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WE have received from Mallow Marsh, Scallop Shoal, The Atlantic, the following letter:

Impressed by the very striking likeness of you that now adorns the heading of *The Phoenix Nest* I am constrained to send you this pen-portrait of myself and personal habits which in its limited way depicts the charm of my existence. It is a pleasure to tell you that I greatly admire the structure and contents of your nest, but am surprised to learn from your portrait that a Phoenix can keep so curly.

N. Heron.

Inclosed in the letter is the following poem:

NIGHT HERON

*Along the silver edge of night his wings
Print a black scarab on the moonlit shores;
He prowls the beach; with loose-legged
hoverings*

Alights by ponds hidden in hollowed moors.

*Starkly he watches where long grasses limn
Sand tumulous, or pebble-dotted dune,
Or vigil keeps where fluting ripples rim
The reedy creek and marshes shell-bestrewn.*

*The ancient stars sink in the solemn sea;
The moon's cartouche fades on its palimpsest;*

*That hoarse sepulchral fugitive cry is he
Raucously passing, flapping to his nest.*

Not his with wings that swoop to wheel and turn

Through the dawn cirrus piled upon the East;

While sunrise fires on occult altars burn

The far-off sedges hide an anchorite's feast.

The Lewis Copeland Company, Inc. enter the publishing field with "The Outline of Man's Knowledge," by *Clement Wood*. This will appear next Monday. Talk about outlines! Here is a digest of just about everything in one enormous capsule. We don't know much about this world, so we're going to sit down and read it. We dipped into the "English Literature" and "American Literature" in Book III: The Outline of Literature. There is interesting stuff in them, but we were not satisfied with the sequence and proportion. And then there are some remarkable remarks. We have *Ben Jonson* called "Greater in influence than in achievement . . . a learned classicist, whose witty plays are dull on today's stage." Possibly Mr. Wood is right, but where does one go to judge whether old Ben is dull on today's stage? He certainly doesn't seem to us to be at all dull in the reading. "The intricate *John Donne*" is the only comment that *Donne* gets, in passing. As for *Milton*, "The splendor of the lines (of 'Paradise Lost') in the grand manner is impressive; but they have a coldness less of Puritan life than of death." Just what this last means, we know not.

*The apostate in his sun-bright chariot sat,
Idol of majesty divine, enclosed
With flaming cherubim, and golden shields;
Then lighted from his gorgeous throne, for now*

'Tis host and host but narrow space was left,

*A dreadful interval, and front to front
Presented stood in terrible array
Of hideous length: before the cloudy van,
On the rough edge of battle ere it joined,
Satan, with vast and haughty strides advanced,*

Came towering, armed in adamant and gold.
However! "The poetry" may be "largely dead to us," "the epic" "a made epic," but for some Milton's "ranking" is not yet seen to "slip quietly down the scale." And how, by the way, can a "ranking" slip down a scale? Later on we come to *Keats* and learn that he is "in pure poetic stature, taller by a trifle" than *Shakespeare*! As the little Southern girl said, "I know you'll all just love *Keats*," and, seriously, our own admiration for this poet is extreme,—but really! Also, on page 418, we learn:

It (*Goldsmith's* "She Stoops to Conquer") and its two compeers, "The School for Scandal" and "The Rivals," by the Irish wit *Richard Brinsley Sheridan*, are all the drama worthy of note between *Ben Jonson* and the age of *Wilde* and *Shaw*.

This is one of the most unusual statements we have seen in a serious volume for some time. . . .

Clement Wood has been at work for seventeen years upon "The Outline of Man's Knowledge." *Lewis Copeland*, President of the new house, has behind him over twenty

years of active publishing experience. He began with *Elbert Hubbard* in the Roycroft shops twenty years ago as a typographer where he produced works selling as high as \$300 a copy, he tells us. Later, as vice-president and general manager of the Haldeman-Julius Company in charge of production he produced the "Little Blue Books" to sell as low as three cents a copy wholesale. He has recently been general manager of the Vanguard Press. His present address is 119 West Fifty-seventh Street. He has brought out Mr. Wood's volume in most dignified and attractive fashion. . . .

An editorial program projected by Simon and Schuster, to foster the best phases of the current tendency to clarify and humanize specialized knowledge, includes contracts already signed for the following: The Story of Music by *Deems Taylor*, The Story of Religion by *Charles Francis Potter*, The Story of Art by *Thomas Craven*, The Story of Morals by *William A. Drake*, The Story of Civilization by *Will Durant*. . . .

We, ourselves, would shyly outline our own outline and complete series of outlines and stories which we are now in the process of compiling. It is divided into three hundred and sixty-five chapters, one for every day in the year. We shall mention only a few. I. A Complete Compendium of Everything I have been Thinking About since the Hour I was Born. XV. The Complete Outline of Old Bartending, appended to which is a complete soda-water-fountain guide. XXVII. The Outline of Archaeology: Specializing in Flinders Petrie, whose name we always liked as an archaeologist. XLVI. A Thorough Outline of Earthworms (with a special chapter on Moles). CII. The Story of Neckties (Leaving out Ruffs; but with a special and extremely interesting section on the Gallows). CCIV. An Outline of the Velocipede, tracing its course with extreme delicacy through the Bicycle to the latest makes of Automotive Vehicles. CCCI. The Story of the Mustache (False Mustaches, Mustache Cups, the Beard, Famous Beavers, The Goatee, Famous Goats; all that sort of thing). CCCLV. The Story of Space (a) Height (b) Depth (c) Width (d) Length—or Breadth—or, oh you know! (e) What's it all about if anything? (f) How far does it go—and how long is this kind of thing going on? (g) How long has it been there,—if anybody knows? (h) How to become a Spatialist: in Four Lessons. CCCLIX. Outlines of all the People I Don't Like: Done with Higgins's India Ink on Foolscap. And so on. Place your orders for this devastating volume right off! . . .

From McBride comes the following statement:

It has always seemed to me symbolical that *Jurgen* was arrested on the day that Prohibition went into effect, 16 January 1920, and set free in 1922 on the anniversary of the establishment of American independence, by the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown (October 19).

(Signed)

James Branch Cabell.

Richmond, Virginia,
October 9, 1927.

The second issue of *The Exile*, edited by *Ezra Pound*, will be published in November. The Gotham Book Mart, 51 West Forty-seventh Street, are the New York agents and distributors. Mr. Pound writes from Rapallo, Italy:

Beginning with the second issue, *The Exile* will be published by *Pascal Covici* of Chicago. The barbarism of the American copyright law and its legal encouragement of piracy and bad practice are such that I should not have continued the magazine after its first issue but for Mr. Covici's intervention.

Of the *Witter Bynner* Undergraduate Poetry Prize of one hundred and fifty dollars one hundred has been awarded for 1927 to *Sterling North* of the University of Chicago. Twenty-five dollars each has been awarded to *Mariana Staver* of Barnard College and *Lucia E. Jordan* of Smith College. For 1928, Mr. Bynner, whose co-judges are *Marjorie Allen Seiffert* and *Mark Van Doren*, offers the \$150 prize under the auspices of *Palmis*, of which he is an associate editor.

We wish to thank F. C. P. of New York for her kind note and her praise of our new headpiece.

And so an end.

THE PHENICIAN.



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By CARL P. ROLLINS and GEORGE P. WINSHIP

THE title page of a book does not differ essentially from the headlines of a newspaper. Both are primarily advertisements. They must attract attention, call their wares, and conform to the limitations of space. The maker of a title has the advantage of time in which to arrange his material, and he has no excuse when he misleads his readers. Least of all has he any right, like the headliner, to take liberties with the meaning of words.

For instance, in the newest book on printing, which can be precisely and accurately described as "A Short History," someone presumably thought, rightly, that the title would look better if the second line was a long one. So it reads "A Short History of the Art," which is precisely what the book is not. The Preface speaks of the "art preservative," but this does not palliate the misuse of a word which has inevitable connotations. A history of the art of printing, before it finished with the fifteenth century, would necessarily link Augsburg with William Morris and Subiaco with Ashendene; the Estiennes would lead to Bruce Rogers and Vascon to Merrymount. There is no "art" in a book on this subject which tells of nothing that has happened in England (except by allusions in the chapters on Germany and Belgium) since Boydell's Shakespeare, and which gives two pages to Vermont printing between 1778 and 1780, and two and a half to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the whole United States.

Grafton and Company of London have only themselves to blame if a captious critic feels annoyed at being misled. Under the editorship of Mr. R. A. Peddie, they have brought out an admirable conspectus of what passes as the history of the art preservative. He was able to enlist the cooperation of ten writers, all but one, perhaps, with a recognized standing in the first rank as students in their special fields. Their ten chapters summarize compactly and authoritatively, with encyclopedic wealth of names and dates, what is now known about the progress of bookmaking as an industry, before it came into its own as a widely recognized art. There is one exception, and it is interesting to note, that this chapter, which supplies a very helpful guide for those who would like to know more of the conditions which have made

possible the lovely Zilverdistel books, was written by M. Maurits Sabbe, who as Curator of the Plantin Museum at Antwerp might have claimed an especial right to live wholly in the past.

A good many American readers who are interested in such subjects, and who were carried into pretty deep water by the great skill with which the late Professor Carter presented his discoveries regarding Chinese printing, will turn to the brief appendix to learn how the Londoners have reacted to his book. It is therefore left with a presumably independent European invention.

Before there could be any printing, there had to be something, and plenty of it, to print on. It is well established that paper-making was a flourishing industry in Europe by the thirteenth century, but this is far from explaining how the widely distributed presses managed to secure a continuing supply of their most necessary raw material. It is certain that a great deal is not known about methods of transportation, and of merchandising, in later medieval times.

"WHEN a man has more money than he needs for his daily wants he either saves it like a miser, dissipates it as a spendthrift, or becomes a collector and lover of beautiful objects that are not necessities but which nevertheless afford him great amusement, and interest in life." The elemental basis for all collecting has never been more succinctly stated than in this opening sentence from Cyril Davenport's "Byways among English Books," which has just come out (Stokes). It justifies great expectations of the pages that follow.

The key word of the title is equally happily chosen. Mr. Davenport clearly had no intention of sticking to any main traveled route, but wished to feel free to roam as fancy dictated. The result is that he has produced a book that cannot be read with any pleasure, for his mind wanders erratically from paragraph to paragraph. He strays far afield, very far from any thought of verifying the pseudo-information that he takes for granted he must know, by right of long settlement at a desk in the British Museum. Indeed, the permanent value of this volume, to future generations of students of book lore, is likely to be as a record of current misin-

formation, in this year of grace, as demonstrated by a recognized British authority.

The professional student's confidence is shaken, on page 6, by a casual statement about "any book printed by Caslon," who hired other men to print the specimen books showing his own types. It is shattered on page 10 by the news that "The Grammars of Aelius Donatus to some extent merely resemble in type some of the Costeriana," and goes glimmering on 13, where Cobden-Sanderson "took up printing at the Dove's Press." The meaning so successfully concealed in the sentence about the Costeriana is matched by others. On page 7 we learn from the Museum expert that "In the British Museum are to be found all the Old Royal Libraries of England, much of which was brought together by Henry, Prince of Wales, the eldest son of James I," which seems to say that the author has a specialist's ignorance that there is anything in that great collection of later date than 1616. There is not much in the account of William Morris to throw doubt on this inference, although the only comment on the Kelmscott Chaucer is unquestionably true, that it measures 16¾ by 11½ inches. Another curious bit of news is that Charles Whittingham and William Pickering, one or both, "cut some very small types with great skill."

The author ought not, really, to be held responsible for the general sloppiness, and occasional illiteracies, of his book. He has been making books for a long while, and grew up at a time when it was customary for the printer's office, the compositor, and the proofreader, to take care of all such unimportant lapses on the part of authors. Time was, not so very long ago, when the compositor looked out for the spelling, and the proofreader took care of variations from normal grammar, along with proper names and literary allusions. The author merely submitted the ideas and a sketch of what he thought he wanted to say. If he failed to express himself intelligibly, the printer saw to it before it went to press. Modern competitive conditions in the printing industry have done away with all this supplementary service. What we ordinarily get now, as in this case, is just what the author writes, in all his intellectual nakedness. The tragic aspect of the situation is that a slipshod generation is growing up under such conditions. It will buy a book like this one, attractively gotten up, with admirable illustrations, and read itself to sleep in happy wonderment that it had never before known that Caslon

was a printer. And this is all the fault of the departed proofreader.

COLLECTORS of Bruce Rogers items will be interested in "B. R., America's Typographic Playboy," an essay on the lighter side of Mr. Rogers's achievement, just published in a limited edition of 500 copies by Richard W. Ellis at the Georgian Press. The book is freely illustrated with examples of Mr. Rogers's *jeu d'esprit*, and the typographic arrangement of the book itself, especially the cover, is delightfully whimsical.

The Catalogue

(Continued from page 268)

it as a work of art. Up to the present, the bibliophile disdained the catalogue. Does the book-lover underestimate it because of its advertising? According to that idea then a work is ugly when it is useful? That theory is inadmissible at such an epoch as well-balanced as the one that is now opening. Is it because it is gratis? The basis of bibliophily as a matter of fact resides in the rareness and price of a work.

The true booklover, the intelligent connoisseur, both understand that the catalogue is just as much representative of an era as the book is. It betrays its preoccupations, its intimate motives and nervous system. They understand that by way of the side-track of publicity, the catalogue is one of the best witnesses of art, one of its excellent servants.

"Literary circles in Belgium," says a dispatch to the *New York Times*, "are in a high state of indignation over a new book by the French critic, Daniel Mornet, entitled 'History of Contemporary French Literature and Thought.' Instead of giving Belgian authors who wrote in the French language a chapter to themselves the author groups them with their French colleagues."

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