

## 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.

### Art

**MINIATURES AND SILHOUETTES.** By MAX VON BOEHN. Translated by E. K. WALKER. Dutton. 1928. \$5.

This well illustrated volume is an English edition of the writer's "Miniaturen und Silhouetten," which appeared in Munich about a dozen years ago. An excellent introductory chapter devoted to technique is followed by a short discussion, from a thoroughly German point of view, of the English, French, and German schools. About half of the book is devoted to "the miniature and its application," to its use in jewelry, fans, china, furniture, and even to an account of the preposterous use of miniatures as a means of interior decoration. The styles of various artists are set down dispassionately, in some detail, though the text is burdened with a good deal of irrelevant, though interesting, curt, tittle-tattle about the various distinguished sitters. Too little attention has been paid to connecting the art to the trend of the great schools of painting. The English reader will perhaps resent the amount of space devoted to the French and German schools compared with his own—an art so eminently English—and the American reader will be disappointed to find no mention of a Trumbull, a Sully, a Malbone, or a Trott. In the short chapter devoted to the silhouette, again, there is no mention of an American master of this trivial and often delightful art. The omission of the location of collections of most of the miniatures illustrated, of a list or even an indication of the public and private collections, and of a short bibliography are all serious, as is that of an account of modern work in this charming and intimate field.

### Education

- LA POUDEUR AUX YEUX.** By Eugène Labiche and Edmond Martin. Edited by Alice Cordon. Century. 88 cents.
- PAILLERON'S PETITE PLUIE.** Edited by Charles Cameron Clarke. Century. \$1.
- ABBOTT ACADEMY SKETCHES.** By Katherine R. Kelsey. Houghton Mifflin. \$2.
- THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.** Edited by Joseph P. Blickensdorfer. Scribners. \$1.
- SCIENTIFIC METHOD.** By Truman L. Kelley. Ohio State University Press.
- THE RENAISSANCE.** Edited by Robert W. Bollwell. Scribners. \$1.
- PLANE GEOMETRY.** By Charles Solomon and Herman H. Wright. Scribners. \$1.40.
- THE BEGINNINGS TO 1500.** Edited by James Dow McCallum. Scribners. \$1.
- ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL HISTORY.** By Carlton J. H. Hayes and Parker Thomas Moon. Macmillan. \$2.60.
- HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES.** By Charles A. Beard and Mary R. Beard. Macmillan. \$1.96.
- WHAT MEN FROM EUROPE BROUGHT TO AMERICA.** By Marion G. Clark and Wilbur Fisk Gordy. Scribners. \$1.
- FRESHMAN COMPOSITION.** By Henry Burrows Lathrop. Century. \$2.
- GENERAL METHOD: Foundation and Application.** By John P. Wynne. Century. \$2.50.
- WHOLESALE PARENTHOOD.** By Ernest R. and Gladys H. Groves. Houghton Mifflin. \$2.
- SHORT STORY TECHNIQUE.** By Stewart Beach. Houghton Mifflin.
- THE MIDDLE AGES.** By Edward Maslin Hulme. Holt. \$5.50.
- AN APPROACH TO COMPOSITION THROUGH PSYCHOLOGY.** By Phyllis Robbins. Harvard University Press.

### Fiction

**THE PEEP SHOW.** By ALICE DUDENEY. Putnams. 1929. \$2.50.

Alice Dudenev has tried an experiment in "The Peep Show" and out of this experiment has come an extremely interesting, if somewhat uneven, novel. She has given us first a woman of forty,—a woman of strange, fresh beauty and fascination (reminiscent of the woman whom "Elizabeth" has so wittingly illumined from "The German Garden" to "Expiation"); and has then slowly, unfalteringly, uncovered the personality of this woman to its tense, directing child-core.

We are used to the stream of consciousness novel, we are used to the novel that cuts back to youth for adult explanation, but this is perhaps the first novel that has actually worked backward, clue by clue, from the present to the past. It is only in the first part, before the retrospective quality of the book becomes established, that any uncertainty is felt. This woman, who is middle-aged yet looks all youth, who falls in love so improbably, almost Glynishly, has too little mystery to cause the necessary

suspension of judgment. After we are launched on the inversion of her life, the whole thing becomes taut, urgent, and perilously real. "The Peep Show" is a mystery story where it is not a criminal but a personality that is to be apprehended. There is plot a-plenty in this novel, which is, of course, at bottom a psychological study, and the book may be a straw telling which way the divergent winds of popular taste—for mystery on the one hand and microscopic analysis of character on the other—are about to blow.

**AFRICAN HARVEST.** By NORA STEVENSON. Washburn. 1929. \$2.50.

This is a tale of dissolution in the Transvaal. The de Beers had come from Holland to Africa two hundred years before Nora Stevenson takes up their lives. They had been a strong family with far-reaching lands, but too much holding with God's handiwork as against modern agricultural methods had eaten away the land, and marriages with the color line too lightly marked had wrought changes in the family stock. Here "African Harvest" begins, and tells the completed story of one generation, the last, of the de Beers. Jan de Beers represents a people and an attitude towards life—a people and an attitude which must always go down to defeat in a world keen for economic progress—but over and above this he stands out clear and vivid, an individual. Jan's idealism, his love of the land, his infatuation with his brother's wife, and his slow, subtle change of character make up a first novel with an epic background against which the lives of the characters show gigantic or microscopic as considered in their own times or in time.

**BELINDA.** By HILAIRE BELLOC. Harpers. 1929. \$2.50.

Perhaps it will remind you of the serried beauty of a formal bouquet, perfect to its last papier maché convolution, or of patterned English gardens sweet-scented in the dusk, or of almost anything old-fashioned and arranged with knowing-fingered care. Which of course quite overlooks the irony in the case. But so to the last dotting of the "i"s and crossing of the "t"s, Mr. Belloc has carried his last-century mood in this romantic tale of the love and sorrow and final joy of the beautiful Belinda and the manly Horatio that there are no tags of the ironic or humorous anywhere apparent. There simply is no use writing about "Belinda," for the author has turned a lovely trick that must be witnessed at first hand. It is Mr. Belloc's bright garland at the feet of other times.

**SHIPWRECK IN EUROPE.** By JOSEF BARD. Harpers. 1928. \$2.50.

The author of this book is a Hungarian who knows his Europe, America, and psycho-analysis well enough to make an in-

teresting novel from just those ingredients. The novel is far from being superficial, and does not at all rely for its principal interest on the sensational element possible in a psychological study of this sort. The protagonist, an American seeking an ego-cure in Europe, grows through the pages into a complete picture of however incomplete a man. While the characters may not be the people one lives next door to, they have the genuine quality of life, increased rather than diminished by their eccentricities and pathological tendencies.

**FIVE WOMEN ON A GALLEY.** By SUZANNE NORMAND. Translated by G. S. TAYLOR. Vanguard. 1929. \$2.

Arriving from France heralded as a "sensation" in Paris and purporting to be a "remorseless exposure" of free love, "Five Women on a Galley" rather places itself by this form of announcement in an unfortunate category. A problem perhaps less alluring, and perhaps more fundamental, lies behind the futility and unhappiness of the five French heroines. It is economic. They all do crave love and desire some more permanent love relationship than they succeed in achieving, but behind this, and constantly at their heels, is the question of how they shall eat and wherewithal they shall be clothed.

The five women are forced into congenial work and are so underpaid that they are driven into unsatisfying surroundings; it is this, rather than any free love, that accounts for their discontentment with life. They are not free to live, and they and the author both seem to confuse this with their not being free to love. They are driven to ugly calculations in regard to love as well as other things. One does not blame the men who evade marriage with such a snarl of defeated, talking, sentimental, and undetermining women.

But as fiction the book has decided merit. No one would become so hotly irritated by the five galley-slaves if they were not real. They are so real that they rouse in the reader that strong urge to good advice usually called up only by the lamentably misdirected conduct of friends. Upon whatever altars the author conceived her heroines to be sacrificed, there can be no doubt that it is human sacrifice. These ladies who eat tangerines and weep, lose their lovers and lose their jobs, refuse to remain black marks on white paper. They are exasperatingly flesh and blood.

**SUMMER FRUIT.** By DORNFORD YATES. Minton, Balch. 1929. \$2.50.

Just what it was in young Anthony Lyveden's personality that made women hurl themselves at his head remains a mystery. When the World War ended, Major Lyveden, D.S.O., aged twenty-nine, found himself penniless. As to prospects: a provision of his late uncle's will that before enjoying the fortune and large estates he must prove his worth by achieving a knighthood is so cruel a stipulation that this being fiction and not life we feel confident it will somehow or other be abrogated. Anthony ac-

cepted the conditions with true Christian humility, and without making the slightest effort to possess himself of his heritage, resigned himself to abject poverty.

We see this romantic Desdichado with but four pounds and a Sealyham dog, Patch, that he loves better than self, stranded in a London where there are no more "legitimate" jobs to be had. What more natural than that he should seek service as a footman in the house of a vulgar profiteer? For a man of spirit one would think the choice strange, yet our author considers it a logical determination for a gentleman down on his luck, and so must we.

You cannot keep a good man down, and a good footman is always in demand. What woman could resist such a shining spirit? Certainly not Valerie French, whose aristocracy was not merely of caste; nor could her aunt, Lady Touchstone, help yielding to his footmanly charm. Mr. Yates has drawn a remarkable character in which the dogged honesty, the pathos, the chaste idealism of a Major Dobbin blend with the delicacy of feeling of a Bunthorne. It is this sensitiveness that must be blamed for all the grievous misunderstandings which kept the lovers so long in single wretchedness. While one cannot accept without serious reservations the statement on the jacket that "Anthony Lyveden and Valerie French are not the stock characters of fiction, but living, breathing, erring human beings," one must admit that the title is *ben trovato*. The tale is succulent and sweet as a ripe, ripe mango.

**THE EDGE OF THE NEST.** By PHILIP STEVENSON. Coward-McCann. 1929. \$2.50

This is a first novel of unusual insight and firmness of touch. It is a study of three children in the agony of adolescence, that period which, like toothache, brings some of the keenest pains one can feel, and is invariably regarded as a joke by our civilized world. Mr. Stevenson writes of it with understanding and sympathy—not humorous patronage which the term usually connotes, but real fellow-feeling.

He illustrates his theme in three novellettes, whose only connection is that their leading characters are brothers and a sister. They came to the edge of the nest at different ages and from different causes, but inescapably. The oldest boy has at eight a child's love-affair, with vague premonitions of physical desire; the second boy, at fifteen, idolizes the leader of a gang of toughs and all his strength and knowledge and coarseness; the girl, in her late teens, with her head full of indigestible French novels, learns that it is true after all that (as she might have said) *on ne badine pas avec l'amour*. One by one they are all forced to a freedom from illusion and an independence of intellect.

Mr. Stevenson tells the stories well, assuming the protagonist's point of view and yet showing a comprehension of the forces involved that the child cannot have. In the first story the persistent use of the idiom and pronunciation of a child is sometimes obtrusive, but in the others the author uses

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## EVERYONE IS READING

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### A WILD BIRD

by Maud Diver

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MIFFLIN CO.

### DARK HESTER

by Anne Douglas Sedgwick

"For all the exquisite beauty of its writing and the familiar pungency of its observation of people, it is a thoughtful and dramatic approach to a modern situation and a completely modern handling of it."—*The New Yorker*. "The clever youngsters writing today may well stand abashed before the work of Anne Douglas Sedgwick."—*Phila. Inquirer*. \$2.50





## Points of View

### A Protest

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

Nearly three months have gone by since your reviewer, Constance Lindsay Skinner, took occasion to fill two columns of your *Review* to show that my book, "Frontiers and the Fur Trade," wasn't worth that much space. That, I have always thought, was the province of the editor, but seemingly both reviewer and editor disagreed with their own premise, and my worthless study was generously raised from inconsequence to importance by her unrestrained outburst. Since Miss Skinner transgressed the rights of a reviewer by taking advantage of the publisher's announcement of my connections with the Floating University (which has nothing to do with the book) and resorted to personalities, I am absolved, I believe, from blame if I say that she did a mighty poor job. I feel certain that, had I been given a chance to review my book, I could have made a much better job of pointing out its defects than did this lady who, I believe, received some degree from Yale for a thesis on this subject.

Some time ago a western "questionarist" asked me to give some fundamental principles on which I base my reviews. Had I had Miss Skinner's outburst before me, I should have answered: "Pick out a few personal objections; add a dash of flattery for well-known authorities to put yourself on the safe side; look for 'smut' and be outraged if you don't find it; allow yourself to be irritated by a different point of view and treatment; look for a hint from the publisher in the biographical note."

Miss Skinner found her cue. I am still "floating." From the waters of the Atlantic I take occasion to answer Constance Lindsay Skinner. She charges me with incompetence. I charge her with deliberate misrepresentation. Miss Skinner objects to a historian seeing the places about which he writes because then he sees only their modern aspects. I have pondered her paragraph about the depths and undertows of the stream of history, but I fail utterly to read any sense in it. When I said that history should be treated as "news" I meant that it should be written as though it were something which would interest people to-day, as current news interests them. Miss Skinner contradicts herself in her own objections when she says that "to-day's 'news' is dead in twenty-four hours." If that is so, isn't last century's news even more dead? I challenge the editor to quote my whole paragraph on this point, page 227. Miss Skinner adds the usual safe comment: "The books of history, which defy time, live not because of journalistic style, for they never have that, but because they are literature." Now what does that mean? To me it is simple academic bunk. As a matter of fact, the most vital records of any era are written, not as literature, but as current news, to wit, Pepys Diaries. The simple annals of any era are vastly more important than the bulk of pseudo-literature.

Miss Skinner, in her third paragraph, makes an implication that is tantamount to a charge of plagiarism, but which turns out to be the best compliment she had the heart to make me. I had not run across Professor Wrong's references to rivers; I had seen only the pamphlet on the fur trade by Professor Turner; I have not read Biggar's reference to the fish trade. With this confession of ignorance, I am happy indeed that these three important authorities justified my humble conclusions.

Miss Skinner distorts beyond recognition my reference to the European fur trade. It is impossible to know where to begin to answer her. I tried to show that the search for furs in Europe a thousand years ago was strikingly similar to the search for furs in America two or three hundred years ago; that the process of conquering the wilderness is always the same; and that, having exhausted their own fur supplies, Europeans in the sixteenth century turned greedily to the American forest for furs. This is not conjecture; it is fact. Miss Skinner says nothing of this, and distorts the whole by deliberately picking half sentences which no one who had not read the book could possibly understand. This misuse of her material is true throughout her review. I can't for the world of me get the drift of her objection to my reference to Eric's venture to America. I nowhere said that Eric came hither in search for furs. I merely showed that by accident he became the first fur-trader in America.

The way she handles my chapter on "Zions and Sodoms in the Wilderness" is

typical of her other reviewing. She is disappointed because the title led her to expect "smut," but the chapter didn't have any in it. Now, I ask you, isn't that a serious case for the "Society for Prevention of Vice"? But what I want to know is whether any reader of this review got from her any hint that this chapter referred to Lord Selkirk's philanthropic endeavor to found a colony in America with some dispossessed Scotsmen, which was frustrated by trade rivalry; or that it deals with the triumphant traders who lived a high life in Montreal? I ask, is that fair reviewing?

Likewise, take her private resentment at my use of the word masochistic. There is not a reader who would have the faintest inkling of what I had said from her "review." The reference is to my chapter on "Fathers of the Forest," the story of the Jesuits in the wilderness. Now I challenge anyone to find an unkindly reference to these missionaries in the whole book. All I said was that some of these missionaries had themselves declared that they welcomed torture and violent death for their faith. "Father Lalemant declared that some of the missionaries 'protest that the fires of the Iroquois are one of their motives for the journey.'" I suggested that "they rejoiced in their martyrdom with masochistic satisfaction." Now I don't give a hoot whether Miss Skinner objects to this word or not; I do charge her with deliberate distortion of fact when she implies that the tenor of my chapter was derogatory to the missionaries. Your readers are entitled to the truth about a book; not to personal taste with regard to words.

Miss Skinner gives no indication of the general contents of the book. She says absolutely nothing about my chapters on the influence of the fur trade on American and European literature, the destruction of wild life on this continent, the relations of Indians to the trade, the struggles of monopolies for possession of the continent, the life of the trapper, the conflict between hunter and farmer—nothing of this is even indicated in her "review." Yet she took two columns of your space to show that the book wasn't worth it.

The book went to press without my having access to my notes, hence there is no bibliography. Had there been Miss Skinner's little brochure on the fur trade would have been mentioned.

SYDNEY GREENBIE.

### Fairies' Farewell

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

In his review of D. B. Wyndham Lewis's "Straw and Other Conceits," Mr. Arthur Colton wonders what is "the charming ancient poem . . . explaining that most of the Fairies vanished at the same time (about 1539) as the Friars." I find it difficult to believe that he has not remembered (and for some good reason rejected) Bishop Corbet's famous "Fairies' Farewell" which appeared first in 1648 in his "Poetica Stomatia" and has since been reprinted by most good anthologists of the period. Kipling used some of its first words as a title for one of his books.

*Farewell rewards and Fairies!  
Good housewives now you may say;  
For now foule sluts in dairies,  
Doe fare as well as they:  
And though they sweep their hearths no less  
Than mayds were wont to do,  
Yet who of late for cleanliness  
Finds six-pence in her shoe?*

Percy reprinted the whole poem in his "Reliques" noting "the departure of the Fairies is here attributed to the abolition of Monks." Bevan Wyndham Lewis is just the man to slip alliteratively from Fairies to Friars, though nobody knows better than he does the distinctions between the worlds of Monks and Friars. At any rate, this, I think, is the poem he had in mind. It is a century less ancient than the occasion from which it sprang.

EDWARD DAVISON.

Arlington, Vermont.

Horace Liveright will publish in October a volume of letters by Frances Newman, edited by Hansell Baugh. Mr. Liveright asks anyone who has letters from Frances Newman that should be included in this collection to send them, or copies of them, to his publishing offices, 61 West 48th Street, New York City, as promptly as possible. Originals sent will be carefully returned.

## The Wits' Weekly

Conducted by EDWARD DAVISON

**Competition No. 63.** A prize of fifteen dollars is offered for the best Lines (not exceeding thirty) to a Neglected Poet. Living men or women are not admissible, and the chosen poet should be named. (Entries should reach the *Saturday Review* office, 25 West 45th Street, New York City, not later than the morning of July 15.)

**Competition No. 64.** A prize of fifteen dollars is offered for the best lyric containing neither adjectives nor adverbs. (Entries should reach the *Saturday Review* office not later than the morning of July 29.)

Attention is called to the Rules printed below.

### COMPETITION NO. 61

The prize for the most amusing satirical Jazz Song and Chorus called "The Intellectual Blues," such as might occur in a piece called "The Highbrows' Revue," has been awarded to Homer M. Parsons of San Bernardino, Calif.

#### THE PRIZE "INTELLECTUAL BLUES"

*I WAS one of these Oedipus wrecks,  
With a yen for the opposite sex:  
Those of fifty or more  
Were the ones I'd adore—  
Till a psychoanalytic clinic shattered  
my complex  
And cured my*

#### CHORUS—

*In-telli-hectual blu-hues!  
And I don't mean maybe! (Dad  
da dad—or rather, pater pater.)  
Now I've got younger views!  
I want a calid, thermal, pachydermal,  
Titian-haired and unmaternal  
baby,  
As sweet as peach preserves,  
With lots of speed and curves,  
Who EATS like a HORSE, and  
DRINKS like a CAMEL,  
And with evidence a-plenty of the  
fact that man's a mammal;  
And then I'll ne-ver go back  
To the in-telli-hectual track.  
I'll trade my Einstein for a wine  
stein filled with escharotic liquor,  
Till my watch runs fast and my pulse  
beats quicker  
And I lo—se  
My intellectual blues.*

HOMER M. PARSONS.

I cannot do better than transcribe part of the prize-winner's covering letter. "There is jazz, you know, and jazz—slow-time and shake-away quickstep, barbaric blue chords and tricky syncopation till your feet can't rest. A hopeless lyric might be given an excellent jazz setting. But blues—ah, there you round up the maverick ideas for branding. Blues imply something lost and the search for a compensating pleasure; a dragging, hesitating melody which manages to keep just a little way ahead of the relentless, but unhurried chordal accompaniment. . . . Here, when a word is extended by the insertion of hyphens, each orphaned dash indicates a musical beat, a rhythmic accent. To help you in scoring the music, make allowance for some muted trombone effects after the patter line about the hot and thick-skinned redhead. The break between 'Mammal' and the succeeding line, clumsy in verse, has the precise stub-toe rhythm that is needed and that a good jazz blues musician can score effectively." These are good footnotes. Mr. Parsons's satire was not a whit better than Arjeh's, but his jazz and jargon seemed to me subtler. All the same Arjeh must be quoted in part.

*Sure—I got them intee-lectual blues!  
The most digressing -est and depress-  
ing -est -blues,  
Wyndham Lew's?  
Whose?  
The most be-numingest, E E cum-  
mingest blues;  
Most abiding, Graves and Riding  
Blues!  
Everyone owns 'em, everyone groans  
them  
Blues.  
So I sing like a canary, literary, ceme-  
tery,  
As I choose . . .  
Them perpetual, ineffectual, inteelect-  
ual blues!*

The "ests" and the "als" were marked for the attention of Ross Gorman. Ralph B. Yule ran hard for the first place with—

*Mah sweet writer went away an' left  
me cold  
(Writers always leaving me cold)  
Sneaked away and wrote a piece that  
everyone read—  
Money there, for everyone read!  
Now Ah'm blue.  
You'd be too,  
If your sweet writer turned and went  
Popular on you.*

Claudius Jones wrote the most amusing song of the week; unfortunately it was nearer to Gilbert than Jazz. I hope to print it in a later issue. Dr. Henry A. Davidson, too, reminded me more of "Patience" than anything else. His verses were excellent.

*After months of ineffectual  
Pursuit of intellectual  
Matters for sophisticated souls  
We have finally concluded  
That we must have been deluded*

*In searching for our philosophic goals  
We abandoned all romantic ways  
And sought the truth in frantic ways  
Until we wondered what we hunted  
for  
And all this would be bad enough  
But then to make it still more tough  
It turned out to be such an awful  
bore.*

Marshall M. Brice, John A. L. Odde, Hebe, and Elmer Ellsworth who rhymed Freud with—

*Oh, mammy, let me go low-brow  
And call a bird a "boil."*

all deserve praise. But Homer Parsons and Arjeh ought to collaborate on a "Highbrows' Opera" and besiege Broadway.

The following sonnet could not be printed last week:  
*The Coolidges are gone, and all the  
dust,  
Once raised in clouds by Cal's electric  
horse,  
Is settling on this famous attic course  
Where nothing has above eight years  
to must.  
An attic cleaned so often I mistrust;  
Can fables grow from such a harried  
source?  
Will superstition sometime, somehow,  
force  
A President to tremble when some  
gust  
Of wind awakes the echo of that  
speed  
That made a hundred millions hold  
their sides?  
Will memories of witchcraft make  
him heed,  
And say, "Tonight, my son, Cal  
Coolidge rides,"  
—Or must the unsung ghost of that  
poor steed  
Defer to ghosts the library provides.*

WILLIAM E. WILLNER.

#### RULES

Competitors failing to comply with the following rules will be disqualified. Envelopes should be addressed to Edward Davison, *The Saturday Review of Literature*, 25 West 45th Street, New York. All MSS. must be legible—typewritten if possible—and should bear the name or pseudonym of the author. Competitors may offer more than one entry. MSS. cannot be returned. The Editor's decision is final and *The Saturday Review* reserves the right to print the whole or part of any entry.