

Chicago—and America

DIVERSEY. By MACKINLAY KANTOR. New York: Coward-McCann. 1928. \$2.

Reviewed by ROBERT B. MACDOUGALL

CHICAGO casts her spell over men in many ways. To Mr. Kantor she means brutality and unlovely strivings. He sees the gangs in perpetually unpredictable warfare; a smashed body found on a lonely suburban road shows to him rival ambitions in clash, jealousies suddenly burst into the deaf rip of machine-gun fire. Furthermore, he sees the utterly inglorious grafting and petty thievery of favored officeholders; the political giants of Cook County play checkers with cringing yes-men. If there is a glint of honor and courage, it is behind the quick hands of the gunmen; politics is merely dull dirtiness. All this sort of thing is of immense interest in 1928. Mr. Kantor's "Diversey" gives us the thrill of comprehending the ways and the purposes of the Chicagoan underworld.

But the gangs are not Chicago. There are the eternals, the struggle for love and understanding, the struggle for the necessities of life. Mr. Kantor gives us in crushing detail the lives of the men and women in a lodging house—dreariness come to a climax in the dinginess of Henderson's. We understand completely Jo, the hungry little girl across the hall from Marry Javlin, and we understand him, the lad from the West, searching for wealth and happiness. These two are our intimates throughout the novel. They are Chicagoans to their depths, Chicagoans—and Americans. They have complete reality, and they are surrounded with a solidly built environment. It is a delight to see the background of a novel filled in so scrupulously and so vividly.

The rest of the world often wishes that it could understand the United States a little better. "Diversey" would be tonic reading for eager-minded strangers to our ways; it is not misleading in its portrayal of urban types and dilemmas peculiarly our own. But "Diversey" is no novel for blanket praise. It is often weakened by a tendency towards the bizarre in word and phrase; it is too long, its pace being uneven; compelling unity is sacrificed to a sprawling largeness; sentimental interludes of retrospect are out of place, and the ending is inconclusive. But it is a first novel, and far better than most first novels. We are sure that we shall read few more stoutly realistic novels of gang warfare. We also know that here we find unusually honest detail of the life of our poor urban white collar trash—the standardized majority of any city crowd. "Diversey" remains, in spite of annoying faults, a splendidly exciting portrait of Chicago.

Poet and Novelist

THE KING OF SPAIN AND OTHER POEMS. By MAXWELL BODENHEIM. Boni & Liveright. 1928. \$2.

GEORGIE MAY. By MAXWELL BODENHEIM. Boni & Liveright. 1928. \$2.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

THE title poem of Maxwell Bodenheimer's new book of verse pleases me better than much of his poetry that I have read. It is extremely well handled. Someone once objected to Bodenheimer's appending an "irrelevant footnote" to one of his poems, and—after that the deluge; as might easily, knowing Bodenheimer's temperament, have been surmised. He has had a high time with plenty of footnotes in this volume. That aside—for they do not strike me as convulsing—and why it makes any difference to a real poet whether he receives an honorable mention or not in a prize competition must remain one of the sacred mysteries to me—let us consider the rest of these new poems. They are not so good. "Songs to a Woman" have delicate beauty, but are not more Bodenheimer than they might be a number of others. "The Crucifixion" is striking, but rather too obvious; "Jazz-Music" doesn't come off at all; the quatrain "Motion" is singularly inept for Bodenheimer; "Metaphysical" is boring; "They Called Him Insane" has been designed to shock Mr. Sumner, but I couldn't get interested in it even then, nor could I get interested in old John Miljus. The final poem is a parody of Bodenheimer. "Dear Minna" I am likely to remember, however, and there are good things in "Baseball Game" and "Advice to a Young Lady." "Anathemas" offends my taste, as it was designed to offend. The "Third Epitaph" I like, but I can't say much for the other

quatrains. The other poems I do not dismiss, but they made no deep impression. So much for one person's opinion. Bodenheimer at his best can write in a deviously epigrammatic manner that I have often found repaid the closest reading. They say now, I know, that his manner "dates"; which is a statement of no importance. He is one of the most original poets we have produced in the last twenty years. He has exercised a versatility quite extraordinary. In the present book, as in all his books, you can pick and choose for your favorites. Mine is the title poem, by far.

Bodenheimer as a novelist is another matter. When his manner is adapted to prose one realizes that the impact of his peculiar images and metaphors is often far greater in the stringent speed of verse than on the balder page of prose. And were they singing "In the good old summer time" as late as nineteen-nine? Heavens, I can remember that that song was popular among young people at least as early as nineteen-two, if not earlier.

Bodenheimer tells the story of a prostitute in a southern city. It is not an agreeable story, but it is told honestly enough. Much of it is written in a Southern dialect that can hardly be said to be handled in a masterly way. I have never known Bodenheimer to try dialect before. It does not seem to be exactly up his street. Is his story interesting? I must admit that I did not find it extraordinarily interesting. I should have been held in bonds of some sort of sympathy by Georgie May. I wasn't particularly. But take the jail scene that opens part three, and the thinking and talking to each other of the various characters throughout the story. That bespeaks first-hand observation and a gift for description and dialogue. And if anyone approaches the book for pornographic details they will be doomed to disappointment. This is a book written with no motive that would appeal to them, written on behalf of the Georgie Mays of the world and with directness and feeling. It is rough, tough material, and its end in melodrama is, at least, accomplished swiftly. Of course, when Mrs. Thomas Pemberton comes in at the end and talks exactly like Georgie May, I sincerely wonder. Mrs. Thomas Pemberton doesn't convince me.

"Georgie May" is what they call "unsparing realism." But the characters have been studied at first hand; and that gives it weight as a document. Technically considered, it is not a first-rate novel, but it preserves an integrity greater than that of most second-raters.

Animal Sociology

SOCIAL LIFE IN THE ANIMAL WORLD.

By FRIEDRICH ALVERDES. (International Library of Psychology.) New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1927. \$3.75.

Reviewed by C. K. OGDEN

THE interest of humanity in Possible Worlds has received fresh impetus during the present century from three sources—Instrumental technique, chatter about Relativity, and Comparative Psychology. The next decade will see the full exploitation of the comparative method, for though few of us can look through mammoth telescopes, and fewer still go through the looking-glass or collapse into flatland, we can all wonder what it would be like to see through the eyes of a dog, or even to bark through its mouth.

The more he saw of men, the more the late Dr. Whewell liked dogs. But it is doubtful whether that eminent logician, though Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, had ever encountered the pariah dog. Professor Alverdes, who holds the Chair of Zoölogy at Halle, gives us a vivid account of this ill-conditioned creature, "which immediately attacks any of his kind that has not scuffled together with him. In oriental cities every street and alley has its own pack of half-wild dogs, which never leave it. If one of these dogs enters a strange alley, the dogs domiciled there fall upon the stranger and tear it to pieces unless it saves itself by speedy flight."

Our respect for man revives; and according to Professor Alverdes, the chief value of a comprehensive survey of animal sociology is to afford us a comparison with the social life of men; not so that certain similarities and differences of behavior may be brought to light, but that by this comparison at all points of the scale we may discover "basic instincts and impulses upon which the whole edifice of human society is reared."

His book is divided into Special and General So-

cology. The first section is limited rather closely to the facts concerning the relationships, in the different species, of the two sexes, and of parents to their offspring. We find forms of monogamy, polygamy, and polyandry in the animal world. Despite the fact that men have emphasized the arbitrary character of marriage, many animals are strictly monogamous; and the fact that they continue to live together throughout the periods of sexual inactivity leads Professor Alverdes to stress the biological necessity of a special instinct for mate-ship. Polygamy is the general rule in herds, where a male collects a "harem" of females; for instance among elephants, Indian buffalo, and antelopes. Polyandry is rare.

The second section deals with such broad characteristics of animal life as the form of societies, imitation and habit, dancing and courtship, play, and domesticity. Man is always interested by the idea of animals behaving as he does. This has led him in the past to anthropomorphize and attribute his own motives and feelings to animals, with dangerous results: aware of this danger, however, we may yet delight in the accounts given here of behavior amusingly reminiscent of our own.

There is the chamois, who knows the fun of tobogganing, and slides on his haunches for a hundred and fifty yards, returning to repeat the performance; the female penguin, who, like the heroine of melodrama, flings herself between two fighting males; the "pairing parties" of the Birds of Paradise, in special trees and at special times. Even more amusing, in the light of the vogue for Intelligence Tests, is the fact that the "pecking order" of hens (their order of acknowledged right to bully among each other) correlates closely with their intelligence. It is refreshing to find a bee acting as a ventilator for its community. Even more attractive are the living store-cupboards of the Honey Ants, who stuff a species of worker with food, and suspend them from the roof of the nest until such time as provisions are wanted.

Professor Alverdes is not only a pioneer in the way he has treated the study of animals, but he has also thrown new light on much that was unknown. He also devotes attention to such debated issues as the modification of instinct. The work of Rüschkamp, who found that in a mixed colony of ants under his observation one species even went so far as to rear root-eating instead of bark-eating cattle (aphids), and made a complete change in their method of nest-building, suggests that ants still offer a particularly valuable field for research.

In the last chapter, on "Human Sociology from a Biological Standpoint," Professor Alverdes shows the difference in the ratio of the constant and variable factors in animal and human behavior. In the latter, V is nearly always greater than C: it is this which accounts for the particular forms which man's ideas on such subjects as religion and marriage take, but the actual existence of these ideas rests on the possession of a C impulse to indulge in metaphysical speculation.

The possibility of religion was given when man began to form ideas on the one hand about the demands made by his egoistic and social instincts, and on the other about his dependence upon his environment. He objectified the demands of "the inner voice" into gods and goddesses, more or less spiritually conceived. A rich growth of imaginative theories entwined themselves around these and satisfied his need of metaphysical speculation. . . . If the different species of animals were gifted, as men are, with a propensity for speculation each would construct a world order cut to its pattern, and every one of these would be valid and real within the circle of individuals for which it was created.

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The BOWLING GREEN

August 6, 1928

IN the smoking car, whose etiquette is that you keep quiet and let men read the morning paper, it occurs to the student that future historians might value a casual abstract of one day's marginalia on the book of life. I take a New York morning newspaper, on a Monday in August 1928, and quote some of its minor items. It is not for me to offer comment; I leave that to the historian of 2028.

The Mayor of New York, who "despite the weather, wore a vest," returned from a six weeks' absence, mostly on the Pacific coast. "After travelling 10,000 miles," he said, "I wasn't in one place where there was any difficulty to see and get liquor. I didn't take advantage of this, however." It is still news, by the way, when a Mayor of New York carries a cane.—The United States Air Transport, Inc., advertised daily air service to Washington: leave Teterboro Field 4 p. m., arrive Washington 6.15 p. m. Fare one way, \$30. Equipment: Ryan Brougham Monoplanes, sister ships to "Spirit of St. Louis," carrying four passengers and express.—In the *Public Notices* column, which lists mostly Inquiries for Missing Persons and "not responsible for debts contracted by my wife," the voice of Hazard can always be heard: "Party going to jungles of South America on sporting and film-taking expedition wants man to join them. K. R., 104 East 14." "Two outdoor-loving girls desire join family on boat trips, week-ends, paying own expenses." "Gentleman driving to Denver, closed Packard, can accommodate three gentlemen." "\$15,000 Hispano-Suiza and man who knows how to use it, awaits instructions in England for European or world tour; hirer pays \$250 weekly. Cable Methven Gearbox, Hackwick, London."

A piano company, having a clearance sale, remark that "The sour tones of an old piano disastrously affect family dispositions. A tin-panny, untuned old piano makes you 'mad' every time you hear it. Imagine what friends and neighbors think of you."—The Consolidated Automatic Merchandising Corporation will send you a booklet on "The Automatic Age in Merchandising." The Company's program for the next 5 years "calls for the installation of 80,000 additional Sanitary Postage Machines. Supplying the public with loosely handled finger-printed postage stamps, a danger to public health, will practically cease to exist.—The same corporation controls the Schermack Talking Automatic Merchandising Machines—"The Machines not only make change and deliver the merchandise, but also say *Thank you* together with the Manufacturer's slogan. The machine does everything but slap the customer on the back and ask him how his family is."—The Eastman Kodak Company made a full-page announcement of its "Kodacolor" process: "Home movies in full color, as easy to make as ordinary pictures in black and white."—Paul Block, the publisher, announced that he had bought the Brooklyn *Standard Union*, and printed a whole page of messages from all sorts of people, including Douglas Fairbanks, Charlie Chaplin, Babe Ruth, Calvin Coolidge and Otto Kahn, all apparently steady readers of the *Standard Union*.

The weather was hot. People slept on the beach at Atlantic City. It was 96 in Baltimore. It was 102 in Phoenix. It was 94 in Boston and Philadelphia. It was 96 in Washington. It was 66 in Montreal, 64 in San Francisco. The Fall River Line said "When torrid summer days turn offices into ovens, take a cool invigorating trip. The water is the great fan whose never ceasing breezes will keep you refreshed and stimulated. Hot and cold running water in all staterooms. \$4.50 to Fall River." Much geography could be learned by studying the sailing schedules of steamships. The *President Harding* was listed to sail for Bremen on the Wednesday: "Mail for Canaries, Senegal, Gambia, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ivory Coast and Gold Coast must be specially addressed." The transcontinental air mail left New York at 11 a. m., arrived Chicago 7 p. m., arrived Omaha 20 minutes after midnight, arrived Cheyenne 4.30 a. m., ar-

rived Salt Lake City 10 a. m., arrived San Francisco 4.30 p. m. The Pennsylvania Railroad urged you to travel through "that most beautiful valley of the Juniata, theme of Indian song and story. On the east slope of the main ridge of the Allegheny Mountains is the Horseshoe Curve, indescribably beautiful in the approaching twilight. Enjoy all this on the Pennsylvania Limited, the 20 hour 50 minute train, with a midday departure from New York and an early morning arrival in Chicago. Club car, valet service, ladies' maid, writing desk, current papers and periodicals, ball scores, stock quotations."—Incidentally I wish Mr. Pedrick, the cheerful passenger agent of the Pennsy, would put a copy of the *Saturday Review* on his limited trains, for a train is one of the few places left in the world where one can read in peace.

Peaches Browning (it will give the historian of 2028 some research to account for her news value) was playing at a theatre in Brooklyn. 34 motorists in Brooklyn, during a two-weeks' period, had their driving licenses suspended—21 of these for driving while drunk. At Rockaway Beach 20 summonses were served on people for undressing in motor cars. The matter of public undressing, the future historian will observe, is one of the quaintest of American phobias. It is only safe if done on the stage. The police of Rockaway were asking property owners at street intersections to keep their hedges trimmed low to prevent traffic accidents. Emergency dressing stations, with doctors and nurses, were urged for the White Horse Pike between Camden and Atlantic City, because the hospitals of New Jersey cannot accommodate all the people who bash themselves up in week-end motor-ing to the shore.—*The Ladder*, that much revised play (said to have been written in red ink), presented gratis for many months, was still in existence at the Cort Theatre with audiences supposed to average about a dozen people. The job of running the Cort box office must be very tranquil; I wonder if the ticket-wallah would like some books to review in his spare time? The ad says "Money Refunded if Not Satisfied with Play."

The parsons had been busy in their Sunday sermons. Dr. Roach Straton said that Governor Smith had a lovable disposition but "whether wittingly or unwittingly was a friend of vice." Rev. Everett Wagner said that the stream of automobiles on the highways on Sunday was evidence that people "find expression for the finer sense of freedom and quiet meditation." Rev. William C. Judd said it would be all right for the men in the congregation to take off their coats and be comfortable, but only one usher at the back of the church did so. Rev. John McNeill "deplored the prevalence of profanity. What particularly pained him was the fact that the practice of using unseemly language had spread to the feminine world." Professor Luccock of Yale, preaching at a theological seminary, said that the much-touted American efficiency was dubious. "We build an \$8,000,000 moving picture temple in which to show 30-cent pictures." The International News Company urged you to buy English religious journals (sample copies 12c each) to keep abreast of "the prayerbook controversy raging within the Church of England."

An "overnight bag" containing a black coolie coat, a navy blue dress, and a typewritten manuscript was lost in a taxicab outside a restaurant on 58th Street. Telephone Spring 1910. I wonder what the MS. was? (Incidentally I wish we might use the abbreviation TS. for a typescript to distinguish from actual penmanship.) The Parisian modistes had concluded their showing of fall and winter modes. The colors for this autumn were said to be scarlet, brick-dust red and tangerine. Picturesque robes will be the style. Short-waisted bodices with extremely circular skirts flaring to the floor behind. The favorite trimming consists of strings of graduated buttons set thickly with rhinestones or tiny mirrors.—The Marathon race in the Olympic Games was won by an Arab from Algeria. "It is the strange irony of destiny," says the A. P. dispatch, "that the only athlete who won for France shuns her wines, drinks nothing but milk and water." Marathon dancers, the biological oddities of the year 1928, were still going strong. A pair of them had just reached the outskirts of New York after having danced down the Post Road all the way from Bridgeport. An alumnus of the Bunion Derby (perhaps that will puzzle 2028?) ran back-

ward from Bridgeport to Stamford, 35 miles, in 7½ hours, "breaking all previous records for backward running."—Electric refrigeration was highly spoken of in the ads. There seemed to be plenty of apartments to let, and plenty of Household Situations Wanted. A couple, Japanese man and Scotch wife (unusual combination, surely?) would go anywhere as cook-valet and waitress-chambermaid. Russian gentleman, highly educated, wished a position as private secretary or major domo with a gentleman desiring to shed all responsibilities of home duties. The Childs Restaurant Company desired a limited number of intelligent English speaking young ladies, ages 18 to 25. The Mayfair Mannequin Academy assured you that Attractive Girls can become professional models in a few inexpensive lessons. "If you earn less than \$50 weekly you should become a Wilfred Beauty Expert at once; learn the famous Wilfred System of Beauty Culture during the DAY or EVENING. Prepare you for the best positions in smart beauty shoppes."—Christmas card salesmen were wanted, a new kind of beautiful Christmas card; cards sell on sight.

"Salesmen to assist on membership drive, strictly private golf club."—"Free, A short course in salesmanship to every one attending the 10 o'clock sharp Monday morning Barton System lecture on Master Salesmanship; learn how to analyze yourself and prospect—108 different difficult situations charted out" . . . "and if you are weary tired of stubborn resistance you can join the Harry Levey Graphic Homesite Organization: learn how the California Lecture and Excursion system solves the hot weather problem, breaks down resistance."

The world of finance and investment is one of which this anthologist has no knowledge, he refrains from excerpt—mentioning merely that Brooklyn-Manhattan Transit 6s, the only investment he ever made, and a very satisfactory one, were quoted at 98½. He watches them just now with attentive eye, as he is about to part with some of them to pay for a piece of waterfront.—Real estate ads are always interesting. Out in Huntington, L. I., for instance, we notice William E. Gormley calling attention to "An old farmhouse, 10 rooms, 3 open fireplaces; 2¼ acre plot; Lloyd Neck, overlooking Lloyd Harbor; magnificent old trees; a good purchase at \$15,000." In that case, as I know by personal observation, the word "magnificent" is not misused; just in front of that farmhouse is the finest tree I have seen in America.—At 246 5th Avenue a gentleman advertises "Mail received, telephone messages taken, confidential, \$5 monthly." Most services of this sort hail from Fifth Avenue: there seems to be a certain flavor about an Avenue address that is highly relished.—There was a "Forest-Farm in Pomerania, Germany" for sale: 3400 acres of which 1977 acres are timber-forest, 1235 acres best farmland. Modern castle with all comforts. Fixed price \$290,000.

There were 14,007 students in the Columbia Summer School. And the American Booksellers Association calculated that in the United States twice as much money is spent for candy as for books. 6.9 pounds of candy are sold for each volume of reading matter, but as the newspaper adds "more than one person may read each book, a situation which is not paralleled in the field of candy."

These, then, were some of the items that caught the eye of a reader of the New York *Times* on August 6, 1928. Undoubtedly a Keyserling in 2028 will be able to deduce all sorts of theories from them; mostly fallacious. But whatever 2028 may say about our present skirmishes he mustn't think we don't enjoy 'em.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

Gabriele d'Annunzio, the poet, heads a group of Italian scholars who are assembling a new collection of ancient Italian music to be exhibited at the Casa Italiana of Columbia University next spring, it is announced by Professor John L. Gerig, executive officer of the Department of Romance Languages.

The collection will constitute a section of a general exhibition of music by the great masters of Italy, past and present. With the sanction of Premier Mussolini, representatives of the Italian government, members of faculties of universities, publishers, composers, and men of letters are coöperating in gathering the material for the exhibition.