

## Rebel—Revolutionist —Reformer

**B**LASCO IBANEZ was a great rebel—a great revolutionist—a great reformer. This powerful figure was a contradiction, a paradox in appearance as well as in character. His hands were the long tenuous ones of a voluptuary, yet it was romance and the romantic, not sex, that filled his life and his work. He had the large, forceful head of a lion, yet his eyes and his brow were those of a mystic. This strange, quaint, paradoxical strain can be traced throughout his thought and art. He was a rebel; he loved Spain and, although banished, he still remained a Spaniard. He could show up the wrongs and evils of his country and still remain true to her. In "Blood and Sand" his theme is the bull ring; he was the reformer, he zealously condemned the torador with all his trappings, and yet the glory and the beauty of the sight fired his imagination. He was a pacifist; his "Four Horsemen" are and will be heard thundering their message through the ages, and yet his revolutionary spirit came under the spell of showy horses, the stark, weird figure of death and the picturesque sight of a duel between the King of Spain and Primo de Rivera.

### Propaganda

Blasco Ibanez, living in the twentieth century, seeing and condemning the evils of his country, using his art not so much for art's sake as for a utilitarian purpose, writing always for propaganda, might almost be classed among the great men of the Victorian period. He had the same great outpouring of word and thought. His flow was of a mighty force that once started, seemed to travel on of its own momentum, like a great flood tide that knows no damming until it has spent itself. He and his works, because of their sheer, exuberant outpouring, their picturesque power and their propagandist themes, can be compared to Victor Hugo. Blasco Ibanez, like Victor Hugo, will be ranked among the immortals.

### America's Influence

The Spanish novelist was probably the greatest romantic writer of his time. "The Land of Art," "The Novelist's Tour of the World" show his great versatility. During his exile he traveled much and has left most delightful impressions of Italy, Morocco, Greece, etc. America cannot help but claim him for her own. It was America's ideals, America's freedom, America's great spirit of uplift that he tried to implant in his own country which helped to make him an exile. He could not separate his brain from his heart and soul, therefore we see in all his writings the great purpose and mission which drove him on. "Mare Nostrum" (Our Sea) is not only a glorious picture of the Mediterranean, but also shows the evils of the submarine; "The Cathedral," those of the Catholic church. Ibanez is gone, but his great torrent of thought, of words, of reform, will continue to go on.

### Books—New and Old

There are many novels of his still unpublished in this country. Dr. Livingston, his able translator, is working on them now—"The Feet of Venus," "The Argonauts," a fascinating tale treating of immigration, are due for publication in the Fall. "Reeds and Mud," of which Isaac Goldberg has said, "This is, in my opinion, the man's masterpiece," will be out in March.

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**W**E'LL make up a package of books for you on which you can't lose. And nobody need say we haven't read them, but are merely talking from hearsay. People get into the habit of saying such things about a column commentator on so many volumes. We-el, once in a while our survey is necessarily very hasty. But here's a group of volumes in which we have of late been positively engrossed. First we'll list 'em; then we'll talk about 'em.

1. DELUGE. By S. FOWLER WRIGHT. Cosmopolitan Book Corporation.
2. THE HOUSE OF DR. EDWARDES. By FRANCIS BEEDING. Little, Brown.
3. THE WAY THINGS ARE. By E. M. DELAFIELD. Harpers.
4. KIT CARSON. By STANLEY VESTAL. Houghton Mifflin.
5. ENGLAND RECLAIMED. By OSBERT SITWELL. Doubleday, Doran.

The Cosmopolitan Book Corporation advertises in the *Publishers' Weekly* a first edition of 100,000 copies for "Deluge." All we can say is it deserves five times that many readers. S. Fowler Wright is a new name to America, but in England he has for some time been quietly writing poetry, translating the Song of Solomon, and publishing his own novels. We read "Deluge" in the English edition, and we noted other romances of Wright's, either in process of completion or actually extant, listed on the dust-cover. A title like "The Amphibians," for instance, how that stirs the imagination after the encounter with Mr. Wright's own marvelous imagination in "Deluge"! . . .

"Deluge" is one of the most exciting stories we have read for a very long while. It takes for granted a world-wide latter-day flood that fatally inundates terra firma with the exception of a portion of the English Midlands. It deals with certain English survivors of that calamity. It pursues its course with a vigor of intensely imagined incident that recalls the force of the earlier H. G. Wells in his romances such as "When the Sleeper Wakes," "The War of the Worlds," etc. It is intermittently tractarian against this modern mechanistic age, though tractarian rather in the English Tory-squire sense, with evident love for the land, for open country undefaced by factories, for simplicity of livelihood uncluttered by all the artificialities of a commercial era. There is a noble savagery in the "asides" sardonically assailing many manifestations of our present industrial phase. But the story is the thing. It moves with a rapidity and constant excitement that holds one breathless. The survivors are thrown back upon primitive conditions. They must adapt themselves to these conditions or perish miserably. Half of them revert to the state of animals in the jungle; the rest must battle these for very existence. But that simple outline gives no idea of the art and varied interest with which the tale is unfolded. An Edgar Rice Burroughs might possibly have hit upon the basic conception; but an S. Fowler Wright can take that con-

ception and make his situations so actual, his characters so convincing, his episodes so absorbing that he lifts the narrative into literature. We defy anyone to lay "Deluge" down, once begun, even the "highbrow" reader. Your emotions are stirred, your sympathies enlisted. And the ending of the story—which might so easily have surrendered to "expediency"—is highly satisfactory,—over and above the fact that it promises an equally exciting sequel (if there should ever be a sequel). . . .

Of course, "Deluge" would make a most extraordinary moving picture, if the "movies" did not ruin it in the adaptation. It has scope, a succession of thrilling incidents, battles and raids, love and death. But the "movies" could never carry it through with the integrity of purpose the author has pursued in his story-telling. And that would be a great shame. . . .

Well, chalk up S. Fowler Wright; and then turn to "The House of Doctor Edwardes," which is one of the very best horror stories of recent years, as well as one of the best tales dealing with diabolism. It gives one the dear old much-referred-to (and rarely experienced) spinal thrill. Here again the conception of the story is original and startling. But we aren't going to spoil your pleasure by giving it away. At some points all we can say is that "The House of Doctor Edwardes" very nearly touches the high water mark of "Dracula." But it also has passages of humor,—of which element, by the way, "Deluge" is quite wholly devoid (only you don't miss it!). . . .

"The Way Things Are" is in an entirely different category. E. M. Delafield has a number of books already to her credit. In "The Way Things Are" she writes of apparently commonplace English married life with a delicate irony, a deep humor, a recognition of the enormous power of "respectability" over the life of the average person, that proves her a profound human psychologist. She reveals ourselves to ourselves with unusual vividness. Her workmanship is clean-cut and highly accomplished. There are delicious moments all through the book. A man, reading it, may sometimes mildly writhe, but any intelligent person must nonetheless warm to the peerless exhibition of this author's pleasantly sardonic intelligence. . . .

Next week we shall continue this discussion; now, we seem to lack room. . . .

Anyway, we can close with the statement that William B. Trites, whose first two books "John Cave" and "Barbara Gwynn" were published here in 1913 and are now out of print, is attracting, fifteen years later, some attention through his "The Gypsy" (Stokes), just out. "The Gypsy" is really his seventh novel. Other books have been published either in England or privately by the author in France. Years ago William Dean Howells gave it as his dictum that Trites was the young writer who showed the greatest promise in American letters.

Selah!  
THE PHOENICIAN.

## from THE INNER SANCTUM of SIMON and SCHUSTER

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For *The Inner Sanctum* the arrival of a new catalogue is always a Great Moment.

Today the ritual is particularly sanctified, for in the thirty-two pages of the new *Spring Announcement* of SIMON AND SCHUSTER the three sowers of this column are rampant.

"Each book listed in these pages," confess the Heads of the House, in a signed and shockingly immodest *apologia*, "is one which (were we not privileged to be its publishers and thereby accorded the honor of purloining the first two copies off press) we should borrow or rent, or in a period of prosperity, be sorely tempted to buy."

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Perusers of this column—we almost said readers—may obtain first edition copies of this new catalogue by addressing a request to ESSANDESS, care of *The Inner Sanctum*, 37 West 57th Street, New York City.

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## Compleat Collector

(Continued from page 621)

### SOLOMON AGAIN

FROM the Centaur Press of Philadelphia comes a new printing of the Song of Solomon, which in typography and illustrations is the final and consummate debunking of that classic from all elements of sanctity and religious connotation! The wood cuts by Wharton Esherick are what first attract attention—and at first, also, surprise. Suggestiveness could hardly go farther than in the medallion on the cover and the illustration to viii;10; and some of the blocks are of an extraordinary technical quality. But granted that the Authorized Version's quaint assumption of symbolical reference to the Church is unwarranted by the context, this edition of the Song, as a frankly pagan love-song, is decidedly of interest. The type face, one of the recent European importations, is appropriate both to the text and to the illustrations, and the book is well executed by the Pynson Printers. Although of proper size for an altar book, we doubt if it will be "read in the churches," although worthy of a place on the shelves of the collector of erotic editions.

### A PROTEST AGAINST BUNK

A CORRESPONDENT writes in protest against certain jazz advertising as follows. His objection to such methods in advertising, a really admirable article, meets with my hearty approval.

"This morning's mail brings a loud broadside from the exploiters of Encyclopedia Britannica. They are going to have another 'bargain' sale in honor of the 160th anniversary. It's an 'epoch-making' event, of 'incomparable value,' a 'marvelous index volume,' 'if you ACT quickly,' etc. It has congratulations from ex-Governor Hughes, ex-premier Borden, the president of Marshall, Field & Co., and other more or less eminent scholars, and probably these will be supplemented by others from Tom-tom Hefflin and Al Smith, Tunney, Lindbergh and Charlie Chaplin. Ain't it sicknin'?"

### TYPE FACSIMILE REPRINTS

OF the fourth series of these reprints we have received from the Oxford University Press the following: Matthew Prior's "Occasional Verses," printed from copies of the single-leaf editions, 1702-1719; Thomas Gray's "Elegy wrote in a Country Church Yard," first edition, 1751; Samuel Johnson's "The Vanity of Human Wishes," 1749; and William Collins's "Ode" on the death of Mr. Thompson, 1749.

Printed at the Clarendon Press by John Johnson, in editions of 550 or 750 copies each, carefully reset in the type of the originals, or as closely as the ample resources of the Oxford printing-office allow, these type facsimile reprints are invaluable to the Compleat Collector. For purpose of minute study they are doubtless less valuable than photographic facsimiles would be, but in their fidelity to the originals in type and manner (though it has not always been possible to retain the exact margins of the first editions), as well as in their simple and inexpensive binding, they make handsome and valuable additions to the library. If the frailties of the XVIIIth century are to be drawn from their dread abode, we like to see it done with the simplicity and candor of these reprints.

### "THE INDISPENSABLE THINGS"

FROM the Bibliographica Typographica, under the editorship of Herbert Reichner, 19 Tiefer Graben, Vienna, comes a formidable list of books on printing. There is an amplified and revised edition of "Modern Fine Printing in the United States"; the first edition being out of print. The second volume in the series, "Flowers and Ornaments" of the Viennese printer Tatner (1760) is announced as now ready. To come are volumes on Civilité type, German typography in the Goethe period, a very much to be desired "Updike and the Merrymount Press at Boston," amply illustrated and with an introduction by George Parker Winship (we long to see what a German will do with Mr. Updike—and what Mr. Updike may do with the German editor!); a facsimile of Dürer's "Alphabet" of 1525; German type specimen books of the XVIIIth century by Gustav Mori; "Five Centuries of Printers' Marks"; "Modern Fine printing in Czechoslovakia"; etc. The specimen illustrations shown in the attractive announcement are up to the usual high quality of German work, and the series comprises a surprisingly interesting variety of subjects. R.

## Points of View

### Addendum

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:  
SIR:

In Mr. Samuel Scoville's letter to *The Saturday Review* for January seventh, he says, "It is a biographer's duty to state the facts fairly." He doesn't say that a commentator on the biographer ought to state them fairly, too. It seems to upset Mr. Scoville that Mr. Hibben went to *Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly* for material for his life of the Reverend Henry Ward Beecher. Says Mr. Scoville, "This was a publication at one time suppressed by the authorities as an obscene paper and Victoria Woodhull served a term of imprisonment for publishing the same." The facts are that Victoria Woodhull was arrested on the complaint of Anthony Comstock; she went to jail until her exorbitant bail could be paid. She never was sentenced to a term of imprisonment. She was acquitted in her final trial, definitely. Mr. Beecher wasn't.

In connection with the life of Victoria Woodhull which I am writing, I have examined much of Mr. Hibben's material, though not all of it. One has only to look at Mr. Hibben's bibliography; one has only to glance through his fascinating book (if anybody can glance at it without devouring it), to know that it is founded on careful scholarship.

Says Mr. Scoville, "... I do not object to Mr. Hibben's using any authority whatever. I do object to his not using them all." Mr. Scoville hasn't used all of Mr. Hibben's authorities either! Moreover, Mr. Scoville objects to "his using the statements of Victoria Woodhull and omitting those of Julia Ward Howe." I think Victoria Woodhull had opportunities for knowing Mr. Beecher that were denied Julia Ward Howe.

And it is amusing for anyone to be solemn about a publication "suppressed by the authorities" as obscene. Who are the authorities and what is obscenity? Maybe they know the answers in Boston, now!

EMANIE SACHS.

New York.

### Exception Taken

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:  
SIR:

In Mr. Sayler's recent review of "Behold, the Bridegroom," in your columns, his first four paragraphs might well be a tangent beguiling to a chatty essayist, but scarcely an elucidation or evaluation of the central idea which I believe clearly motivates Mr. Kelly's brave study. Indeed, Mr. Sayler in hugging the pining-girl theme, nowhere mentions what he avers the playwright delivered from a platform. If Mr. Kelly has made his point so plain, it is curious that the critic missed it.

My recollection of the speeches and the drift of the story on the opening night leads me to consider "Behold, the Bridegroom" not as a psychologized "East Lynne," but as a commentary on the spiritual bankruptcy that trails the sensitive young woman who squanders the emotional and ideal aspirations of her youth in hectic living, exhausting thrills, and cheapening experiences. When a genuine romance sprouts, there is in her barren heart no soil to give nourishment and in her debased mind no dewy thoughts to stimulate efflorescence. That she had the fineness of nature to feel ghastly horror over how her misuse of life had betrayed potential happiness informs the close of the play with tragic beauty. That her home life and associates had swung her into the whirl of the jazz age with never a pause for stock-taking gives the play social significance. That beneath the metallic hardness and engrossment with false values there had awakened understanding and appreciation of finer loyalties comes as a revelation to the Bridegroom all too late, but to the audience, I fancy, in good time as an indication that sympathy here must solve a psychological phenomenon of the time.

ELMER KENYON.

Pittsburgh.

### Frances Newman says

in the *Atlanta Journal*:

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