

sicians as in his conviction that periodic physical examinations do more harm than good, they are cause of anxiety and introspection while "ignorance is bliss"). He is little disposed to make rules for the conduct of life: the outcome, he holds, depends far more on constitution than regimen.

In his prevailing mood Doctor Clendening, genial and trenchant, reminds one of Holmes and Osler. Somewhat infrequently he is a bit cynical but presently he is found making amends. Thus on page 275 he gives a ghastly characterization of marriage but a little later he relents in admitting that there are at least occasional examples of companionship which transcend his analysis. The reader may incline to think that while we are well rid of the Victorian reticence concerning bodily processes we have lost too much the Victorian faith in human virtue.

The Stuff of Dreams

DREAMS. By DR. PERCY C. STILES. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1927. \$1.50.

Reviewed by JOSEPH JASTROW

DR. STILES explains that he is not a trained psychologist; he is one by temperament—a sufficient warrant for his most interesting contribution. It has the advantage of a representative collection gathered through thirty years, following the open road of induction, with no thesis to defend. The drawings accompanying the slight volume show that, since dreams are for the most part "visions," the pencil is as indispensable as the pen for their convincing record.

Prominent in the dream components are the sensory glimpses or momentary tableaux, in this case with an unusual frequency of a colored embellishment; transformations, like dissolving views, such as a pair of swimmers each in the center of his wave passing into the same persons seated in a chair, the crest of the wave forming the back of the chair; some analogy, both pictorial and verbal; and a sprinkling of symbolism. The stuff that common dreams are made of is homespun with no elaborate patterns—just reverberations of the lighter concerns of life, with a bit of the dramatic, the pictorial, the exaggerated, and an occasional flash of imagination or wit. Next to the seen is the moving—appearance enhanced by action, both as felt and seen. Odor is not absent; the auditory is not prominent, though sounds that awaken, in so doing are woven into the dream-plot.

Bodily states play a leading part and typically give room by way of projected disguise, in this instance peculiarly explicit because the dreamer is anatomically informed. It takes a doctor to transform intestinal distress into a multi-arched "subway," the dream side of "intestinal unrest" appears compositely in "an anxious mood, the threading of winding ways, the gas-jets, the lavatories, the hollow cornice derived from the sacculated colon, the rumbling notes proceeding from an invisible source." Troubled breathing transforms the diaphragm into an elevator of an entire floor of a room moving up and down, but embellished with a green carpet. A recent extraction of teeth becomes in dream version a picture of two dead birds. The mood following participation in a Christmas pageant—and feeling rather foolish—pictures the subject taking a bath in the Harvard Medical amphitheatre, the tiers occupied by spectators, and the episode labelled, "Humiliated." The agony of an actual carbuncle projects the dream doctor taking off his own head, shocked to discover a gangrenous area, while the thyroid drops to the floor.

But there is quite as much of the man as of the doctor, and the conclusions drawn reinforce the genetic interpretation of dreams. Dreaming is "reversion to childish modes of thought."

When the collection was begun the compiler was twenty-two years old. At fifty-two he seems to have gained nothing in prudence and sagacity. His mental age has remained for a generation at about ten or twelve. He has accumulated information in his waking experience which he can utilize when he dreams; but while facts have been stored, there is no corresponding growth in wisdom.

The emotional attitude of dreams is childish. There is a childish insistence and confidence, lack of consideration, heedlessness of consequences, recourse to deception, agitation about trifles, admirable reasoning on false or "bad" premises, exaggeration, and making excuses, with a prevailing mood of self-satisfaction. All this is consistent with the Freudian principle of reversion; but of Freud's sex

content and erotic direction and elaborate disguising subconscious symbolism, there is conspicuously little.

To sleep is to contract, to wake is to expand the sphere in which we live. To dream is to be committed to crass egotism and to sitting in the seat of the scornful. We wake to a broader vision, a more patient philosophy, a kindlier idealism; provided, as in the present instance, such is our matured nature.

On Wings of the Familiar

TRANSLATIONS FROM THE CHINESE. By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY. New York: Doubleday, Page & Company. 1927. \$2.50.

Reviewed by LEONARD BACON

IF Mr. Morley had never done anything other than "Translations from the Chinese" he would still be a notable figure. These gay things which, like the White Knight's devices, are very much his own invention, give him room and verge enough for the exercise of his particular talent. It is delightful to have the whole shooting match in one volume (the constituent parts have heretofore been scattered through four little books). One reader at least is glad to see the recognition which these happy performances seem to be attaining. For Mr. Morley's forte is this sort of business. No one passes "from the sublime to the ridiculous and back again" with greater elegance. And the reader must be obtuse indeed who looks on this book as a collection of quips and cranks.

For there is more brain and more beauty in this book than in a dozen vasty performances which blind without dazzling the eyes of this generation. But the literary crowd will read it and think it slight because it is short. Our contemporaries will be known to the twenty-third century as the men who never were comfortable except when their women had sewn pillows to all arm-holes. They want their padding.

Mr. Morley reminds me of the California water-ousel, once described eloquently by the late John Muir. The creature flies impudently before the fisherman from pool to pool. Suddenly it dives in the deep stream or through the very cataract. It is equally at home in either world, and each must seem to it at once familiar and strange. Mr. Morley has two such worlds. The nice part of it is that he can show us both with exquisite grace. Few poets restore more generously the mystery that our own clumsy hands have rubbed from the butterfly wings of the familiar.

The book is charmingly illustrated with humorous drawings by Gluyas Williams.

Casehardened Men

TOMBSTONE. By WALTER NOBLE BURNS. New York: Doubleday, Page & Company. 1927. \$2.50.

Reviewed by BERNARD DE VOTO

THE beginning: "'Don't mess up the place,' said Shorwell, 'take him outside and kill him.'" That was 1878. The end: "Mrs. William Lutley entertained at bridge last evening." That was 1926. Mr. Burns is clearly saddened by the degradation. The biographer of Billy the Kid, he turns, in "Tombstone," from the thorough-going but small scale slaughter of the Lincoln County War to a community that dealt in toughness wholesale and when it started an atrocity wasn't content short of perfection. Mr. Burns declares that Tombstone was not only Hangtown and the elder San Francisco, but also Virginia City, Alder Gulch, Poker Flat, Deadwood, Hays City, Abilene, and Dodge City as well—all in one. The claim is as formidable as it is comprehensive. I file a demurrer.

Mr. Burns does, however, display before us, in support of his claim, what is certainly the largest cast of bad characters yet produced by the current revival of Western Americana. His book is packed with good yarns about casehardened men. It presents to us, for the first time, the unique folkways of Tombstone. Tombstone, understand, was hard-boiled, but it was also refined. You might patronize the arts there or observe what was being worn in Paris, and the barkeep who fumbled a pousse-café was shipped back to the less exacting standards of New York. It existed, however, to a continuous barrage of revolvershots, and continuous ridings to and from robberies of every recognized sort. (The shots were not purely of the hand-gun kind: Mr. Burns is almost alone of modern chroniclers in recognizing that the West preferred rifles and scatterguns for really heartfelt shooting.) Grade A certi-

fied bad men move across the screen so rapidly and in such masses that the effect is a little blurred. Everyone is shooting everyone else and no one's heart is pure, except for Slaughter's and the Earps's. A few do stand out: Curly Bill, the perennial outlaw, who was finally shot, and may or may not have been killed by Wyatt Earp; John Ringo, who was Bill's colleague and whose end was strange: the Clantons and Buckskin Frank, also of Bill's staff: the Earps, who finally blotted out Bill's organization: Doc Holliday, their associate, who was too thin to be shot: and John Slaughter, who brought order to Tombstone. But the rest are hardly distinguishable, very bad customers, whose badness was quantitative, who did away with some dozen or sixteen before breakfast, Mexican or white. That is, if Mexicans count.

In the portraits of Wyatt Earp and John Slaughter, Mr. Burns does his best work. His account of the former, in fact, easily ranks with his portrait of Billy the Kid, which raises it far out of the ruck of these new Western psychographs. It is a cunningly rendered study, an accomplishment of first-rate importance. Wyatt Earp emerges as the type specimen of gunfighters, coldly but magnificently courageous, temperamentally opposed to outlawry, swiftly intelligent, patient, crafty, resourceful. There is much realistic interpretation of the frontier in Mr. Burns's study of him and of John Slaughter. He would have been well advised if he had kept his book always in that key. Unfortunately, however, he sometimes writes dialogue that might be lifted entire from the "Cowboy Tales" nonsense that is ground out by mild bohemians in Chelsea. Then, too, rhetoric comes upon him and we read, too often, how "his black eyes gleamed like those of an ambushed panther that suddenly on a slant of wind scents prey."

Tombstone, in Mr. Burns's pages, has a satisfying glamour. My demurrer, however, requires me to point out the camp's contamination by small-town bullies from the South, who got their start shooting negroes in the canebrakes. That is why it was not Virginia City or Alder Gulch. There was murder at those less refined places, to be sure, and robbery and even massacre, and a duello after cards or liquor was the affair of no one but the principals. But bad men were not tolerated there—professional hard guys who carved notches in their gun-stocks and swaggered about being rude to the citizenry. When any such tried to show his wares he was spanked and his gun was taken away from him. If he procured another one, he observed the next sunrise from the limb of a tree. The West, as distinguished from the Southwest, wore its pants tucked in and did not admire swashbucklers.

Imperialism

THE WHITE MAN'S DILEMMA. By NATHANIEL PEPPER. New York: The John Day Company. 1927. \$2.50.

Reviewed by HENRY KITTREDGE NORTON

WE are fallen upon evil times. The White Man in his globe-circling career has reached the climax of the age of imperialism and can neither go on nor draw back without losses too heavy to bear. Without continued control over the lands of the colored races we cannot obtain the raw materials which are the source of our high standard of life: that control can only be continued at an expense of more money and lives than the raw materials are worth.

That is the white man's dilemma as Mr. Pepper sees it. He is distressed about it. He is distressed that others, especially our statesmen, business men, and so-called experts, do not see it as he does. "Practical men," he fears, have not the "common sense" to face the realities of life. Here is a huge, menacing reality and they do not even see it. The white race has a bear by the tail; it can neither hold on nor let go—and it doesn't even know it! Here is the raw material of tragedy and Mr. Pepper, with a sarcasm the brilliancy of which excels even his own previous efforts, insists upon calling it to our attention.

The author disclaims any desire to discuss the moral aspects of imperialism. He says it would make no difference. Even if the imperialistic nations could be convinced of the immorality of their domination over the lesser peoples, it would not end their imperialism. They would go right on in the old way as regardless of morals as they are of consequences.

Chinese, if the foreign settlements were turned over to them, would allow them to go to pot. If the British withdrew from India, the native races would spend their time and energy in trying to kill each other off. And so on through the list.

But, says Mr. Pfeffer, these native peoples have made up their minds to have their freedom and they are going to get it whether they deserve it or not unless the white man exerts himself much more strenuously to keep them in subjection than he has heretofore. Mr. Pfeffer, one would think, rather expects that the additional effort will be made and he sees no good to come therefrom.

Like the Jeremiahs of all ages, Mr. Pfeffer is inclined to see all of the evil and magnify it to such an extent that there is no room left for optimism. To do this it is usually necessary to omit essential facts in any given situation and occasionally the momentum of the thought forces an actual falsification. But this is an accepted part of the Jeremian technique and due allowance will be made for it by the intelligent reader. The very hopelessness of the picture as it is here painted would lead even the unintelligent reader of average buoyant spirits to doubt whether it is complete.

Looked at in the large, the process of imperialism is hardly so novel a thing as Mr. Pfeffer makes it. He treats it as something which began "in the middle of the last century." But in one form or another and under one name or another, the history of imperialism is the history of the world. All through the ages the peoples who have learned coöperation and organization have extended their sway over their more ineffective neighbors. In some cases these neighbors have been assimilated and in others they have been inspired by their very subjection to work out a national regeneration which has brought them independence again. The process as it goes on in our own day under the name of imperialism is not different in its social implications. Much of the brutality has been eliminated. Subject populations, instead of being reduced to slavery, are given an opportunity to secure larger returns for their labor than ever before. The border-lines of civilization, shaped by the times, are gradually extended. Political problems somehow find their solution and the world goes on developing, probably growing no worse in the process. One can despair, or one can be optimistic. Mr. Pfeffer chooses to despair.

Despite his avoidance of the moral issue; despite his resignation in the face of the hard-heartedness and stupidity of the white leaders, despite even his statement that "it would be presumptuous to offer instruction and advice," he cannot quite stultify himself. Almost by a slip of the pen he discloses that he really has the solution. It is as he says a "counsel of perfection," but there it is for those who would profit by it. "If there were ten real statesmen at the helm of the governments in the principal countries of Europe and in the United States, if among the financial and industrial potentates of those countries there were ten men who could see beyond the year's balance-sheet, then there might be compromise." This compromise Mr. Pfeffer would prescribe in advance. He would find out what the subject nations "demand or are likely to demand" and then give them a little more.

There is the solution in a nutshell. We have but to await the arrival of the enlightened ten.

In Vienna, according to the *Paris Peuple*, there has just been launched a weekly paper whose contributors will be paid by the readers and not by the management. The name and address of the writer of every article and every story will be printed, together with his contribution, and all the readers of those articles or stories are "left free to send to the individual contributors whatever sums they judge an appropriate reward" for the said contribution. (If the readers do not wish to reward the writers direct they may send their donations straight to the management of the paper, which has generously offered to distribute the result, free of any commission, to the contributors concerned.) The arrangement so far as the readers are concerned seems to be permissive: there is no stipulation that, having read the magazine, they must send something to somebody. The contributors, on the other hand, are less free; it is laid down that with every contribution they must send three shillings to the management, a trifling expense which, it is pointed out, will in the aggregate meet the cost of producing the paper, and which is certain to be more than returned to the contributor by the handsome gifts which he will receive from his readers.

The Play of the Week

By OLIVER M. SAYLER

THE PLOUGH AND THE STARS, a Tragedy in Four Acts. By SEAN O'CASEY. Produced by the Irish Players for George C. Tyler at the Hudson Theatre, New York, November 28, 1927. New York: The Macmillan Co.

Reviewed from Performance and Published Manuscript

ONE of the most difficult tasks the theatre confronts in making dramatic literature oral and visual, in completing and fulfilling its latent promise as drama, is to bring to plausible life on the stage scenes of confusion and combat. Ever since Schiller marshalled the hosts of Wallenstein in his great trilogy, ever since Shakespeare set the legions of Roman civil strife chasing each other over the battlefield of Philippi in "Julius Caesar," ever since Aristophanes sent the old men of Athens to a scalding bath at the hands of Lysistrata's conspirators on the Acropolis, the theatre's resources for giving plausibility and illusion to mass action in cross-section and microcosm have been strained to the breaking point. To this illusive and elusive end, the Greek stage invented and the Greek populace accepted conventions of which we have scant record. The Elizabethans, likewise, were content with symbolic stimuli to the imagination—a handful of soldiers with property swords serving as proxy for untold armies locked in mortal strife. In our own day, the two distinct and characteristic species of dramatic utterance—realism and expressionism—have shared the common trait of utilizing to the utmost the physical and mechanical as well as the human instruments of the theatre: the former, as in the Moscow Art Theatre's production of "The Family of Tiurbin," for the sake of the representative illusion of life; the latter, as in Capek's "R. U. R.," Toller's "Man and the Masses," and Kaiser's "Gas," for the sake of the suggestive illusion of significant unreality.

Overstimulated by this craze for meticulous detail and yet never satisfied with what is at best an approximation, it is with relief akin to that of escape from the pompous rigmarole of city traffic into open country that we encounter the bland indifference to the demands of external illusion displayed by the Irish Players in their production of Sean O'Casey's "The Plough and the Stars." Paradoxically enough, the Irish gain this tranquil effect of wide spaces in the process of interpreting a series of high-strung scenes set not only in the streets and tenements of Dublin but in those streets and tenements as transformed into a shambles during the Easter Rebellion in 1916. This paradox resolves itself, however, the moment we stop to realize that in effectually reverting to the physical simplicity of the Elizabethans, these actors free themselves for the undisturbed pursuit of their true and natural task—acting.

In citing this paradox and its effect, I am not making excuses for a shabby, resourceless, and indigent scenic investiture for O'Casey's play. I realize full well that a masterly and prodigal regisseur could provide it with a nervous atmosphere of reality, drumming incessantly on all the senses. But I beg to doubt whether such an elaborate and provocative production could appeal so directly, so poignantly, to the emotions, especially if it sought to replace and conceal indifferent acting. I even suspect that superlative acting might be blurred and swamped by such a production. In other words, we have here an eloquent exhibit for the plaintiff in the immemorial case of the actor vs. stage settings.

In any event, the production of "The Plough and the Stars" by Arthur Sinclair and his associates is quite in keeping with the best traditions of Dublin's Abbey Theatre, from which they emerged to independent life some years ago. This group, fully entitled to the term, "Irish Players," since six of the leading members of the present company came to us direct from the Abbey on one or two previous visits, and two of them on both occasions, clings to both of the major tenets of the parent stage: the production of plays of sound literary merit dealing with Irish life and character, and their interpretation by means of naively simple, earnest, sincere acting. The Abbey never rocked the boat of its budget for the sake of stage settings.

In reading "The Plough and the Stars," it is evident that O'Casey, too, honors these traditions. In this wise, dauntless, and human play that is both

Nor is the author pleading here for the rights of the subject peoples. He readily concedes that left to themselves they will make a mess of things. The

comedy and tragedy, sometimes alternately, sometimes simultaneously, he has written, not for stage directors, scenic designers, electricians, or property men, but for actors. Beginning with that casual but ominous scene in the Clitheroes's parlor, on through the eccentric but increasingly intense dissensions in the public house adjoining the rostrum on the eve of revolution, through the snatches of fear, despair, and elation over plunder from stove-in shop windows after the storm breaks, to the bitter and tragic ironies of rebellion's ebb-tide, he has written winged words that live trebly when spoken, words that sublimate the mood of turmoil without the need of its physical counterpart. If it were not a matter of record that younger novices created these rôles at the première in Dublin, one might almost feel that, as Chekov did in Moscow, he had written for these particular players: for the comic genius of Arthur Sinclair, who knows as well as any man living how to bring a thought to birth on his face; for the volatile passions of Maire O'Neill; for the legendary dignity of Sara Allgood; for the suspicious irascibility of J. A. O'Rourke; and for the blunt geniality of Sydney Morgan—to name only those most familiar to us.

For those who would amplify a visit to the Irish Players by more than a reading of "The Plough and the Stars," recent books contain no more illuminating glimpses of Dublin's Abbey and her dramatists than Padraic Colum's "The Road Round Ireland." All that Colum says about O'Casey as author of "Juno and the Paycock" applies with even greater point and force to him as author of "The Plough and the Stars." This episodic but cumulatively powerful drama of the metropolis does for the city worker and his tenements what Synge did for the peasant, his fields, his glens, and his roadsides. Both Synge and O'Casey have an instinctive ear for transcribing and crystallizing human speech, though the imagery of O'Casey's proletarians is necessarily cruder and less poetic than that of Synge's farmers and beggars. At one point, however, O'Casey all but merges with his great progenitor, for the reverberating periods of his drunken, voluble, but whole-souled fruit-vendor, Bessie Burgess, might have been written by Synge himself—a fact which is not so strange when we pause to realize that the fountain source of her speech is the same as that of the denizens of Synge's thatched cottages, the ritual of the church.

(Next week Mr. Sayler will review Noel Coward's "Marquise" and "Fallen Angels.")

Swirling Currents

BLACK STREAM. By NATHALIE SEDGWICK COLBY. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company. 1927. \$2.50.

Reviewed by ALLAN NEVINS

IN the black stream of business cares, petty professional vexations, and hectic social duties, Mrs. Colby's characters plunge, struggle, reappear, and are lost. The swift tempo of her novel and her rapid, staccato, incisive style suit perfectly her theme. It is not a novel in which the moral is needlessly labored; Mrs. Colby is too shrewd a craftsman for that. But as each of her characters comes to some tragic frustration, the deadlines of the black stream, the folly of those who seek its deepest waters, are heavily emphasized.

With only one of these characters is the tragedy placed on any high moral level. Out of the mass of hurried, petty, febrile New Yorkers, people with money and social ambitions, who dance through the pages, just one heroic figure disengages himself. This is Dr. Farraday, striving hopelessly to carry on scientific research of value in the intervals of almost incessant demands upon his professional attention by neurotic women. After long hours in his office, earning money to enable his wife to make a splurge and his daughter to set her cap for a distinguished foreigner, he retires into a laboratory built at the rear of the house; and here he and his assistant, Miss Mapes, who is hated by wife and daughter, pursue some discovery which always eludes them. Across the street is Jim Brazee, Wall Street speculator, with another spendthrift wife, and a daughter who is reckless of money and virtue alike. The two families find their fortunes unexpectedly interwoven. In the few days covered by Mrs. Colby's novel there occur a fashionable debut, a secret marriage, a business catastrophe, a suicide, a breakdown in health, and any amount of loving and fighting. The curtain goes down upon Jim Brazee slain by his own hand, Dr. Farraday's son married