

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

LAUGHING TRUTHS. By CARL SPITTELER. Translated by JAMES F. MUIRHEAD. Putnams. 1927.

It is not often nowadays that the American and British public so completely misses a man of otherwise international reputation as it has done in the case of Carl Spitteler. Until the present volume none of his works were translated; his name, even as that of a Nobel prize winner, has remained practically unknown. Yet this "greatest of Swiss writers," proclaimed by Romain Rolland "the only master of the epic since Milton died," was "discovered" by Felix Wein-gartner as long ago as 1904 and his due worth immediately recognized upon the Continent. Among his numerous works there are three outstanding ones, all epics: "Prometheus und Epimetheus" in rhythmical prose, "Der Olympische Frühling," and "Prometheus der Dulder" in verse.

In default of the much needed translation of one or all of these, we are offered in "Laughing Truths" a collection, for the most part, of the early critical essays which aroused the admiration of Friedrich Nietzsche in 1887. Considering that they were written so many years ago, they seem remarkably of the present. Spitteler might well be addressing the America of 1928 in his repeated protest against the assumed authority in literary matters of "the parson, the attorney-general, or the public instinct." Folly is as perennial as beauty. Spitteler was keenly sensitive to the enduring forms of both, and these brief essays, firm, balanced, and judicious, with their continued plea for reason in both life and art, introduce one to an outstanding mind and lofty character, whose more important productions, it is to be hoped, may some time become known to Americans.

ENGLISH LITERATURE THROUGH THE AGES. By Amy Cruse. Houghton Mifflin. \$5.
FROM A CORNISH WINDOW. By Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch. Cambridge University Press. (Macmillan).

Biography

APHRA BEHN. By V. SACKVILLE-WEST. Viking. 1928. \$2.

This brief and well-written summary of the career of the first Englishwoman to become a professional author, is a useful addition to the Rev. Montague Summer's "Memoir of Mrs. Behn" prefixed to his edition of her works. Mrs. Behn herself was well worth the trouble. Her "Oroonoko" is decidedly the best short narrative of the seventeenth century, her plays are witty even though, as Pope charged, she "fairly puts all characters to bed," her life on the fringes of a dissolute court, her experiences as a spy, and as a rake, her engaging if disingenuous personality, all make her a subject for fascinated study, to which is added the puzzling obscurities that are frequent in her career.

A number of pages in this little book are properly devoted to restoring the reputation for reasonable veracity of her masterpiece "Oroonoko." It was praised for its realistic background of South America and its sympathetic study of an African slave by literary critics who were roughly handled some years ago by an American scholar, Dr. Bernbaum, who in several pamphlets proved by circumstantial evidence, and to his own satisfaction, that Mrs. Behn had never gone to Guiana and that the intuitive perceptions of the literary critic were here, as elsewhere, not to be trusted. Mr. Summers and Miss Sackville-West between them have unearthed new evidence, which, while leaving some dates and details obscure, makes it reasonably certain that the South American portion of "Oroonoko" was written after first-hand observation, that Aphra was in Guiana, and that Dr. Bernbaum's reasoning was based upon false documentation. The point was worth making, since it is only Aphra's literary reputation that can by any possibility be restored. If she did not have genius, she had a talent for narrative not to be excelled until Defoe.

THE DIARY OF SAMUEL RODMAN, 1821-1859. Edited by ZEPHANIAH W. PEASE. New Bedford, Mass.: Reynolds Printing Company. 1928.

For nearly forty years, till the impending cloud of the Civil War discouraged him, the owner of one of the chief whaling businesses of New Bedford kept a careful, though brief record of his daily occupations. Samuel Rodman was a Quaker, a man of varied business and civic interests, an ardent

opponent of slavery, and interested in science and letters. In his diary, which has been running in instalments in the New Bedford *Morning Mercury*, we may find descriptions of stage-coach and railway travel; of changes in household life during the 'thirties, 'forties, and 'fifties; of the growth of the New England textile industry, in which he was for a time financially involved; and of the progress of the temperance, public school, and abolition movements. Some noted figures, such as William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, N. P. Banks, Whittier, and Richard Henry Dana, appear in these pages, chiefly as anti-slavery orators or lyceum lecturers. The annalist has a pleasing style, and he gives the little events of New Bedford life—births, deaths, marriages, ship arrivals, fires, balls, teas—a considerable interest. Some of his comments are decidedly quaint. For example, after hearing the elder Dana lecture on Shakespeare in 1840, he remarks that "Dana's high respect and veneration for Shakespeare makes me incline to a further acquaintance with his writings, and suspect that my impression of the tendency of his plays which I have always considered, from the bad characters which are introduced and the coarseness of the language in numerous places, unfavorable to good morals and therefore to everything good and valuable in life, may have been mistaken and the result of early education and my want of personal acquaintances with his writings." Students of social and economic history will find the book worth examining. The usefulness of its three hundred and fifty double-column pages of fine print would have been greatly increased if the editor had supplied an index.

BARRIE. By THOMAS MOULT. Scribner. 1928. \$2.

This is not a biography, but the chronicle of Sir James Barrie's literary and dramatic career. We do not see why we should be shy of conjecturing that something of Barrie may take its place among the classics. We should differ from Mr. Moulton in betting on "Window in Thrums" rather than on "Sentimental Tommy." Mr. Moulton does not venture the conjecture but his judgment is quite decidedly for the later works. Admitting the flaws of "Auld Licht Idyls," the flaws seem to us more than compensated for by the freshness and first bloom of the peculiar Barrie quality. It is a surprise to hear from him how much Barrie has written that is unfamiliar to most of us. His dramatic gift is a sort of superadded second wind. After Goldsmith and Sheridan to Wilde, Shaw, Barrie, and Synge there was no theatrical drama, no comedies of distinction in English literature. We are far enough along now to see that there was an unmistakable renaissance, and it may eventually appear that Barrie's work was as important as any.

LINCOLN. By Frederick Trevor Hill. Appleton. \$3.

Drama

THE ALCHEMIST. By Ben Jonson. Cambridge University Press (Macmillan).

SHAKESPEARE'S "THE TAMING OF THE SHREW." Cambridge University Press (Macmillan).

Economies

SIGNIFICANT PARAGRAPHS FROM "PROGRESS AND POVERTY." By Henry George. Selected and compiled by Harry Gunnison Brown. Doubleday, Doran.

THE ECONOMIC WORLD. By Arthur R. Burns and Eveline M. Burns. Oxford University Press. \$2.

ADAM SMITH. By a Group of Writers. University of Chicago Press. \$3.

Education

BUILDING CHARACTER. Chicago Association for Child Study and Parent Education. University of Chicago Press. \$1.

EDUCATION PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES. By Emit Duncan Griessell. Macmillan.

THE GROUP-STUDY PLAN. By Edward R. Maguire. Scribners. \$1.80.

THE FOUNDERS OF THE REPUBLIC ON IMMIGRATION, NATURALIZATION AND ALIENS. Edited by Madison Grant and Charles Stewart Dawson. Scribners. \$1.

OUR ATLANTIC POSSESSIONS. By J. Earle Thomson. Scribners. 90 cents.

COLLEGE HANDBOOK OF COMPOSITION. By Edwin C. Woolley and Franklin W. Scott. Heath. \$1.24.

IMMIGRATION AND RACE ATTITUDES. By Emory S. Bogardus. Heath. \$1.80.

CHILD LIFE AND RELIGIOUS GROWTH. By Edna M. Bonser. Abingdon. \$1.50.

The Wits' Weekly

Conducted by EDWARD DAVISON

Competition No. 41. A prize of fifteen dollars is offered for the best sonnet called "The End of the World." (Entries should reach *The Saturday Review* office, 25 West 45th Street, New York, not later than the morning of September 10.)

A TEACHER'S GEOGRAPHY. By Mendel E. Branom. Macmillan.

PRINCIPLES AND METHODS OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL MATHEMATICS. By J. Herbert Blackhurst. Century. \$2.50.

STANDARDIZATION OF AMERICAN POETRY FOR SCHOOL PURPOSES. By L. V. Cavins. University of Chicago Press. \$1.50.

Fiction

THE LIGHT SHINES THROUGH. By OCTAVUS ROY COHEN. Little, Brown. 1928. \$2.

Mr. Cohen has in the past written many amusing stories of negro life. "The Light Shines Through" is a departure in every way from those earlier successes. It seems a pity that Mr. Cohen deserted his negroes, on whom he had a sure grip. This novel is practically trash—thin, weak, uninspired. The events center around a girl who inherits a million from a supposedly dead lover; to her later regret, she marries a most unworthy fellow, a mere fortune hunter. The dead man returns, further complications are added, and after a convenient murder all is serene. There is nothing here for those who have advanced beyond the tabloids.

THE BLACK HEART. By SYDNEY HORLER. Doubleday, Doran. 1928. \$2.

Mr. Horler's latest thriller is concerned with the dark schemes of an English master-criminal, Sir Luke Benisty, to plunge the Powers into another world war. On his track is a vengeful young girl whose father Benisty ruined. Working in alliance with her is a rising novelist, one Chertsey, seeker of adventure and material for his books. The story is told with plenty of violent action, but without anything particularly ingenious or mystifying in the development of the plot.

JANE CARROLL. By E. TEMPLE THURSTON. Doubleday, Doran. 1928. \$2.50.

In this latest novel by E. Temple Thurston there is an integrity of narrative outline that marks it off sharply from the sprawling novel that aims at a cross section of life and eschews all selection. In the matter of form this is pure gain: the story moves forward with dignity, events falling into their place and presaging other events to come. "Jane Carroll" has, in a rather paradoxical juxtaposition, both solidity and suspense. From the very beginning the reader senses the inevitable tragedy and yet is led from chapter to chapter in alert interest.

The story opens in London. The home of Jane Carroll and her husband is a social rendezvous for the politically important of Great Britain; dinners here make destinies; and to one dinner comes the young, radical, idealistic Irishman, John Madden, with a price, and a high one, on his head. The beautiful, the exquisite, the aloof Jane Carroll realizes that there is no escaping destiny; life must be for her, henceforth, John Madden. Swiftly she gathers her forces, bartering the merest fraction of her grace and wit for needed resources, and goes with her husband to Ireland to make possible Madden's political coup. The sinister coast, and the ominous characters about, remind one of shores and people that lower in the Waverley novels. In this atmosphere, heavy with foreboding, the reader waits with Jane Carroll for the end. The novel has texture and depth; the beauty of Jane Carroll and the spirit of John Madden transcend the telling of their story and invest the book with some of that radiance that is granted only to love, star-crossed.

(Continued on next page)

*Wanderlust sent him down
from the hills to the city
but love called him back*

The HAPPY MOUNTAIN



By MARISTAN CHAPMAN

"We doubt if it will be possible to find another novel as stirring and beautiful as Mrs. Chapman's within the year. At one leap she has become a novelist of the first rank."

—Bruce Gould, New York Evening Post

"I've climbed The Happy Mountain and I've found it the easiest, happiest, fresh-air climbing any book-climbing body could wish."

—Walter Yust, Philadelphia Public Ledger

Sherwood Anderson, Carl Van Doren, Herschel Brickell, Julia Peterkin, Robert Hillyer, Walter Prichard Eaton, booksellers and critics throughout the country are bestowing new adjectives on this idyll of young love and adventure, which restores a lost beauty to the American language.

At all bookstores \$2.50

Chosen by THE LITERARY GUILD of America

THE VIKING PRESS · NEW YORK

The New Books

Fiction

(Continued from preceding page)

ARROGANCE. By LÉONIE AMINOFF. Dutton. 1928. \$2.50.

This is one of a series of Napoleonic romances in historical sequence written by the same author. It is done not without imagination, but in an insufferably chatty, familiar style, vivacious to the point of agony.

THE KING'S PASSPORT. By H. BEDFORD-JONES. Putnam. 1928.

We find in "The King's Passport" many of the qualities that characterize the very best historical romance. Mr. Bedford-Jones puts three familiar figures into his novel—Richelieu, d'Artagnan, and Cyrano de Bergerac. He disarms the pedants by admitting a certain historical inaccuracy. His frankness was not necessary, however, for he is highly convincing, making us entirely sure that his major characters are essentially authentic. Indeed, his Richelieu is memorable, and his Cyrano hardly less effective. The novel as a whole, although neither so solid nor so sweeping as it might have been, is excellent reading. The love element is not allowed to retard the main action; laborious attention to the building of historical background is never noticeable. In short, "The King's Passport" is an intelligent, skillful novel of action.

OL' MAN ADAM AN' HIS CHILLUN.

By ROARK BRADFORD. Harpers. 1928.

Skip the Foreword and you will like "Ol' Man Adam An' His Chillun." If you need further assurance, look over some of the titles of these tales about the Time When the Lord Walked the Earth Like a Natural Man. "All About the Potiphar Scandal," "The Stratagem of Joshua," "The Sun Trick," "Balaam and His Talking Mule," "The Adulteration of Old King David." They practically tell the story and it is well they do, for there is no possibility of paraphrasing these fables. Their humor lies absolutely in the telling, and it is equally impossible to excerpt particularly funny pages, since each one grows out of the one before and into the one beyond. Read 'em and laugh. The Foreword, already mentioned, is peculiarly inappropriate in so gay a volume and will prove irritating to many readers who otherwise might find "Ol' Man Adam An' His Chillun" highly congenial.

WHERE THE LOON CALLS. By Harry Sinclair Drago. Macaulay. \$2.

THE CRIMES CODE. By William C. Queux. Macaulay. \$2.

THE QUARRY WOOD. By Nan Shepherd. Dutton. \$2.50.

THE SILK PURSE. By Elizabeth Sanxay Holding. Dutton. \$2.50.

History

STUDIES IN BIBLICAL AND SEMITIC SYMBOLISM. By Maurice H. Farbridge. Dutton. \$2.

ITALY IN THE RENAISSANCE. By Maud F. Jerrold. Boston: Luce.

NAPOLEON III. AND THE RHINE. By Hermann Oncken. Knopf.

THE STREAM OF HISTORY. By Geoffrey Parsons. Scribners. \$5.

STONEWALL JACKSON. THE GOOD SOLDIER. By Allen Tate. Minton, Balch. \$3.50.

A HISTORY OF ENGLAND. By Hilaire Belloc. Vol. III. A. D. 1348 to 1525. Putnam.

THE MEXICAN SIDE OF THE TEXAS REVOLUTION. By the Chief Mexican Participants. Translated by Carlos E. Castaneda. Dallas, Texas: Turner.

GARIBALDI'S DEFENCE OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC. By G. W. Trevelyan. Longmans. \$2.

GARIBALDI AND THE MAKING OF ITALY. By G. M. Trevelyan. Longmans. \$2.

GARIBALDI AND THE THOUSAND. By G. M. Trevelyan. Longmans. \$2.

TALES OF THE MONKS. Edited by Manuel Komroff. Dial. \$3.50.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FRENCH ABSOLUTISM. By Franklin Charles Palm. Crofts. 65 cents.

ENGLAND. By Cyril E. Robinson. Crowell. \$5 net.

UNPOPULAR ESSAYS IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY. By Moorhouse F. X. Millar. Fordham University Press. \$2.50.

International

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS. By John Spencer Bassett. Longmans. \$3.50.

THAT MEXICAN. By Robert N. McLean. Revell. \$2.

MUSOLINI AND THE NEW ITALY. By Alexander Robertson of Venice. Revell. \$2.

THE BANKERS IN BOLIVIA. By Margaret A. Marsh. New York: Vanguard Press. \$1.

OUR CUBAN COLONY. By Leland H. Jenks. New York: The Vanguard Press. \$1.

BLACK DEMOCRACY: THE STORY OF HAITI. By H. P. Davis. Dial. \$5.

ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION. International Publishers. \$2.75.

SOVIET RUSSIA IN THE SECOND DECADE. Edited by Stuart Chase, Robert Dunn, and Rexford Guy Tagwell. Day. \$4.

CHINA AND WORLD PEACE. By Ming-Chien Joshua Bau. Revell. \$2.

CHINA AND FOREIGN POWERS. By Sir Frederick Whyte. Oxford University Press. \$1.40.

ROUMANIA TEN YEARS AFTER. Beacon Press. \$1.50.

SURVEY OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS. Vol. II. By C. A. Macartney. Oxford University Press. \$8.50.

MODERN JAPAN AND ITS PROBLEMS. By G. C. Ellen. Dutton. \$3.

EUROPE. By Count Hermann Keyserling. Harcourt, Brace. \$5.

STEERING OR DRIFTING—WHICH? By Israel H. Levinthal. Funk & Wagnalls. \$2.50 net.

CHINA AND ENGLAND. By W. E. Soothill. Oxford University Press. \$3.

(Continued on page 78)

German Authors in America

By H. W. PUCKETT

Barnard College

IT was because I could not answer some questions raised by a Berlin school director that I began to question others as to what German authors are being read in the United States; that is, his suggestion that the students of the Volkshochschule in Berlin would like to have me take that subject for my lectures there made it necessary to formulate a questionnaire and send it to libraries in various parts of the country, for while one had a well-based opinion about the popularity of German authors on their own heath, or in case of doubt could resort to German literary journals, there was no published evidence of their reception among us. Through the assistance of Dr. C. C. Williamson, Director of Libraries, Columbia University, and the coöperation of more than two score librarians, facts were brought together which are analyzed in the following article.

It may be assumed with certainty that an investigation of our German reading before the war would have given different results. Not merely that some names now frequently cited were still obscure; the reading was done under a different star, with a piety toward German culture that would be hard to find anywhere to-day. The idols shattered were not all in Germany. The younger generation throughout the world has brought to its reading since the war an interest very different and in some ways more critical. Older readers, lacking flexibility or perhaps the ambition to orient themselves in a new world, turn still to old favorites. The answer is made repeatedly in the questionnaires that "the pre-war German readers are calling for the same things as before the war." These books are to some extent the classics of German literature. But along with the names of Goethe and Schiller and Lessing and Heine, appear a host of lesser lights, a motley company ranging from the unquestioned excellence of Keller to the flabby pabulum of a May or a Marlitt.

It was impossible for practical reasons to use a questionnaire large enough to embrace such a number. Furthermore, the inquiry was for contemporary authors, which greatly reduced the selection; and then among these again some sifting beforehand was necessary. All on my list of ten except one—Rilke died December, 1926—are still living, all have been before the American public since the war. Inasmuch as all are available to some degree in translation, their readers are by no means confined to people of a German language tradition.

Three of the ten have been familiars with us for a generation. There was a time in former days when an educated American, asked who was the greatest living German writer, might have hesitated whether to give the title to Sudermann or to Hauptmann. A bit later he was sure it was Hauptmann. Still both of these literary lights continued in the ascendancy throughout that period. "Die Versunkene Glocke" made Hauptmann, if not famous, at least so well known in America that to many Americans he is still the author of that work alone. It appeared at the beginning of our century as a school text, in which capacity it continues its triumphant progress down the years, being now well on the way of becoming a classic. The same fate has been accorded Sudermann's "Frau Sorge." One library has but two German books, these two. Another reports, "all copies of 'Frau Sorge' worn out." How much academic persuasion has contributed to keep the names of these two authors before our public, can be judged from the evidence of libraries in touch with high schools and colleges, where it is said that the student demand for "Die Versunkene Glocke" and "Frau Sorge" is constant and that former students with some ambition to look beyond these specimens call for other books by the same authors. It might be supposed that Hauptmann with his unquestionably greater merit, his more varied offering, his uninterrupted production, and his better press-agenting would be read to a much greater extent than Sudermann, who is still known chiefly by his earlier work. As a matter of fact, Hauptmann's lead is slight, their relative popularity comparing as 4.18 to 4.16. There is still another surprise offered by the record of the third writer of this older group, Arthur Schnitzler. Undeniably, the tide has been with Schnitzler. Without creating anything essentially new since his first books, he has gone on polishing an already finished style with which he

purveys Freudian dramas, novels, and short stories with increasing success. The theme is more popular now than ever, and Schnitzler's mastery of the technique leaves nothing to be desired. Reasoning on these facts, I should have hazarded the opinion that Schnitzler appealed to more readers than Hauptmann even. This is not borne out by the facts, which give him a ratio of 3.60.

In a way, Schnitzler is a liver issue in the book world to-day than any other writer of his age. He is more "up-to-date." It is a significant fact that practically everything of Schnitzler exists in English translation and that in nearly every case the librarians have the translation and not the original.

To have a clue to books other than purely belletristic, I included two names which seem to be particularly favored at present, Keyserling and Ludwig. The results have been interesting. Three librarians put Keyserling at the head of the list for popularity, two others assigned that place to Ludwig. For second place Ludwig received a plurality with nine votes, Keyserling coming next with eight. Keyserling's showing among the ten was excellent: he comes second on the list with a ratio 4.63—a testimonial to the serious tastes of our reading public that as astonishing.

The real sensation of this bit of research was the confirmation of the Jakob Wassermann craze. How much of his popularity must be attributed to circumstances and how much to merit, is a nice question. No other writer remotely approaches his record. The unanimity of opinion about him is itself instructive: out of forty-two possible votes for first place he received thirty-one, three times more than any other author received for any place. The situation is really unusual. I can think of no other foreign author who has so completely captured the American field as has Wassermann. How did he do it?

It is interesting to note beside this startling record of Wassermann the modest position of the *doyen* of German novelists, Thomas Mann. He has been before the American public longer than Wassermann, but being less of a fabulist, also less in the durance of "new ideas" and "modern thought," he plays not so much the rôle of an H. G. Wells as of a Thomas Hardy. There is nothing meteoric in the career of Mann—was not in its beginning and will not be in its close.

Such cannot be said of Toller, whose introduction into the United States by the Theatre Guild has been of little avail in getting him before the reading public. Toller was a phenomenon of the revolution, and as the revolutionary enthusiasm has ebbed, his significance and influence has gone out with it. On the other hand, Franz Werfel makes a much better showing. He should. Aside from the fact that he was also imported by the Theatre Guild he has little in common with Toller, being a figure of undeniable importance in German literature to-day. With us he is read more than Thomas Mann. He has more strings to his bow than the other writers on the list: beginning as a lyricist, a field in which he achieved distinction, he moved on in wartime to the drama, and latterly to the novel. Talented in all three lines, Werfel has made a name for himself which gives his every work a hearing, or, as the case may be, a reading. He is, however, a bit too impressionistic, too eccentric ever to become really popular.

Trailing far behind all the others on the list comes one of the greatest of them all, Rainer M. Rilke. This is not surprising. One could be sure without investigation that he would not be found among the well-thumbed volumes of the libraries. However, notices of Rilke's work having appeared not infrequently in our literary journals, I wished to test how far interest in his poetry had percolated among the rank and file of readers. The answer is clear: it has not percolated. A small volume of his verse in English which appeared some time ago has attained little circulation, so that one must really reckon the Rilke readers as German readers. But the bar of language is only one of the obstacles to Rilke's popularity. The lyricist to-day cannot compete with the dramatist or storyteller for popularity, and this lyricist has pitched his tent further from madding crowd than the most.

"Power and distinction
... throbs
with the
beating of
human hearts

ARTHUR B. MAURICE



The
Forgotten
Conqueror
of Europe

GENERAL CRACK

By GEORGE PREEDY

"General Crack is a cracker-jack. The author has the rare quality of keeping his story moving on a high level, and the charm of style in

itself is sufficient to carry along any one who likes good writing." — TOM MASSON, author, editor, lecturer, critic.
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