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Dead Hands

THERE is an interesting discrepancy between the specifications for the Pulitzer prize awards and the character of some of the books crowned this year by the judges. The novel chosen to "present the wholesome atmosphere of American life and the highest standard of American manners and manhood" was Thornton Wilder's literary phantasy of Peru; the play chosen to "represent the educational value and power of the stage in raising the standard of good morals, good taste and good manners" was O'Neill's powerful study of an egocentric and predatory woman with a fixation, and a slant toward polyandry and nymphomania.

At least one dead hand has been lifted from literature. In 1920 it is alleged, that the Committee refused to award the Pulitzer prize for fiction to "Main Street," the outstanding book of the year, on the ground that it did not present a "wholesome" picture of the United States. When, later, the award was given to "Arrowsmith," Lewis refused to accept it, and had reason, if not wisdom, on his side. But now judges have discovered that a book does not have to be about Sandusky or Philadelphia in order to be American, and they have learned that a play may deal with quite appalling ethics and yet be a moral influence.

This right-about face is significant. The Pulitzer prizes are the most important awards given to literature and literary scholarship in this country. In cash value they are only one-fifth to one-tenth the sums given annually for prize novels by publishers, but in prestige and in real indication of merit, they are worth five times as much. The contrast between a list of Pulitzer books and a group of prize novels is striking.

And if in changing the plain meaning of "good manners" and "American" in the terms of the award, the judges have departed from the intention of the founder, it is not because they intended to cut loose from its leading strings an award of such importance, nor indeed in all probability because of any conscious purpose at all. They have responded, as we all are doing, to a change in the content of the words themselves. The idea that a play or a story which advertises a set of "principles" held by the best people in the last generation thereby advances the cause of morality, is no longer tenable. More boys were probably set upon the primrose path by the books of crystallized morals given to children to read in the nineteenth century than by all the dime novels; more girls went wrong because their parents tried to break their will to moral inessentials than from reading amorous fiction. The platitudinizing moralist, preaching damnation for every change from nineteenth century customs, has been regarded as an infernal nuisance for four decades at least. Traveling on Sunday, reading novels, playing cards, dancing, mixed bathing, the theatre, free thinking, and intellectual badinage, all of which were once labeled vices, if not sins, have been quietly dropped from the guide book of certain roads to hell; but the feeling that a good book must either leave moral questions alone, or be constructed upon a conventional virtue-rewarded basis, has persisted in the best families. A moral book was a book that taught familiar morals. An immoral book was a book where the ethical problems were either unsolved or solved by unfamiliar equations. "Tess" was immoral in the

The Upper Mowing

By HELEN HARTNESS FLANDERS

I KNOW a meadow pitched beneath the sky
As bosom to the shouldering crags that lie
Grey-sharp on blue; where all the winds ride
high.

Deep sunk in grass, the sun beats with the heart,
Releases it and lulls it to be part
In the earth-beat, as where first pulses start.

Long hills flow downward to the river's blare.
Its thin far noise comes dim along the air
And valley-thoughts are dulled in rising there—

There, where I'm bounded only by the grass,
Four fitted corners; and the clouds that pass;
Where what I am refuses what I was.

This Week



- "Heredity and Human Affairs."
Reviewed by *Ellsworth Huntington*.
- "The Campus."
Reviewed by *Frederick P. Keppel*.
- "May Alcott." Reviewed by *Honoré Willie Morrow*.
- "Mary Todd Lincoln."
Reviewed by *Allan Nevins*.
- "The Cambridge Ancient History."
Reviewed by *M. Rostovtzeff*.
- "Catherine-Paris."
Reviewed by *Arthur Ruhl*.
- "Daisy and Daphne."
Reviewed by *William Rose Benét*.
- "Flamingo."
Reviewed by *Ernest S. Bates*.
- Two Books on Physics.
Reviewed by *N. C. Little*.
- Translations from the Chinese.
By *Christopher Morley*.

Next Week, or Later

- "Lawrence and Hergesheimer."
By *Henry Seidel Canby*.

nineties, moral by 1910, because the sympathies of the readers had changed faster than their conception of a static morality.

But to call "Strange Interlude" a play that raises "the standard of good morals" is quite different. By no casuistry can this drama be said to inculcate ethics—unless in its warning against father-daughter, lover-sweetheart fixations. It does not teach, it investigates; it does not lead, it follows the changing complexities of conduct. Whether this purely analytic attitude makes the highest art is not a question we raise here. What is significant is that without protest, or even a grimace, a prize committee recognizes as self-evident that a play which makes

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Liberty for Mistress*

A Review by WILLIAM MACDONALD

IT would be difficult to find two biographies more completely different in substance, manner, and point of view than are these two biographies of Lafayette. Mr. Sedgwick undertakes to let Lafayette and his contemporaries "speak for themselves," and to portray Lafayette's character "in its larger outlines" even at the expense of passing lightly over "long periods of his life." He does not claim to be impartial, for, as he says, no man can be that. "We are all swayed by a host of prejudices, by nationality, by natural tastes, by education, by the peculiar circumstances of our interests." He has not begun his book however, with "any conscious partiality." The duty of a biographer, as he sees it, is that of a juror: "he should listen without bias to all the evidence, and make up his mind solely according to that evidence." Were there any fixed rules about biography, he might well have added, to complete his illustration, that the juror must also act upon the evidence with due regard to the law as laid down for him by the court, but there are no canons, and Mr. Sedgwick is free to interpret the evidence as the truth seems to him to require.

Mr. Delteil is equally concerned with the evidence, but in a wholly different way. "Needless to say that, in my opinion, to relate the life of an eminent man is not to report facts and action, but to invent his soul. What I love in a great man is myself. My hero is my 'ideal self.' Have I depicted Lafayette as he was? I have depicted him as I like him, anyway. I admire Napoleon; I like Lafayette." And before this, but in the same breath: "I have made him a pure sentimentalist. He was a great poet, one of the greatest the world has known. Lafayette's life illustrates brilliantly the power (and the limits) of the heart. Therein he is unique, true brother to Jeanne d'Arc. Lafayette, or the genius of the heart."

After such declarations of faith one is prepared for anything; for hero-worship, at least, in either case. Mr. Sedgwick's hero-worship, if he will allow the term, is much the more restrained. He rehearses with detailed care, and in a style which the events themselves, rather than any notable literary skill or grace, make interesting and at times vivid, the well-known story of Lafayette's life in its three important episodes—the years of youthful adventuring in America, the stirring times of the French Revolution when he was "master of the fate of France," and the revolution of 1830 when, "after a long eclipse, a second time he held that fate in his hands." The Lafayette whom he pictures is "not a great man, but a great-hearted gentleman, a worthy countryman of Jeanne d'Arc."

Nature had not given him ten talents; she bestowed upon him zeal, courage, energy, honesty, frankness, simplicity, perseverance, a flaming enthusiasm for what he deemed high causes, a disposition so graced with charm that his wife, his family, his friends adored him, and—a rare quality of ambitious men—a power of admiration, and what is perhaps rarer still, a hero to admire worthy of that admiration.

There is nothing to add to Mr. Sedgwick's appreciation of his own work. The book does not offer us new facts, and there is less than the words just quoted might seem to indicate in the way of novel

*LAFAYETTE. By HENRY DWIGHT SEDGWICK. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1928. \$5.

LAFAYETTE. By JOSEPH DELTEIL. Translated by JACQUES LE CLERCQ. New York: Milton, Balch & Co. 1928. \$4.

interpretation. It is, rather, a sterling narrative of an active, eager, enthusiastic life crowded with adventure and romance, not wanting in frailties and streaked with indecision at crises, thrust repeatedly upon the mountain and relegated as often to the plain, but imbedded, almost from its beginning, in the everlasting remembrance of two nations each of which it served with passionate devotion in anxious times.

Mr. Delteil sees things differently. A penetrating look at the record, and there emerges from his canvas a romantic personality wrestling with events as a poet or an artist might wrestle, mixing sentiment with practicality, more or less obsessed by words and formulas about liberty and the people, governed by his heart as often as by his head, but an alluring personality notwithstanding. Bacon's famous phrase does not hold here, for Mr. Delteil's Lafayette was born great, achieved greatness, and had greatness thrust upon him. There goes Monsieur de Lafayette, galloping down the centuries," somebody shouted on July 14, 1790, in the Champ de Mars, and Mr. Delteil follows with admiration the figure on the white horse.

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The blot on the scutcheon, as Mr. Delteil looks it over, is a curious lack of virility; and upon Lafayette's sexual shortcomings he dwells with a zest which the scrupulous in such matters may perhaps think would better have been bridled. A youthful affair with Marie Antoinette, devoid of the climax which the turbulent emotions of the Queen expected, earned him her undying hatred. "I could not have believed," said Napoleon to Lafayette years afterwards, "that human hatred could go so far." "Lafayette never knew love: not, at all events, Franco-Judaic love, hairy, chesty love. I see him," continues Mr. Delteil,

As a sentimental lover, a pure one, a great one: that and nothing else. He has no senses. That sharp and sloping brow never knits, never tightens. Those large level eyes are flat. He has no nose, and the rune runs: *No nose, no sex!* (sex, the stronger sex!) All that is carnal, lionish, incarnadine, wheezing and a bit barbarous in your true male, Lafayette lacks. The spread of the chest, the furnace of the veins, the vast odor of Nature; he has none of it. . . . A man in two dimensions: he lacks the beautiful third. No hair, in Samson's sense. He drinks water, and water breeds hydrogen. Women play no part in his life, a blank, zero. I could swear he never betrayed his wife. For all the good his senses did him, he was virgin to his death. . . . Dammit, the man has no entrails; he is all heart! Sterile? I think not. But I feel complete deviation of the senses: a kind of terrible deflection of his narrow, all sensual energy turned to ideology. . . . His heart he gave his wife; but his sex to liberty. Liberty for mistress. That makes his case a tantalizing one, mysterious and attractive. . . . For his fellows he has a twofold appeal: one for the collector of curios, one for the lover of logic.

How much of all this is solid fact, and how much a decorative background for the display of literary artifice, the reader may be left to judge for himself. Fortunately, it does not prevent Mr. Delteil from writing passages which are substantial as well as scintillating, or driving deep the likable human impression which he obviously wishes to convey. His description of Lafayette's childhood life in Auvergne, of his extraordinary experience with Marie Antoinette, of his days at La Grange, and of his death are striking examples of the French impressionistic manner. Mr. Sedgwick, too, although more straightforward and less self-conscious, describes effectively the chief episodes, keeps Lafayette always in the proper position on the stage, and quietly enforces the conclusion that the man, in spite of what was spectacular about him, was taken seriously then and is to be taken so now. Hydrogenic Americans, one may suspect, will prefer his book to Mr. Delteil's because, among other things, it brings Lafayette within the field of their national experience and comprehension, but they will miss some of the qualities that made Lafayette a hero to the French if they do not read Mr. Delteil's lively pages also.

A notable collection of the works of Horace Greeley has just been acquired by the Library of Congress from the Rev. F. M. Clendenen of Chappaqua, N. Y.

It includes books, pamphlets and articles by and about Greeley. In the list are volumes of journals edited by him, bound files of Greeley's *New Yorker* and *The Jeffersonian*, a set of scrapbooks containing a miscellany of newspaper clippings, lectures and letters, and notes in Greeley's own peculiar handwriting.

Eugenics

HEREDITY AND HUMAN AFFAIRS. By EDWARD M. EAST. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1927. \$3.50.

Reviewed by ELLSWORTH HUNTINGTON

IF there were any question as to public interest in the great problem of eugenics, all doubt would be dispelled by the writings of 1927. During that year Mr. A. E. Wiggam published his third book on the subject, "The Next Age of Man"; Professor E. A. Ross, under the striking title of "Standing Room Only?" issued a volume warning us of the dangers of overpopulation and assuring us that the only road to safety lies in eugenics; Mr. L. F. Whitney and the reviewer (in "The Builders of America") attempted to show that natural processes are already beginning to protect us against these same dangers; while many others treated the subject from all sorts of angles.

One of those others is Professor Edward M. East of Harvard. Although his "Heredity and Human Affairs" contains material that is also included in each of the other books mentioned above, it has a distinct character of its own. One way to judge of its character is to see how its ideas as to a sound eugenic policy compare with those of the other books. All the authors agree that such a policy must include the forcible prevention of reproduction among the obviously unfit by segregation or sterilization. All likewise agree that another step is the spread of birth-control among the lower classes, the main appeal being to the self-interest which makes people desire to lessen their burdens. Here our various authors begin to part company, or at least to display different degrees of optimism. Professor East is the least optimistic, perhaps because he is a biologist. He does indeed point out the highly hopeful fact that among the Jukes family, who are famous for their badness, the birth rate has fallen almost as fast as among the Edwards family who are famous for their goodness, even though Clarence Darrow has much to say to the contrary. But what bothers Professor East is not the million of the Jukes type, who can be sterilized, or even the million of the Edwards type, who self-control themselves into extinction. His worry is over the twenty million "defectives" who will be the active agents in a great proportion of the anti-social acts committed. If their activities are to be restricted in any way, other than eugenic means must also be sought. . . . Social inadequacy can never be eliminated by any combination of eugenics and euthenics. The poor of body and the poor of mind will be with us always, as long as the world lasts."

It is not quite clear why Professor East is so hopeless. The other authors, to be sure, paint an equally dark picture of the economic and political consequences which will overtake us unless we adopt a national eugenic policy. But Ross, who thinks that such events are almost on our heels, does not deny that they may sift mankind so that the new race is better than the old. Wiggam, with the ardor of a crusader, cannot help believing that the future will be far better than the past. Huntington and Whitney put the matter in still another light, for they say that nature, without any conscious act on the part of man, is already beginning to accomplish what all these eugenic writers so eagerly desire.

Professor East's tendency to see the difficulties becomes still more clear when he discusses the problem of raising the birth rate among the more competent portions of society. Like all eugenists he is persuaded that this is most desirable, but "preaching large families among the more intelligent people is hardly a solution. The wise will never compete with the foolish in the matter of reproduction." Professor Ross is only a little more hopeful; Mr. Wiggam sees vague signs that the upper classes are not wholly oblivious to the desirability of having more children; Messrs. Huntington and Whitney give figures which show that in the United States the people at the very top in character and achievement have distinctly larger families than do the rest of the upper classes; while Dr. Karl Edin, a Swede, has recently told us that in Stockholm the condition which all our eugenic writers sigh for has actually begun to exist—the birth rate among the more competent and intelligent classes is higher than among the less competent and less intelligent.

In the face of such diversity of opinion concerning so important a question, no intelligent person can afford to be ignorant of all sides of the problem. Professor East's sound, interesting, and carefully

considered book is just the sort of source from which to get a clear idea of the basic facts as to inheritance. The reader will be well rewarded by an excellent discussion of the mechanics of heredity, as well as by hearing why women are presumably as intelligent as men, how alcohol and inbreeding influence heredity, and what proof there is as to the innate ability of the negroes. He will be interested to hear of the effect of modern democracy in lessening rather than raising the percentage of leaders derived from the lower classes. If he is philosophically-minded he will greatly appreciate the careful discussion of the way in which racial mixture and especially the sexual as opposed to the asexual method of reproduction hastens evolution by increasing the number of varieties among which environment is able to select those best qualified for preservation. The whole broad theme of the relation of heredity to environment is very ably handled and forms the culmination of the book in both interest and value. Professor East is fairly positive in his opinions, but he backs them up by facts.

Undergraduate Life

THE CAMPUS: A Study of Contemporary Undergraduate Life in the American University. By ROBERT COOLEY ANGELL. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1928. \$2.50.

Reviewed by FREDERICK P. KEPPEL
Carnegie Corporation

WHEN we use the word "campus" we think of the life of a college or a university from the point of view of the student rather than from that of the professor or of the world without. Not a few writers have attempted recently to set forth this point of view, usually in the form of fiction and not particularly good fiction at that.

Professor Angell's book on the subject, which he calls "The Campus," discusses the whole question in a dispassionate, common-sense way. He has been trained in the appraisal of social problems and he is fortunately young enough to understand young people. The book has one defect which the author himself recognizes, namely, that so far as direct experience goes it is based on a single institution, the University of Michigan. The result is that while the picture is admirably typical of the coeducational state university, it is less so of the separate coeducational college, Swarthmore or Oberlin for example, and it differs in important respects both from the city universities and from the men's and women's colleges. It is true that the author has supplemented his direct experience by a study of recent available publications, but the book misses the influence of things that are in the air at these other places. As a result he fails to give full credit to the leadership of the women's colleges in stimulating the intellectual interest of students, and the quite remarkable recent growth of these interests in the student body at Dartmouth, Princeton, Yale, and Harvard. Just now the newspapers are making fun of the recent competitive general examination between the two last-named institutions, but that the competition has been held is an interesting and serious matter. Professor Angell would have derived comfort from the present feeling of experienced alumni secretaries that the athletic bonds tying the alumnus to his alma mater are wearing thin and that some way may be found to supplement them by intellectual ties as well.

Other points upon which further information would be useful include the effect on the Campus of the interest in the Arts, and in the Drama particularly, which is spreading like a wave over the country. A comparison with European conditions would be a help, and particularly with those of the English universities, where the unwritten objectives are closest to our own, but where student life has developed the art of conversation, an art in which our own young people are signally lacking. Canadian college life has also its lessons for us.

It is to be hoped that Professor Angell's excellent, if somewhat limited, treatment of this subject will inspire other contributions to it. The Campus and all that it implies affects a very large portion of our population. If we include the generations of young people either preparing for college, now there, or recently graduated, and if we add their parents, the total runs well into the millions. Higher education is also one of the most expensive investments. The value of college property and the endowment back of it are estimated to exceed a billion dollars each, and society in one form or another pays three hundred million dollars annually to support the Campus.