

## 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

- HAPPY DAYS. By Capt. Alban B. Butler, Jr. Coward-McCann.  
A PORTRAIT. By John Rothenstein. Covici-Friede. \$3.50.  
EVOLUTION OF ART. By Ruth de Rochement. Macmillan. \$6.  
THE GOTHIC REVIVAL. By Kenneth Clark. Scribners. \$6.  
ART IN ANCIENT ROME. By Eugénie Strong. Scribners. 2 vols. \$5.

### Belles Lettres

- THE STRUCTURE OF THE NOVEL. By EDWIN MUIR. Harcourt, Brace. 1929. \$1.25.

Mr. Edwin Muir separates prose fiction into three main divisions, the character novel, the dramatic novel, and the chronicle; and proceeding from examples, he derives certain generalizations about each division. Though at first he leads the argument gently, the conclusions quickly become abstract. The first result is that "the dramatic novel is an image of modes of experience, the character novel a picture of modes of existence." So far it is uncalled for to disagree with Mr. Muir's exposition; but the subsequent thesis, that the imaginative world of the dramatic novel is in Time, and the imaginative world of the character novel is in Space, introduces a difficulty which perhaps overshadows the advantage of this description. Time and Space are troublesome words, and insensibly they encourage Mr. Muir to employ other words which are troublesome, until we are puzzled to know whether we are being handed good coin or bad. There is probably acute discrimination in the later chapters; but we long for homely descriptive phrases, which might convey the distinctions adequately. The pseudo-scientific terminology has a suggestion of the grandiose. If a *récit* is the same as a yarn, let us call it that; if it is not the same as a yarn, we could get at it more quickly, and without feeling we were highbrows, by being told the difference.

In the middle of the book we have to struggle through unaided to the conception that by "period novel" is meant something close to good (or bad) reporting, and find out, on the next to the last page, that we are right. But our complaint remains that we have been given the conclusions before the clues; and there lingers a feeling, which we should have liked to have dissipated, that the novel is hardly yet a subject for criticism, in the sense that the drama and the various forms of poetry are subjects. That may be the fault of the novel, of ourselves, or of Mr. Muir.

- THE REDISCOVERY OF AMERICA. By Waldo Frank. Scribners. \$3.

### Biography

- KING HENRY THE RAKE (Henry VIII and his Women). By CLEMENT WOOD. Stratford. 1928. \$3.50.

This book pretends to be history. There is some basis of fact in it; the author has dug up in the literature of the time all the coarseness and indecency that he could find, and with a vivid imagination has added details. He can write in a way to give those details all their value. To what base uses may history descend. This book will doubtless be banned in Boston where it is published and thus secure a considerable success. It deserves a place easily in libraries of erotica.

- THE LOST ART. Letters of Seven Famous Women. Edited by DOROTHY VAN DOREN. Coward-McCann. 1929. \$3.

Is letter-writing a lost art? Typewriters, telegraphs, telephones, and a "machine age" might explain the loss, but they do not prove it. One seems to remember reading many letters, long, interesting, unhurried, written within the last twenty-five years, published and unpublished. Are not the Walter Raleigh and the Walter Page letters good of their kinds? Mrs. Van Doren refers to the common assumption that the art is lost, and cautiously supposes there is something in it. But is not the "machine age" in itself and in its inferences something of a myth, and the idea that no one any longer writes himself into private letters, another and derivative myth, not based on any substantial evidence? If one uses a typewriter as automatically as a pen, he writes as personally, except for the penmanship, which disappears in print anyway. If he dictates, it may be

nearer his talk than his writing is. The number of persons who habitually telegraph instead of writing must be negligible.

The seven women Mrs. Van Doren selects for her demonstration are Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Abigail Adams, Mary Wollstonecraft, Jane Austen, Jane Welsh Carlyle, Margaret Fuller, and Charlotte Brontë.

Lady Mary's letters are perhaps the best of the group presented, especially the one of her later years written from Italy to her daughter; Abigail Adams's are affectionate missives to John, though the most interesting is one from Paris to her sister; Mary Wollstonecraft's are passionate and sad letters to Imlay, the lover who deserted her; Jane Austen's are lively domestic gossip; Jane Carlyle's are all to Carlyle, and their character is already widely known.

Mrs. Van Doren remarks that with all Mrs. Carlyle's brilliancy and charm she never disciplined herself to literary labor, although Carlyle urged her to do so. "She complained because she was only the wife of a genius, she did not take the trouble to be more." But one feels that there was something like genius in her.

Margaret Fuller's letters are interesting but not extraordinary. It was her talk that was extraordinary, and her talk is lost. Charlotte Brontë's are the most curious. They are so serious and so queer; the first letter, to Miss Russey, advises for all girls a cool, sensible, unromantic marriage. She thinks no woman should begin to love until "the first half year of her wedded life has passed away—and then with great precaution, very coolly, very moderately, very rationally." The second letter explains that she did not know that Thackeray's domestic situation was something like Rochester's in "Jane Eyre," and regrets the coincidence.

All these women, Mrs. Van Doren points out, had some traits in common, "they all had a genius for living" and a terrible energy. They were all courageous, fond, wise, proud, egotistical, and impatient of dulness; finally, they were all articulate, and somehow interesting.

- THE LIFE OF LORD PAUNCEFOOT. By R. B. Mowat. Houghton Mifflin. \$5.  
MEMORIES OF THE OLD EMIGRANT DAYS IN KANSAS. By Mrs. Orson. Harpers. \$3.50.  
FAMOUS COMPOSERS. By Nathan Haskell Dole. Crowell. \$3.75.  
TWELVE BAD MEN. By Sidney Dark. Crowell.  
PORTRAIT OF AMBROSE BIERCE. By Adolphe de Castro. Century. \$3.50.  
PILLORIED! By Sewell Stokes. Appleton. \$2.50.  
STEALING THROUGH LIFE. By Ernest Booth Knopf. \$3.  
AMERICA'S AMBASSADORS TO ENGLAND. By Beckles Wilson. Stokes. \$5.  
RANDOM THOUGHTS OF A MAN OF FIFTY. By John Harsen Rhoades. Knickerbocker Press.  
THE DIARY OF TOLSTOY'S WIFE. Translated by Alexander Werth. Payson & Clarke. \$3.50.

### Economics

- THE RETURN TO LAISSEZ FAIRE. By Ernest J. P. Benn. Appleton.  
THE LABOR MOVEMENT IN THE UNITED STATES. By Norman J. Ware. Appleton. \$3.  
OUR ECONOMIC MORALITY. By Harry F. Ward. Macmillan. \$2.50.  
ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF PUBLIC DEBTS. By Shitaro Mataushita. Columbia University Press. \$3.

### Education

- TRAINING CHILDREN. By William H. Pyle. Century. \$2.25.  
PLAIN PROSE. By W. E. Williams. Longmans, Green. \$1.75.  
INCENTIVES TO STUDY. By Albert Beecher Crawford. Yale University Press. \$5.  
CREDIT AND COLLECTION CORRESPONDENCE. By James H. Picken. Shaw.

### Fiction

- THE SINGING GOLD. By DOROTHY COTTRELL. Houghton Mifflin. 1929. \$2.50.

It was a pretty fancy about the golden song of the larks which gave this book its title; and fancy, pretty and odd, is present throughout the whole volume. In the wilds of Australia a girl child is born into a family running over with boys, and she grows to womanhood, chumming with them and with all the children of the outdoors. She weds with one "Dickie," an odd, attractive little man seemingly drawn from imagination, although his pose is unaffected. There is a pretty story of their domestic experiences, of hardships bravely borne, of unconscious heroisms on the part of the un-

(Continued on next page)

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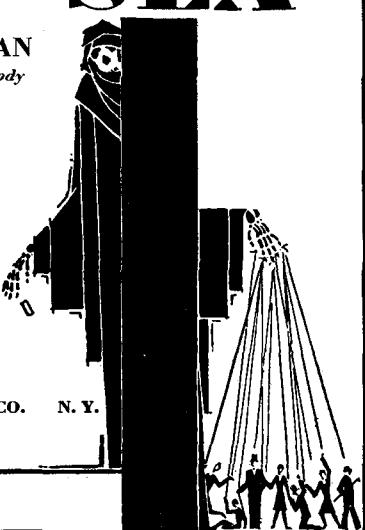
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## The New Books

### Fiction

(Continued from preceding page)  
usual little man, who is winning in the extreme.

Modern in tone, the book is written in an old-fashioned way; with ease and leisure, as though its author, while recognizing the strife and madness created by the world war, remained untouched by it. She seems to see it through the haze of family and personal life, and consequently there is an atmosphere of peace and naturalness throughout the book which makes it quietly enjoyable.

A SELF-MADE THIEF. By HULBERT FOOTNER. Doubleday, Doran. 1929. \$2.

This is the story of a once upright New York lawyer who plunges suddenly into a life of crime and vice which leads ultimately to his destruction. He rashly bets three other men that he can accomplish alone a single act of daring bank banditry and escape detection. After winning his wager, the thrill of the escapade lures him on into committing similar crimes, while he outwardly maintains his accustomed respectability, though he is actually sinking deeper and deeper into the ways of the underworld. He experiments with heroin, and is soon its victim, a completely unbalanced creature who murders two of his confederates and then in crazed bravado divulges the truth of the harrowing misdeeds the guilt for which no one hitherto had dreamed of laying to him. This seems to us a better story than those Mr. Footner has published in the past year or two.

WAR PAINT. By DANE COOLIDGE. Dutton. 1929. \$2.

The period of this turbulent "Western" is that of the vanished days when New Mexico, then a territory, was the scene of constant strife between lawlessness and order. Its action centers in the war waged by despoiled horse and cattle ranchers upon powerfully organized bands of rustlers which threatened to bring ruin to the honest industries of the county. A stranger from Texas, one Curly Wells, on the trail of his own stolen horses, joins the aroused citizenry and is conspicuously valiant in the work of exterminating the outlaws. The story is an almost continuous round of gun-fights, broken occasionally by gentler interludes wherein Curly loves and courts a frontier damsels.

THE LEADING MAN. By HORACE ANNESLEY VACHELL. Putnam. 1929. \$2.

Valentine Godden is one of those inexplicable sons whom the country squires of fiction not infrequently produce. Family pride found his unstable temperament accounted for by a flighty grandmother. After an indifferent career at school and in the army, he finds his true career on the stage. Valentine has always been conscious of playing a part; he has always known that what others on occasion thought his wit or his bravery was but cowardice beautifully conquered by the fact of an audience. Consequently, he is as fully himself when acting behind the footlights as he is with his friends in his rooms. When he goes to war he is a hero before his men and a weakling as soon as he is alone.

His love affairs are influenced by this peculiarity of his to less advantage. With both Doris and Sally he offers marriage when the occasion demands it, although he is actually faithful in his heart to his first sweetheart who jilted him when he gave up an army career. Fortunately he meets her again and wins her back and is able for the first time to reveal himself candidly to another.

The "leading man" is a charming personality, although he often seems stupid and cannot interest more than mildly. It is better not to analyze him too carefully and so not risk impatience with an easy-flowing narrative which creates atmosphere with more skill than it does characters.

GO AS YOU PLEASE. By OWEN ARCHER. Stokes. 1929. \$2.

This novel is written earnestly about an earnest heroine. Joan Karslake's sense of values is instinctively sound, but it is displayed without much humor and with an adolescent disdain for compromise. She is indeed a strangely serious child for two such irresponsible parents as are hers. When she is sent along the "go as you please" route, silently by her mother, directly by her father, she goes up to London to live with her brother. Here, disgusted with the code of his friends, she falls into a friendship with Martin Osborne, who shares her opinion of the modern generation. What is more, she marries Martin, only to discover that he is mentally deranged as a result of shell wounds. From the day of

their marriage he domineers utterly over her and with fanatic cruelty. Joan suddenly realizes that she loves the childhood playmate who has been devoted to her always and frees herself from this intolerable alliance.

One is rather inclined to attribute Joan's difficulties to her own lack of imagination and immaturity. She is certainly not the character to whom Mr. Archer can safely entrust the burden of his argument. For this reason, despite his sincerity, the obvious constructive intent of the book is not successful.

THE LIVING ALIBI: A MYSTERY NOVEL. By SELDON TRUSS. Coward-McCann, Inc. 1929. \$2.

Let Mr. Edgar Wallace look to his laurels! If the new writer introduced by "The Living Alibi" cannot beat him at his own formula, at least their work is indistinguishable. Mr. Truss knows all the tricks. In his book, exactly as promised in the advertisements, disappearance follows disappearance, murder follows murder, and a master mind directs whole armies of alien criminals, and manipulates the most fiendishly ingenious of scientific devices in a desperate attempt upon the crown jewels and the reader's peace of mind. The modern English thriller of this type seems to be written with both eyes fixed firmly on the movie serial rights. As long as events move with breath-taking rapidity, and the pursuits, escapes, catastrophes, and reversals of situation are sufficiently spectacular, one may sacrifice not only the shadow of probability and the slightest consistency of characterization, but even that thread of logical sequence of cause and effect upon which the detective story, properly speaking, depends. Often amid the excitement of the final scenes, the initial complications are overlooked entirely. That is not quite true of the present exemplar, but when one does come to the dénouement, the presence of the figure with whose plausibly described abduction the book opens is a genuine surprise. One has been through so much that one had forgotten all about him.

THE HOUSE OF THE THREE GANDERS. By IRVING BACHELLER. Bobbs-Merrill. 1928. \$2.

Irving Bacheller has carried the present popular form of fiction, the mystery story, to his own ever-popular milieu, the small American village. The village's name, in this case, is Amity Dam, and the villagers are known as Amity Dammers. Almost anything might happen under such names, and almost everything does, including a complicated murder mystery which "The House of the Three Ganders" unravels very pleasantly and efficiently, taking time during the process for the introduction of numerous salty characters, for which Mr. Bacheller has long been famous. There is young Shad Morryson, an unhappy runaway boy who falls in with great kindness at Amity Dam and enjoys boy-heart-warming success as an amateur detective. There is Bony Squares, Shad's young friend who calls the street where tombstones are made "Angel Alley," the Sunday meeting-house "The Sob Works," and other equally worthy things equally irreverent names. And there is, above all, old Bumpy Brown, a wooden-legged veteran of the Civil War, who prepares in his little cabin such meals as halt the story with their succulence, whose favorite oath is "By Jeedit," whose perennial tale-piece sentence is "And there lay round upon the ground great heaps of so'jers," and who utters most of the pithy remarks on life of the kind that made "Eben Holden" quoted from New England to Oregon.

ORIENTALE. By FRANCIS DE MIOMANDRE. Translated by RALPH ROEDER. Brentano's. 1928.

This is a novel of atmospheres, of the airless atmosphere of the French shabby-genteel household, and the heavy, luxurious atmosphere of China. The relationships are subtly drawn. There is a skilful irony in the presentation of the Chinese lodger, polite and alien, so remote that the family regard him no more than a cat in their talk, while we wise spectators suspect him of being capable of more than he shows. This same exoticism, in another Chinese to whom we are introduced, becomes the strongest element of his fascination for the Frenchwoman—a delicate study in the unlikeliness of like things. The first appears to have no importance, because he is Chinese, the second to have all the golden richness of the East—because he is Chinese. In the end we are flattered by finding that the first, the self-effacing lodger, was, as we thought, by no means so negligible or unimpassioned as he seemed. The atmospheres are caught, and the passions recorded, with a remarkable quietness and economy.

**ROGUES IN CLOVER.** By PERCIVAL WILDE. Appleton. 1929. \$2.

This story of a reformed card sharp's campaign against followers of his old calling is highly entertaining and refreshing. During his six years of outwitting the unwary, Bill had mastered and practised every trick of the trade so that when he turns against his former competitors they are at his mercy. His method is to be introduced casually into a game suspected of containing one or more dishonest players, and then, by expert observation, to lay bare the cheats. Bill's special forte is poker, but he is equally skilful at detecting hanky-panky in roulette, faro, and even casino, but bridge, old maid, and slap jack do not seem to come within the range of his talents. The book begins heavily with the repentant, prodigal Bill's return to his father's home, but quickly drops its solemn air and keeps thereafter to a note of comedy.

**A SEARCH FOR AMERICA.** By FREDERICK PHILLIP GROVE. Carrier. 1928. \$3.50.

Mr. Grove's search was somewhat thrust upon him in the beginning, but it ended by being most comprehensive, and the picture he presents is drawn from a double perspective. The Old World peers at the New, and society's upper crust takes a long look at what lies under that crust.

The author, born of cultured British-Scandinavian parents, found himself left at twenty-one with a literary and artistic education and very little else. Feeling that genteel poverty was his almost inevitable future in Europe he came to America as an immigrant. His struggle to adjust himself in a material way makes interesting reading. He is by turn a waiter, a book-agent, a factory worker, a hobo, and a harvest hand. The difficulties he experienced in arriving at an understanding of the attitude of mind which he found on this side of the Atlantic are a clear illustration of how definitely the American spirit was an accomplished fact even thirty years ago. In the end he rejects it and goes to Canada, where he has lived since. Mr. Grove's gift for narration will divert even those readers who resent his sometimes drawing conclusions from a view of only one side of the picture.

**THE BEST EUROPEAN SHORT STORIES OF 1928.** Edited by Richard Eaton. Dodd, Mead. \$2.50.

**THE SEVEN DIALS MYSTERY.** By Agatha Christie. Dodd, Mead. \$2.

**DARK STAR.** By Lorna Moon. Bobbs-Merrill. \$2.50.

**QUEEN OF NINEVEH.** By Algernon Crofton-Covici-Friede. \$2.50.

**THE PLUNGER.** By E. J. Dies. Covici-Friede. \$3.

**THE SCARLET THUMB.** By Jermyn March-Henkle. \$2.

**JUDITH SILVER.** By Hector Bolitho. Knopf. \$2.50.

**DAYS IN THE SUN.** By Martin Anderson Nexö. Coward-McCann. \$3.

**PALE WARRIORS.** By David Hamilton. Scribner. \$2.50.

**LIVES AND DEATH OF ROLAND GREER.** By Richard Pyke. A. & C. Boni. \$2.50.

**A DUCHESS AND HER DAUGHTER.** By Alfred Bishop Mason. A. & C. Boni. \$2.50.

**THE LOVE CLINIC.** By Maurice Dekobra. Payson & Clarke. \$2.50.

**THE LADY OF THE LOTUS.** By Ahmadul-Umari. Oxford University Press.

**THE CURIOUS LOTTERY.** By Walter Duranty. Coward-McCann. \$2.50.

**DODSWORTH.** By Sinclair Lewis. Harcourt, Brace. \$2.50.

**BARBARIAN.** By Dickson Skinner. Appleton. \$2.

**BLACK GOLD.** By Robert McBlair. Appleton. \$2.

**PROTESTANTISM IN THE UNITED STATES.** By Archer B. Bass. Crowell. \$3.

**ROSE THE DANCER.** By Winifred Carter. Crowell. \$2.

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**THE GAMBLER.** By Aylwin Martin. Crowell. \$2.

**DYNASTY.** By Clarence Budington Kellard. Harpers. \$2.

**CRISIS.** By Claude Houghton. Harpers. \$2.50.

**HOBBY HOUSE.** By Russell Neale. Harpers. \$2.50.

**ONE BY ONE.** By Moray Dalton. Harpers. \$2.

**ALL IN A DAY.** By Martin Armstrong. Harpers. \$2.50.

**THE DEVIL AND THE DEEP SEA.** By Elizabeth Jordan. Century. \$2.

**THE HAMMER OF DOOM.** By Frances Everton. Bobbs-Merrill. \$2.

**SUMMER FRUIT.** By Dornford Yates. Minton, Balch. \$2.50.

**KIF.** By Gordon Daviot. Appleton. \$2.50.

**SALAD DAYS.** By Theodora Benson. Harpers.

**PALE WARRIORS.** By David Hamilton. Scribner. \$2.50.

**THE BURNING FOUNTAIN.** By Eleanor Carroll Chilton. Day.

**EASILY PERSUADED.** By Elizabeth Deane. Liveright. \$2.

### Juvenile

(*The Children's Bookshop will appear next week*)

### Miscellaneous

**THE STORY OF ENGINEERING IN AMERICA.** By CHELSEA FRASER. Crowell. 1929. \$2.50 net.

Here is a most interesting chronicle, presented in a style which will appeal to the young lad and also to his father. In the first chapter, entitled "The Engineer and His Work," the author briefly traces the development of engineering from its earliest days to its present specialized participation in modern civilization. After giving a very appropriate answer to the question: "How is it that so many American engineers gain distinction while still comparatively young, say, under fifty?" he says, "Engineers are the most optimistic, persevering class of workers in the whole universe. There is no problem presented to them that they will not tackle. What is more, they seldom fail to accomplish their ends, even under the most discouraging circumstances. The job may require a year, ten years, or even twenty."

How the old trails were expanded and developed into great modern highways as civilization advanced is followed by the story of our amazing accomplishments with railroads, bridges, tunnels, and subways. In beginning the chapter on dams and reservoirs the author describes his experiences when accompanying a group of Boy Scouts on an overnight hike. "Our boys wanted a place deep enough and wide enough to swim in, but the stream was both too shallow and too narrow. . . . So they went to work and the dam was soon built out of logs, boulders, brush, and sod." Lessons about strength, levels to which the water must back up, run off, spillways, and reservoirs were soon learned and "it was the best swimming hole any of us had ever used."

No volume of this size can contain the entire story of engineering in America. Wonderful developments in the fields of mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, and chemical engineering have been omitted, as well as all those remarkable achievements in industrial plant design and operation which include problems of organization as well as of invention and design. The industrial worker in this country today has about six times as much horsepower at his disposal as his European rival.

**COLLECTING ANTIQUES.** By W. G. MENZIES. Dodd, Mead. 1928. \$5.

This is at once a beautiful book, a maddening book, and (for some collectors) a valuable book. To take the last attribute first, the lists of furniture makers, potters, line engravers, and artists, the various glossaries, all are excellent for consultation. But here a difficulty—and this points to its qualities of high provocation—is that its very size prevents it from being anything but a library volume; it never could be classified as a handy *vade mecum*, the sort of general collecting book that the average gatherer in of antiques packs in his trunk before he sets out to forage in English and Continental markets. This is a fault very easily forgiven to a compendious tome on one subject, which moves from shelf to table and rarely ventures farther; witness Mr. Luke Vincent Lockwood's "Colonial Furniture," a scholarly study of a single theme which makes it invaluable to the student of Americana.

Mr. Menzies's reach is too high, stretching as it does from English furniture (oak, walnut, and mahogany) to the intricacies of French *ameublement*; dealing with British and Continental porcelains and potteries; considering painters of the Dutch, Flemish, French, Spanish, Italian, and English schools; devoting pages to mezzotints, etchings, woodcuts, and all the rest. It too far exceeds the grasp of the average collector; in a few contradictory, plagiarized words it is not what the everyday amateur's heaven is for. It is too diverse to be completely useful; half a dozen more practical collecting volumes could have been made out of the material of which Mr. Menzies is very evidently a master. All this is emphasized since the Preface speaks of "Collecting Antiques" as a beginner's book, a thing it most assuredly is not.

The writer, however, has no criticism at all of the magnificence of the examples that are shown; these stand as criterions of taste—and of the luck that might happen to anybody. Watteau's famous "Gilles" was picked up at the Paris Ham Fair for twenty dollars; recently an English friend at a rural sale bought a Poussin for seven pounds, and, just the other day, a fine Louis Seize bed was bid in for six francs (plus

(Continued on next page)

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