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WE have been glad to see Vincent Starrett's "Seaports in the Moon" getting such good notices. We have not yet read this fantastic work ourselves, but we have always had a liking for Vincent Starrett's verses. Once he drew a lyrical portrait of himself, of which his publishers recently reminded us. Here is the picture—but they say that since seeing "The Miracle" he has thrown away his glasses.

A slightly Jewish, somewhat Spanish visage. Nose nearly Roman, hairless lip and jaw, And shaggy thatch: eyes that incline to prowl

Behind horn spectacles, in gentle quizzage. Tall, but of proudly curving appetite; Garments that hang like some grotesque conceit:

Abstracted manner, save when inward heat Gives off in steam of talk, late in the night. Kindly indeed, except when roused to rages, Soothed by tobacco and by skilful cooks; Fond of the gallant company of books, And villains of all languages and ages. Withal, a decent chap, who likes the ladies And daily paves a goodish stretch of Hades.

We made a slight error recently in stating that the Verse Class of *Mary Carolyn Davies* met at her home; it meets every Friday at eight P. M. at the Hotel Gonfarone, corner West 8th and MacDougal Streets. For further information address Mary Carolyn Davies, 58 West 8th Street. . . .

Lord Dunsany will address the Century Forum on "The Arts and Life," on the evening of April 17th. The lecture will be delivered at the Community Church. . . .

John Gould Fletcher's poem, "The Black Rock," addressed to *Thomas Hardy*, was originally printed in the *Yale Review* for July, 1920. It was dedicated to Hardy with his consent. It is an extraordinary tribute and one of Fletcher's best poems. In the April *Yale Review* of the present year it is reprinted in memory of the master. . . .

Willett, Clark & Colby, publishers at 440 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, believe very strongly in a recent novel published by them. This is "Shoddy," by *Dan Brummitt*. We have not yet seen the book, but the publishers think it has distinct qualities of greatness. . . .

A new poem by *Percy Mackaye*, which Longmans, Green and Company are bringing out in May, is queerly entitled "The Gobbler of God." But the queerness of the title is somewhat lessened when one realizes that the poem concerns the Kentucky Mountains and that its most dramatic moment centers upon a conclave of wild turkeys. Mackaye has preserved a fascinated interest for the folk of the Kentucky Mountains for some time. The speech and legendry of the mountaineers has furnished him with unusual material. His "Kentucky Mountain Fantasies" are also published by Longmans, and are subtitled "Three Short Plays for an Appalachian Theatre." Both these and "The Gobbler of God" are illustrated by his highly talented daughter, Arvia Mackaye. . . .

The character of King David in the Bible continues to provoke the pens of many writers. *Elmer Davis* has now written his own story of David which *Collier's Weekly* is to serialize, probably beginning in August. The John Day Company will publish it in book form, sometime along in next November. . . .

It certainly is an amazing phenomenon, the fact that reminiscences written by candle-light on scraps of paper, bill-heads and envelopes in a Johannesburg lodging-house should eventually have become a book that has been averaging the author and his editor (American sales alone) over two thousand dollars a week in royalties. During the day, *Trader Horn*, whom we have recently had the privilege to see in the flesh, hawked aluminum ware. He sold the South African novelist, *Mrs. Ethelreda Lewis*, a gridiron she didn't need, gave her a recipe for oat-cakes, and thus the collaboration began. Old stuff, but still astounding! . . .

We have been meaning to acknowledge a long and amusing letter written us back in February by *Father Will Whalen* of the Old Jesuit Mission, Orrtanna, Adams County, Pennsylvania. His letter is too long to quote. In one year ten novels by him appeared,—but the reason was that he

had written them at different times and they had been lying in his trunk for years. He says that right now he has seven full-length plays "ketching dust in the garret." . . .

The more we don't hear much about it the more we wonder that *Marcus Cheke's* "Papilée" hasn't had more praise. To us it has proved one of the gayest and most brightly colored entertainments of the lingering winter, a capital trifle! . . .

Dr. Horace Howard Furness, Jr., whose "Coriolanus" has just been published in the well-known Variorum Edition of Shakespeare, made a decided "find" recently when he discovered in a dusty storeroom of the Walnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia, a diary of *Junius Brutus Booth*, father of *Edwin Booth* and himself a Shakesperian actor of note. The diary was written when the elder Booth was a young man. In the basket of old papers Dr. Furness discovered a playbill announcing the elder Booth's appearance in the Walnut Street Theatre in "Richard III," and a letter written by a patroness of Convent Garden, New York, introducing him to managers there and, in this way, starting him on his way to fame.

We wish to acknowledge—and the acknowledgements are long overdue—the communication from *C. A. MacPherson*, of 28 Gould Avenue, Newark, N. J., concerning the old "Literary Chat" in a *Munsey's Magazine* of some twenty-seven years ago,—the letter from *C. S. Schneider*, of Springfield, Ohio, relating what he finds the modern parent is up against,—several poems of *Sylvia Satin* that we are still holding,—a poem by *E. M. S.*,—and poems by *Florence Reeves* of Montclair. We may be able to use some of these poems sometime soon. We hope to. . . .

J. Newell Green of Hartford, Connecticut, mentioned to us lang syne an interesting epitaph he had come across in an isolated cemetery discovered on a back road running from Amherst to Belchertown. It reads:

*Think, my friends, when this you see
How my wife has dealt with me.
She in some oysters did prepare,
Some poison for my lot and share.
Then of the same I did partake
And nature yielded to its fate.
Before she my wife became
Mary Felton was her name.*

That is certainly startling enough! . . . In a recent *Publishers' Weekly* we chanced upon the following inspired rendering of the old Bible story by *Horace Liveright*, President of Boni & Liveright:

You all remember that once upon a time the Creator was walking in the garden in the cool of the day and Adam and his wife hid themselves among the trees and the bushes, whereupon the Creator called upon Adam and said in effect, "Where art thou?—come out of the bushes." But Adam was afraid because he was naked.

For two of the latest volumes of The Modern Library, *Herbert Gorman* has written the introduction for *Joyce's* "A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man," and *Vincent Starrett*, one for his own selection of "Fourteen Great Detective Stories." This is evidently Starrett Day in the Nest, for we perceive that we begin and end with him. Incidentally, the man has written detective stories himself, on and off for years. . . .

But maybe we'd better end with our own word about *Samuel Hoffenstein's* "Poems in Praise of Practically Nothing." Such a fanfare as has greeted it! Well, we don't think it's quite as good as all that. We could have done with the volume cut considerably. The verses we still like best are those that give their title to the book. But there is a decided flash of real poetry about the specific numbers that Hoffenstein wanted to make real poetry. As a jester he has a lot of cleverness; yet hardly more, it seems to us, than a number of others. Still, his Yiddish is often excellent; and there is the iron taste of despair in a number of apparently "kidding" lines. Here a soul may certainly be discerned, even when the body in which it resides is bitterly clowning. . . .

So saying, he walked rapidly down the street on his hands and was almost immediately lost in the crowd. . . .

THE PHOENICIAN.

from THE INNER SANCTUM of
SIMON and SCHUSTER

Publishers . 37 West 57th Street . New York

TO the ranks of the inner shrine of columnists, ESSANDESS welcomes THE OLD MAN OF THE SEA, whose first effort appears in *The Atlantic Bookshelf* this month, under the heading: *From the Back Yard of DOUBLECOURT and LITTLEBRIDE, Word Magnates, 200 Fifth Avenue, New York.*

The Inner Sanctum not only hails *The Back Yard* as blood-brother to the wise-crack, but also helps himself to the following samples:

A meeting of publishers who are actively anxious to bring out THORNTON WILDER's next book is scheduled for next week at Madison Square Garden.

A leading publisher famous for his high hat and his low royalties will shortly release an anthology of Scotch jokes. His sales manager will introduce the item to the book trade by throwing a box party at THE LADDER.

GENE TUNNEY helped the trade enormously by carrying a book into his training camp. Imagine what will happen when he begins upper-cutting the pages.

The Inner Sanctum is planting 2000 pine trees out in Long Island this spring (literally)—that is the least we can do after ordering five carloads of paper (also literally) for the next printings of *Trader Horn*.

A publisher's idea of Paradise is a book steadily averaging 750 copies a week in its second year.

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WILL DURANT and ALFRED ALOYSIUS HORN met for the first time in *The Inner Sanctum*.

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Philosophers both, convivals both, they were soon calling each other "Willie" and "Zambesi."

To join *The Friendly Sons of Trader Horn* it is not even necessary to own the book. Nor must you peddle gridirons or capture gorillas or collect rogue elephants or rescue auburn-haired goddesses from the jungle. Those qualifications will help but the cardinal requirement is the spontaneous and persistent use of the word *convivial* as a noun. Aye, 'tis a word that gets to the core, like *Beethoven*.

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