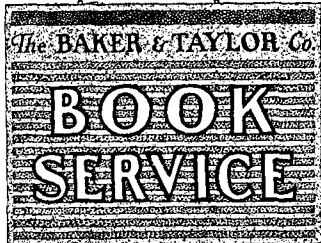
Or at the
Putnam Store

2 West 45th
Street

G. P.
PUTNAM'S
SONS

New York and
London

By the
Author of
“LEW TYLER'S
WIVES”
“THE GOLDEN
BED”
etc.



Can YOU Read Ten Books a Day?

You would have read nearly three times that number to include all the books published in a year. Yet you take it for granted that your bookseller is able to select the five or six hundred that will be in greatest demand and know something about each one of them. You assume in your bookseller knowledge of contemporary literature impossible to a university professor. But back of your bookstore is a highly trained corps of book experts and a tremendous book-selling organization. The Baker & Taylor Co. by its long experience and familiarity with trade conditions is able to recommend from the thousands of new books the comparative few that will be popular, thus justifying your confidence that the retail bookseller will have the books you want.

THE BAKER & TAYLOR CO.
Wholesale Booksellers
NEW YORK

DORAN BOOKS

"A ROMANCE unrolled against the changing spectacle of English life... Edna Ferber wrote the epic of spinsterhood in this country, and Catherine Dodd has written the epic of spinsterhood for England.

"*The Farthing Spinster* displays power and discrimination, a sense of values and imagination... Miss Dodd shows herself an authority on spinsters!"

*This is the verdict of
"The Boston Transcript" on*

The Farthing Spinster by Catherine Dodd

At all Booksellers \$2.50

GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY, Publishers, New York

DORAN BOOKS



30,000 Copies now and headed for the Top!

Second printing five days after publication.

HEARTS OF HICKORY

Pronounced by critics a masterpiece of historical romance.

To miss this story of Andrew Jackson and his times, is to miss one of the great books of the year.

At all Good Bookstores—\$2.00

COKEBURY PRESS

Nashville

Tennessee

Points of View

Heaving a Brick

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

I never yet came within range of one of those condescending critics without wanting to heave half a brick at him; and I know that I'm not the only writer who feels that way: when to a grand condescension they add insincerity I feel like making it a full sized brick. Some Anonymous Critic has been having a shot at my "Steel Decks" in a late issue of yours. It's a safe barrier—shooting from cover. Do I rate a shot in the open at him?

This A. C. pretends to outline the plot of the story. Assuming this plot, or any other plot, to be the silliest ever, since when has the plot of a story been the whole works? Is it the plot outline or how we fill it in that counts? Does the bully skipper live and breathe? Is the roughneck mate a real seagoer? Do the deckhands, cook, and oilers act like real human beings on an oilship out to sea? Did the ship act as a ship should act in a storm? Aren't these the things to inform the reader about? If our A. C. honestly thinks he should expend so much of his space in outlining the plot, why does he so carefully avoid mention of the main theme, which is: Should a man, because he has managed to get himself a ship-master's ticket, be allowed to hold unlimited authority over a crew of men at sea? Also, why does it happen that our A. C., reviewing for a magazine which circulates so largely among writing folk, carefully avoids mention—he mentions lesser items—of the hero's arraignment of Immature Book Critics?

Our A. C. writes . . . "This might make

curious reading in the office of a regular tank steamer concern." I'm not sure that I have him right—his style runs to innuendo and insinuation rather than straightforward statement—but he must mean that the office force of a shipping concern would smile with him at the absurdity of the story. I don't know what our friend knows about shipping offices, but in the years when I paid small attention to time clocks I put in many a fine day loafing in such offices. One of them operated a line of oil ships. It may interest our A. C. to know that "Steel Decks" was born in the aforesaid oil ship office; and long before the story saw book form it was read by shore and seagoing employees of that office. I have to report that their reactions to the story have not discouraged me.

Our A. C. may mean by the phrase quoted above that collusion for grafting purposes between a ship captain and a company official ashore is a preposterous notion. Well, I once took a cruise with an oil ship skipper who was later reported for grafting. I reported him. The office investigated and fired him.

Speaking of absurd rascality plots, I wonder what our critical friend would say to the plot of one steamship concern hiring men to set fire at sea to the cargo of a rival passenger steamer. No, this is not out of the movies. It is open talk right now in shipping circles along the Atlantic Coast; and a hint of it has been printed in the daily press. When? Within three months. There's one to smile off.

It irks our A. C. that seventeen pages are given over to a fist fight. What an awful waste! Mr. Shaw writes a full sized play around a prize fighter, and Mr. Doyle a full length novel about a prize ring hero, and nobody in the writing world that I know has condemned their choice of themes or the space given to them, but my allowance of seventeen pages for a battle which is to have a vital bearing on the hero's fortunes is too much—much too much. Our A. C. objects to the hero talking while he is punching his man. Now what are you going to do with that kind of a writing creature? Did this man never sit near a ring side in his life? Did he never know a fighter of the "kidding" type? Or one who uses his brains as well as his fists?

There is also the meticulous notation of the ridiculous idea that the villain weighs seventy pounds more than the hero and yet is beaten up. Has this particularly damn fool person any knowledge at all of fighting men? The old Jack Dempsey—a light middle weight, Joe Walcott, a welter weight, Charlie Mitchell (a light heavy weight), all defeated men who outweighed them by more than seventy pounds. Mitchell once defeated a man who outweighed him by ninety-five pounds; and these defeated men were thought good enough to get backing for professional ring work. The present Jack Dempsey, weighing 190, knocked the livers and lights out of Willard, weighing 245; and Willard at that time was the world's champion. What is there so foolish about my claiming that the hero of a story can out-punch a fat slob who is seventy pounds heavier than himself?

What I chiefly hold against your critic is that he is not sincere . . . "Now for a word of comment in all fairness to the author . . ." Now may I be argued into admitting the vigor and originality of that phrase, but never the sincerity of it. "In all fairness . . . and speaking frankly . . ." If there were any way to prove it, I would bet a quart of Baccardi rum, which is getting to be a scarce article of commerce on this bleak New England Coast, that when those archaeologists now digging in Assyria get acquainted with the idioms they will find these same canting phrases baked deep in on the old cuneiform tablets.

Having expended four-fifths of his space in depreciating the story in every way he can, our A. C. proceeds to expend the last fifth in advising the poor boob of an author what he should do in the future. I should . . . stick to my "fishermen, sloping decks and humming gear . . ." whatever humming gear is on a fisherman! Fishermen speak of fishing gear, meaning with the hooks and lines they lay along the bottom of the ocean: and sometimes they speak of reefing tackle as reefing gear; but hooks and lines and reefing tackle do not hum. Back stays hum, fore stays hum, ratlines hum—there is a humming throughout the whole rigging sometimes in a hard breeze; but lines laid along the bottom of the ocean and reefing gear howsed down to a fore or main boom do not hum in the wind. The

wind can't get at 'em, if my A. C. gets what I mean.

Stick to my fishermen! Why stick to any one thing if a man knows something about something else? Having spent at least a month aboard steamers to every week I have put in on sailing craft, why not allow me to pen a few pages about the steamer folk? As the best two (or perhaps three) stories I ever wrote had nothing to do with fishermen, why stick exclusively to my fishermen?

Our A. C. is eager to give advice. I wonder will he take a little? Why not, in reviewing a book stick to a review of the book, and allow the writer of a book to say a word about a life that he may know as much about as any A. C.?

JAMES B. CONNOLLY.

Hardy and the Nobel Prize

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

If I read the news correctly, the Nobel prize for literature was not awarded this year. I propose with your cooperation to enlist the interest of authors and of all other people who care for literature in a movement to urge upon the Board of Directors of the Nobel Foundation the fitness of awarding the prize for literature to the greatest living man of letters, Thomas Hardy. I tried two years ago to get the international P. E. N. Club to take some action to this end, but nothing came of my suggestion, and Mr. Galsworthy, the head of the English center, did not receive the idea with much enthusiasm. I wonder if writers in England and America, and in other countries too, would not find it a pleasant and dignified expression of respect, certainly not an impertinence, to recommend to the Swedish Committee that they increase the distinction of the honorable list of names of men of letters by adding that of Thomas Hardy. Nobody will object to the award of the prize to any worthy writer. But it seems a pity to omit the award altogether when such a genius as Hardy is still upon the earth. I felt this even more strongly in 1914 when there was no award (probably on account of the war), for then Joseph Conrad was alive, a supreme artist and one, moreover, with a unique claim to international recognition. Mr. Hardy is eighty-five years old and in the course of things is not long for this sad world, and he probably is far beyond any interest in the bauble prizes of life. The prize would add no honor to him, but his name would add lustre to the already brilliant list of twenty-four names. Will you open your correspondence columns to communications on this subject and see what response we get?

JOHN MACY.

Hastings-on-Hudson.

"Mary Wollstonecraft"

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

For going on four years I have been engaged in collecting and putting together the material for a book now nearing a London press. It is provisionally entitled: "Memoirs of Mary Wollstonecraft." Written by William Godwin and edited with a supplement chronologically arranged and containing hitherto unpublished or uncollected material and a bibliography of Mary's books by W. Clark Durant.

The first source to which I turned was of course *Notes and Queries*. In the seventies a gentleman residing in Hull informed its readers that in an unlikely book may be found, as examples of improvement in English composition, eleven letters written by my heroine from Beverley, Hull, and Bath, at an early and entirely undocumented period in her life.

The book is entitled: "English Exercises." By Jane Gardiner. Adapted to the "Young Ladies' Grammar" lately published by the same author. York. 1801.

I have searched by correspondence with libraries of any importance all over the United States and Great Britain. The closest I reached was at the British Museum where one may consult Jane's "Young Ladies' Grammar" (1799).

It only occurred to me recently that the field would be greatly extended were this appeal made to a multitude of individuals, any of whom might be a possible owner. So I shall state in closing that should any reader have a copy or cognizance of one's whereabouts he will earn my undying gratitude by communicating that priceless fact to the undersigned.

W. CLARK STEWART

State Hospital,
Middletown, Conn.