

Foreign Literature

Boswell in Swedish

JAMES BOSWELL. SAMUEL JOHNSON'S Liv. Till Svenska, med Bibliografi, Inledning, Anmärkningar, och Register, av HARALD HEYMAN, fil. D:R. I FEM DELAR, med talrika Illustrationer. Första Delen: 1709-1753. Stockholm: Albert Bonniers Förlag. 1926.

Reviewed by FREDERICK A. POTTLE

... me peritus denum
Disce Iber, Rhodanique potor.

ONE wonders whether Boswell would be more pleased or vexed to learn that his "Life of Johnson" is now, one hundred and thirty-five years after its publication, appearing in its first complete translation into any foreign tongue. Neither he nor the Doctor hesitated to avow a peculiar delight in international fame. Indeed, Johnson on few occasions showed himself so softened as when he exulted in the false report that "The Rambler" was about to appear in Russian. "O! Gentlemen, I must tell you a very great thing. The Empress of Russia has ordered 'The Rambler' to be translated into the Russian language: so I shall be read on the banks of the Wolga! . . ." Boswell: "You must certainly be pleased with this, Sir." Johnson: "I am pleased, Sir, to be sure." And as for Boswell, he must have looked for the speedy dissemination of his masterpiece to the banks of the Wolga and beyond. He swelled with pride over the Irish piracies of his "Account of Corsica," and complacently recorded the fact that that work had been translated into German, Dutch, and twice into French. He thought well, of course, of "An Account of Corsica," but he was well aware that the "Life" was much greater. "Yes," he says, "I have Johnsonised the land." How has it happened that he has so signally failed to Johnsonise Europe? Dr. Hill thought it was simply because Johnson was "so English that foreigners could neither understand him nor relish his 'Life,'" which may be an adequate explanation, though it seems somewhat too simple. The fact remains that, of all undisputed English masterpieces of the first rank, Boswell's "Life of Johnson" is perhaps the least known abroad.

Yet Boswell has always had a secure European reputation; not, to be sure, as the great biographer, but as a minor historian whose work on Corsica still possesses independent value. "An Account of Corsica," published in February, 1768, was at once made accessible in German, Dutch, French, and Italian. Anton Klausning, professor at Leipzig, made a German translation which ran through four editions. Hieronymus Mertens, a pedagogue of Augsburg, followed with a German abridgment. Seigneux de Correvon, councillor of Lausanne, with the help of a mysterious "Madame * * *" turned the "Account" into French, his work appearing simultaneously with another French translation by J. P. I. Dubois, secretary to the Polish ambassador at the Hague. The Italian and Dutch translators have not as yet been identified.

Boswell's first great Johnsonian work, the "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides," was well translated into German in 1787 by Albrecht Wittemberg, a *littérateur* of Hamburg. The translation seems to have been utterly neglected; at any rate, it has never been reprinted. Ten years later a German bluestocking named Dorothea Margarethe Liebeskind, after considerable success in translating English Gothic romances, made the second attempt to Johnsonise Germany, by bringing out the first volume of an abridgment of the "Life," the whole to be complete in three volumes. Germany showed no enthusiasm for the Doctor, and the work was never completed. The only other attempt to present the "Life" to foreign readers was made in 1851, when Aleksandr Druzhinin, Russian critic and fanatic admirer of the literature of Tory England, brought out in Russian a work entitled "Johnson and Boswell," in which he paraphrased considerable portions of the "Life" and the "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides."

Boswell, we are pleased to remember, was interested in Sweden. "A History of Sweden" stands third in that extraordinary list of thirty works which he projected but never executed. In 1772 he asked Dr. Johnson whether he might venture to "write a history of Sweden, without going thither." Johnson thought he might, at least "one for ordinary use." The next

year when he and the Doctor were in the Isle of Skye they actually elaborated a plan of "going up the Baltick and visiting some of the more northern regions"—perhaps to get materials for the history. How barely we may have missed having "The Journal of a Tour up the Baltick with Samuel Johnson, LL.D.!"

Dr. Heyman's work shows clearly that he has felt the responsibility of his position. His Boswell is not a cheap and careless abridgment, but a monumental work of painstaking scholarship, with which only one English edition—Hill's—deserves comparison. This first volume (360 pages plus nearly 200 of introduction) brings the "Life" down only to 1753. There will be four more volumes; five, if the "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides" is included. But the work is by no means intended for the scholar alone. Dr. Heyman has tried to make it attractive to the ordinary Swedish reader as well, and has succeeded better than one would have supposed possible. His translation combines the essential principles of two editions so widely different as Hill's, the definitive scholarly edition, and Ingpen's, the most lavishly illustrated. The text is Hill's, and the notes in general have been selected from his, though the peculiar needs of the Swedish reader have naturally been kept foremost in mind. The text, however, is broken into chapters as in Ingpen's edition, and all Ingpen's illustrations are reproduced. Boswell's own notes and a few from Malone's editions are left as footnotes; the editors are collected at the ends of the chapters. It is a remarkable testimonial to the taste and intelligence of the Swedish nation and the character of its publishers that such an elaborate and expensive work can be launched as an ordinary commercial enterprise.

Dr. Heyman has prefaced this volume with nearly two hundred pages of introductory matter. A bibliographical section presents a fuller list of works in Johnsonian scholarship than any single work in English. A preface discusses the problem of presenting Johnson to a non-English-speaking public, and a long essay, "Samuel Johnson och James Boswell" attempts to evaluate Boswell's book and its hero for a Swedish reader. There is a separate index of thirty-seven pages, modeled on Hill's, and comparable with it for fulness.

Confession

BEKENNTNISSE DES HOCHSTAPLERS
FELIX KRULL: Buch der Kindheit.
VON THOMAS MANN. Leipzig: Deutsche
Verlags Anstalt. 1927.

Reviewed by PIERRE LOVING

WITH "The Magic Mountain" Thomas Mann, it is conceivable, may have reached the summit of his method: this beautifully flowing and rounded book represents perhaps the *ne plus ultra* of his gifts and his ripe knowledge and whither he will go from now on, it is difficult to foretell. This classically resourceful writer who uses the German language with a full sense of its deep inherited values, playing with rare virtuosity on all its stops, was indeed predestined—if nothing untoward intervened to cut short his ascent—to achieve his clear goal. For at the outset, it is evident, he set his eyes on attaining certain ends, and these ends were for the most part conscious and quite realizable. And he now may claim the happy distinction of having done all that he could do with his medium and with the "correspondences"—to use a favorite expression of Baudelaire's—of that medium within his own interior world. This, it may be, is the enviable fate of the writer who is born fully aware of both his talent and his limitations. And he is bound, if persists long enough, to find himself and so to skirt all disrupting surprises.

This, moreover, is apt to be the fate of the writer who starts out, as Mann did, with a smooth finished style. We know that Mann spent incisive years perfecting that almost faultless style: he tells us as much, vicariously, through a number of his characters who are either scholars or writers or both. But—without attempting paradox—the flaw in the perfect writer's prose may be exactly this *summum bonum* of perfection. "Style" is something fixed and limited in which, it goes without saying, only the fixed, constrained and limited things can best be uttered.

In the work of Thomas Mann, accordingly, "style" is a very definite thing: it is, in a word, the inherited resources and music of German prose. There are few, very few vagaries in this fluent prose, few adventures and rencounters beyond pure felicity. I sometimes think that Melville and Hardy, Keats and Blake, Hölderlin and Rimbaud, were blessed beyond words by the high anthropomorphics precisely in that they were not vouchsafed this solemn perfection.

In these confessions of a speculator in European high finance (Mann has only gotten as far as the young man's seventeenth or eighteenth year) we easily note the flagrant imperfections in this exquisite style of Thomas Mann's. At the outset we are asked, for example, to accept these personal confessions of a middle-class youth with no literary discipline and education (save the meagre alibi that his father had once lived in Paris and he may have inherited Latin form that way) as the authentic expression, the very living voice and accent, of a crude speculator. The accent, however, is not at all credible; the exquisite prose style of Thomas Mann stands solidly with its long flowing robes between the reader and the character who is speaking.

By the careful and exact choice of words, the middle-class German who is here making his *confiteor* attests to a remarkable sensitivity which his actions and the tenor of his thoughts subsequently belie. Is it possible, we may well ask, for a man thus unschooled to clothe his thoughts—apart from the liquid music of which I have already spoken—in language which only an inheritor of the long usufruct of European prose like Thomas Mann could reasonably employ? If a writer possesses a superb style, rather than a superb instrument, his subjects, as we see, are apt to be considerably restricted, and the reader, no matter how indulgent, will find it enormously hard to swallow the convention.

I find it hard to explain why Mann fails in Felix Krull's first love affair with the servant Genoveva. As I have said, the language is choice and flowing, the rhythm is highly pleasing. But we are asked once more to admit the convention that a man who commands such harmonies of language, capable of such infinite variety and subtlety, could dismiss his introduction to fleshly love as a thing of no moment. Felix Krull contents himself with saying (but is it not the author speaking here?) that others have described this sort of thing and, as for him, he has no appetite for dwelling on this "materia." Well, well—the mellifluous and absurd adulteries of Mr. Hergesheimer must wring their hands in the outer void at such brutal indifference.

G. K. CHESTERTON'S

first novel in
several years

The Return of Don Quixote

A modern Don Quixote tilts
a humorous, well-aimed lance
at some conventional wind-
mills of realism. "A great
book in the truly Chester-
tonian style."

—Philadelphia
Public Ledger.



\$2.00
DODD
MEAD

But Yesterday



A deeply moving story of
the influence of a strong
personality over several
people with whom he
comes in contact. A
novel of penetrating char-
acter study, set in Eng-
land of today, and light-
ened by a touch of youth-
ful romance. \$2.50

By the author of "Captain Desmond, V.C." etc.

MAUD DIVER

ROWFOREST

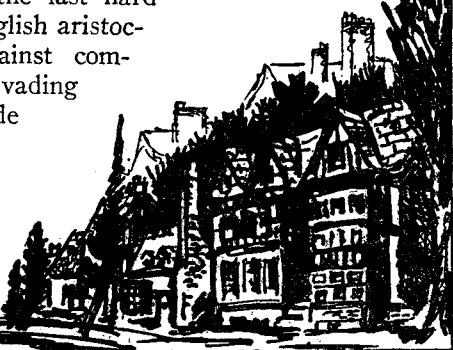
By ANTHONY PRYDE

Author of "Marquerry's Duel," etc.

The story of Tom Cesil, last of the
owners of the great estates known
as "Rowforest." A romance of
a dying era . . . the last hard
struggle of the English aristoc-
racy to stand against com-
mercialism and invading
hordes of self-made
millionaires.

\$2.00

At Booksellers
DODD, MEAD



THAT ISLAND

By

ARCHIBALD MARSHALL

Author of "The Allbrights"

The deliciously amusing
experiences of an Eng-
lish family, their ser-
vants and a sailor, who
escape from shipwreck
to a tropical island, where
they attempt to set up an
England all their own.

\$2.00

DODD
MEAD

DODD, MEAD & COMPANY, 449 Fourth Avenue, New York 215 Victoria Street, Toronto

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.

Belles Lettres

- DANTE. By John Jay Chapman. Houghton Mifflin. \$2.50.
 THE THEATRE IN LIFE. By Nicolas Evreinoff. Brentano's. \$3.50.
 LISZT, WAGNER, AND THE PRINCESS. By William Wallace. Dutton. \$5.
 THE TOMB OF TUT-ANKH-AMEN. By Howard Carter. Vol. 2. Doran. \$5.
 LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN'S PIANOFORTE SONATAS. By William Behrend. Dutton. \$2.50.
 NEW ESSAYS ON AMERICAN IMPRESSIONS. By Alfred Noyes. Holt. \$2.50.
 LOEB CLASSICAL LIBRARY. Cicero, Translated by J. E. King; Hippocrates, Translated by E. T. Wittington, Volume III; Polybius, Translated by W. R. Paton, Vols. V and VI. Edited by E. Capps, T. H. Page and W. H. D. Rouse. Putnams.
 SHAKESPEARE STUDIES. By Elmer Edgar Stoll. Macmillan. \$4.
 1001 AFTERNOONS IN CHICAGO. By Ben Hecht. \$2.50.
 A HISTORY OF RUSSIAN LITERATURE. By Prince D. S. Mirsky. Knopf. \$4.

SECRETS OF THE WHITE HOUSE. By ELIZABETH JAFFRAY. Cosmopolitan Book Corporation. 1926. \$2.50.

WHITE HOUSE GOSSIP. By EDNA M. COLMAN. Doubleday, Page. 1927. \$5.
 "Gossip" better fits the first of these books than the one which has the name in its title. This is no reflection upon the accuracy of the statements and stories set forth by Mrs. Jaffray, who was Presidential housekeeper for seventeen years, from Taft's inauguration through the Wilson and Harding administrations and a year of the term now being served by Coolidge. Miss Colman's volume follows her "Seventy-five Years of White House Gossip" and covers the period from Johnson to the present. It is dignified and political rather than informal and personal, although it has many personal touches. Two quotations relating to President Coolidge will show the difference in tone between these books. Referring to the President's dry humor Miss Colman writes: "At one of the informal gatherings, a woman, desiring to impress herself upon his mind, remarked airily, 'Mr. President, I'm from Boston!' With that twinkle that is so ready to show itself, he remarked instantly, 'You'll never get over it!'" Mrs. Jaffray was struck with another Coolidge trait: "The White House is run in the most economical way possible and the actual White House expenses of President Coolidge during the past four years have averaged less than \$1,000 a month. I think it is quite safe to say that President Coolidge has been able to save \$50,000 a year during all the time he has been in the White House."

Dress, menus, personal characteristics including foibles—these are the things that interest Mrs. Jaffray and no doubt will delight—or shock—her readers. Among the "secrets" she reveals are President Wilson's indifference to food and clothes, President Harding's insistence upon having toothpicks on the dining room table, President Coolidge's pair of indulgences—an afternoon nap and cigars—and the exact amount of wines and liquors served at a certain state dinner. Dealing with a much longer period than that surveyed by Mrs. Jaffray, Miss Colman presents personages and customs of a vanished era as well as some of those of our own time. Her attention to dates and important events gives her chapters a historical character, while her use of more personal material imparts color and life to her pages.

ROOSEVELT AS WE KNEW HIM. By FREDERICK S. WOOD. Winston. 1927. \$3.50.

In this volume are assembled the recollections of one hundred and fifty of the late Theodore Roosevelt's friends, many of them his associates at one stage or another of his career. They are partly appreciative, partly analytical, partly anecdotal. The interest of such a book needs no stressing. The material is arranged chronologically with reference to Roosevelt's life. Among the contributors are Major George Haven Putnam, Charles W. Eliot, William Howard Taft, Brander Matthews, Alton B. Parker, Admiral Sims, Oscar S. Straus, General Pershing, and a number of newspaper men. The stories show the Colonel in characteristic fashion, recalling his vivacity, his range of interests, his insistence upon efficiency, his love of the human aspect of things, his humor. If the laudation voiced by some of the contributors goes to extremes, they unconsciously supply a corrective in some of the stories they tell. The secretary

of Roosevelt's class at Harvard is guilty of an exhibition of bad taste in the remark: "I am glad Roosevelt died while strong and vigorous, and that he did not have to 'survive himself,' as perhaps in some measure Woodrow Wilson did." On the whole, however, the volume is an excellent piece of work.

- WASHINGTON. By Joseph Dillaway Sawyer. Macmillan. 2 vols. \$20.
 AMERICAN MASTERS OF SOCIAL SCIENCE. Edited by Howard W. Odum. Holt. \$4.50.
 BARNUM'S OWN STORY. The Autobiography of P. T. Barnum. Viking Press. \$3.
 THE EVOLUTION OF CHARLES DARWIN. By George A. Dorsey. Doubleday, Page. \$2.
 FROM SERFDOM TO BOLSHIEVISM. The Memoirs of Baron N. Wrangel. Lippincott. \$4.
 RIATA AND SPURS. By Charles A. Siringo. Houghton Mifflin. \$3.
 POLONAISE. The Life of Chopin. By Guy De Pourtales. Holt.
 LORD BIRKENHEAD. By Ephesian. Doran. \$4.
 MARCEL PROUST, HIS LIFE AND WORK. By Léon Pierre Quint. Knopf. \$3.50.

Drama

THE SECOND MAN. By S. N. BEHRMAN. Doubleday, Page. 1927.

This comedy in three acts opened at the Guild Theatre on April 11th last, Lynn Fontanne, Alfred Lunt, and Margalo Gillmore taking the principal parts. The production was directed by Philip Moeller. The play is crisply modern with a number of amusing lines. It centres about a rather blasé writer who evidently possesses considerable personal charm, inasmuch as a Mrs. Kendall Frayne (looking somewhat like Sargent's "Madame X") and a delightful flapper, Monica Grey, are both in love with him. The character drawing throughout is convincing. The main idea of the play, which gives it its title, is drawn from a quotation from a letter of Lord Leighton's where he said,

... For, together with, and as it were behind, so much pleasurable emotion, there is always that other strange second man in me, calm, critical, observant, unmoved, blasé, odious.

Certainly there is, by his own admission, such an individual in the character of Clark Storey, who may be called the hero—or villain—of the piece, as you will. Yet doubts arise, considerable doubts, as to this being the most important feature of the play. To this reviewer (who has not seen the actual performance on the stage) the merit of the production would seem to consist in the suavely amusing comedy of manners it presents. Nowhere is the dialogue brilliant, but it is a little more than competent, and the portrait of the undisciplined and endearing Monica Grey is particularly diverting. The scene between Storey and Lowe, when the latter is about to take his (Storey's) life is excellently imagined. A creditable comedy altogether, a neat transcript from what might well be actual life.

- MODERN ENGLISH PLAYWRIGHTS. By John W. Cunliffe. Harper. \$3.
 MARCO MILLIONS. By Eugene O'Neill. Boni & Liveright. \$2.50.
 MORE ONE-ACT PLAYS. Edited by Helen Louise Cohen. Harcourt, Brace. \$2.25.

Economics

THE ECONOMIC THEORY OF THE LEISURE CLASS. By Nikolai Bukharin. International Publishers. \$2.50.

Education

- THE ROMANCE OF WORDS. By Ernest Weekley. Dutton. \$2.
 THE SMALL JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL. By Francis T. Spaulding. Harvard University Press. \$2.50.
 HISTORY OF SOCIALIST THOUGHT. By Harry W. Laidler. Crowell. \$3.50.
 THE CALCULUS OF VARIANTS. By W. W. Greg. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
 CLASSICAL MYTHS THAT LIVE TODAY. By Frances E. Sabin. Silver, Burdett. \$1.92.
 BREAD LOAF TALKS ON TEACHING COMPOSITION. By Alfred M. Hitchcock. Holt.
 STUDY PLANS FOR NOVELS READ IN HIGH SCHOOLS. By Alfred M. Hitchcock. Holt.
 UNIVERSAL KNOWLEDGE. Edited by Edward A. Pace, Thomas J. Shahan, Conde B. Pallen, James J. Walsh, John J. Wynne and numerous collaborators. Twelve Volumes. Volume II. New York: Universal Knowledge Foundation, Inc.

(Continued on next page)



Wake up Merle!

There's something new in the air
 No, it's not the Happiness Boys, Merle,
 so stop your cheap talk I've been
 a different person ever since I tried it.

All my friends grin now when the waiter talks to me in French. My reading problem is solved. I was the Early Bird of America and discovered on the lawn of Spring books, my one salvation, fat and juicy

The EARLY WORM

By ROBERT BENCHLEY

Illustrated by Gluyas Williams



The funniest of all possible books by the author of "Love Conquers All," "Of All Things" and "Pluck and Luck."

Be an early bird and enjoy this book. Learn about the "Decline of Sex." Read the lousy ghost story Uncle Edith told Peterkin and Black Beauty's (a horse's) account of how to make a night club out of the ice box on the back porch—selah.



And find out the truth about what college did to the author. You cannot do without this adjunct to the American Home. No, Merle, it's not a five foot bookshelf You can buy it, God bless you, at any bookstore for \$2.00.

HENRY HOLT & CO.,

One Park Ave.,

NEW YORK

D. Appleton and Company Announce

EDITH WHARTON'S

new novel of the fashionable
 world of today

Twilight Sleep

A tense and haunting story, brilliantly told—a novel
 worthy to rank with "The Age of Innocence."

\$2.50 at Booksellers

This is an Appleton Book

The story of
 Saint Genevieve
 of Paris and Nanterre

SAINT IN IVORY

By LORINE PRUETTE

With true art Miss Pruette has breathed life into legends surrounding the patron saint of Paris and there emerges the living portrait of an extraordinary woman whose life was filled with adventure and daring. An enchanting novel of great vigor and beauty.

\$2.50 This is an Appleton Book

Send 50c for a year's subscription to our illustrated Monthly Guide to New Books.

D. APPLETON AND COMPANY

George Eliot and Her Times

By ELIZABETH S. HALDANE

A brilliant study of the life and works of the great novelist. "A wonderful portrait."—*The Spectator*. Illustrated.

\$3.50 This is an Appleton Book

Hurdy-Gurdy on Olympus

By BERTON BRALEY

A collection of the choicest verse written by this popular American artist during the last eight years. \$2.00

35 West 32d Street, NEW YORK