

The Reader's Guide

By MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the choice of books should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review*, c/o *The Saturday Review*

E. J. M., Urbana, Ill., asks if there is a book on the technique of acting that could be used as a text in teaching children from five to fourteen? There is indeed: "Amateur Acting and Play Production," by Wayne Campbell, professor of dramatics at Oklahoma City University (Macmillan), goes into details on the technique of expression on the stage, and though it is meant for actors who, though young, are older than the younger of these years, its advice can be easily relayed to children by the director. For quite young children "The Little Theatre in School," by Lillian Foster Collins (Dodd, Mead), would make a valuable guide and companion; it goes in strong for play-making and gives four plays written with and largely by children, but it also sets the mind of an inexperienced leader at rest in matters of production and performance. For older amateurs, take "Modern Acting," by Helena Chalmers (Appleton), an excellent guide.

C. H. L. Jackson Heights, N. Y., asks for books on Whistler. The Pennells' "Life of James McNeill Whistler" (Lippincott) is now in its sixth edition; it has been lately reinforced by Elizabeth Robins Pennell's "Whistler the Friend" (Lippincott); the Pennells also edited the "Whistler Journal" (Lippincott). The latest book on the artist to appear is James Laver's "Whistler" (Cosmopolitan), a fine study, not hero-worship but sympathetic; it includes the old *Harper's Magazine* Du Maurier sketch of him as "Joe Sibley," which was prudently left out of the book of "Trilby." "The Whistler Book," by Sadakichi Hartmann, is published by Page; Putnam publishes his "Gentle Art of Making Enemies" and Mosher his "Twelve O'Clock"; Mrs. Pennell's "The Art of Whistler" is in the Modern Library; Dutton publishes a sumptuous "Portraits of Whistler," by A. E. Gallatin, and "Recollections by J. A. McNeill Whistler," by A. J. Eddy, is issued by Lippincott.

E. H., Mishawaka, Indiana, and E. F., Stockton, Cal. ask for suggestions for a study club now choosing from novels of recent publication and announced for publication, such as would reward club consideration.

"FAREWELL to India," by Edward Thompson (Dutton), is out, and seems to me as nearly as a novel can come to an actual visit. It does not argue or unduly take sides; if it does not treat Gandhi with veneration it does treat him with respect, and the talk is unmistakably true talk. I would put it with "Bengal Lancer" and "Passage to India." Maud Diver's "Ships of Youth" (Houghton Mifflin) has an Indian scene but the actors are English; this is already a best-seller. The most astonishing best-seller of recent years is "Hatter's Castle," by A. J. Cronin (Little, Brown), acclaimed everywhere in England, as long as "The Good Companions" and as consistently and continuously unpleasant as that famous flood of sunshine was pleasant to read. Yet "Hatter's Castle" clearly is one of those books that must be read—even all the way through, once you begin. I am more interested in his next book, whatever that may be. "The Sun in his Own House," by Warren Piper (Houghton Mifflin), is the second of a series, a quiet, deeply interesting record of a young man whose extraordinary strength and distinction of character makes way in spite of peculiarly bad handicaps; notice its remarkable conversation between an invalid and the doctor who is showing him why he is not—as he fears—growing weak in the mind; many an invalid would be the better for reading this. J. E. Buckrose's "Silhouette of Mary Ann" (Stokes) is biography in dialogue, beginning with the life of George Eliot amid the surroundings made famous by "The Mill on the Floss" and continuing to its close in Chelsea. "Ambrose Holt and Family," by Susan Glaspell (Stokes), is to my way of thinking her best novel since "Glory of the Conquered"; it is a straightforward story but the underlying idea is subtle as Pirandello. There is a new edition of Anne Douglas Sedgwick's shrewd study of the artistic (musician's) temperament, "Tante" (Houghton Mifflin), to remind us that she did not begin to write with "The Little French Girl." "The Loving Spirit," by Daphne Du Maurier (Doubleday, Doran), I haven't seen yet, but I would read anything with kind feel-

ings if it were, like this, written by the grand-daughter of the blessed George.

The subject of Ford Madox Ford's "When the Wicked Man" (Boni) should recommend it to readers wanting studies of character, for it deals with a New York business man; they should also choose R. H. Mottram's "Castle Island" (Harper), for it involves a wife's part in her husband's career. . . . I would take G. B. Stern's "The Shortest Night" (Knopf), if but to prove to such members of the group as do not like detective stories that a murder mystery may be also a good novel. Though I hasten to add that it need not be to fulfil its right to live.

It is among the titles of novels as yet only announced, though for publication within a reasonable time, that I can flap about irresponsibly. For instance, I can hardly wait for the appearance of "Queens of Tilling," by E. F. Benson (Doubleday, Doran), for I am assured that in this novel the peerless Lucia of Rischolme (and Brompton) whose fortunes I have followed so closely that I have several times rebought "Queen Lucia" and "Lucia in London" when they have been borrowed away from me—is to meet Miss Mapp, that spinster on the boil whose adventures made me visit Rye (where they are supposed to have occurred) and purchase one of the "rainbow piggies" she was wont to collect. I am especially anxious to get a sight of A. A. Milne's "Two People" (Dutton), because I am always anxious to get a sight of anything by A. A. Milne, and I want to read "Two Worlds," by Vicki Baum (Doubleday, Doran) because I found her "Grand Hotel" even better as a novel than as a play, and heaven knows it was good enough as a play. I don't know what Louis Bromfield's "A Modern Hero" (Stokes) will be like, but I am predisposed to like it, and so, I fancy, are a great many other American readers. Admirers of Knut Hamsun's "Vagabond" (Coward-McCann) will reach for its sequel "August," which is said to be in a different vein, but still in a happy one, and those who followed the fortunes of Hugh Walpole's "Rogue Herries" (Doubleday, Doran) will welcome the novel about his daughter, "Judith Paris." Naturally "Maid in Waiting" will be welcomed; it will be the first new novel from John Galsworthy in four years. "The Pastor of Poggssee," by Gustav Frenssen (Houghton Mifflin) is already out; it is in one sense a story of the war years in Germany, in another a statement of German idealism *contra* contemporary materialism, in the persuasive manner of Frenssen.

A remarkable novel has just slid into print, "God in the Straw Pen," by John Fort (Dodd, Mead), presenting in a close-woven series of episodes the course of a camp meeting in Georgia a century ago; it is a true historical novel, true to time, place, and character, and with enough of the timeless in it to make it more than historical.

This department does not feel comfortable in so great a departure from its standards as speaking about books it has not read, but I cannot let slip the chance of saying that after Emily Hahn's "Seductio ad Absurdum" (Brewer, Warren & Putnam) which contained the germs of some eighteen complete and excellent novels, I am willing to take a chance on her own first effort at continuous fiction, "Beginner's Luck," which the same house promises for August.

E. N., Baltimore, Md., some time ago saw a review of a book, autobiographical in nature, by a Chinese woman who was a member of the court of the Dowager Empress, but has forgotten title and author. It must be either "Old Buddha," by the Manchurian Princess Der Ling, lady-in-waiting to the Chinese Empress (Dodd, Mead), or the same author's "Kowtow" (Dodd, Mead), the story of her own life as a child and at the court. Princess Der Ling also wrote "Lotus Petals" and recently, "Two Years in the Forbidden City" (Dodd, Mead) and all of them are fascinating. I keep a strong impression of what the Dowager Empress must have been like, from one reading of "Old Buddha" in the year of its publication.

H. S. L., Pioche, Nevada, has been advised by his customers that "if you want to sell wrought iron hardware you must build the house to put it in." So, be-

ing a blacksmith as well as a client of this column, he consults me for books (well illustrated) dealing with hunting lodges, mountain cabins, rustic camps, and the like; books of an architectural nature. Appleton publishes a little book by Brimmer entitled "Camps: Log Cabins; Lodges and Clubhouses." The Architectural Book Company has one by Shapard called "Camps in the Woods." Both of these would be helpful. But this column would welcome further suggestions.

P. H. T. Orono, Maine, and R. S., Boston, Mass., were the first to identify the verse about speaking with some old lover's ghost as the lines that open the poem called "Love's Deity," "by that delight-

fully stimulating metaphysician John Donne," as R. S. says, recommending "The Poems of John Donne" with an introduction by George Saintsbury, available in a two-volume edition in The Muse's Library, Routledge, London. "Whether this edition is now out of print I cannot say; it were a pity if so, for books in 'The Muse's Library' are of just the right size to slip into the pocket or bag of the omnivorous reader." P. H. T. says that Donne seems to be coming back into fashion and calls attention to the new edition of John Donne published by the Oxford University Press. For my own part, I like the looks of the edition published last year by the Nonesuch Press, a lovely compact little volume.

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This novel has not been serialized

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THE ULSTER COUNTY GAZETTE and Its Illegitimate Offspring. By R. W. G. VAIL. New York: New York Public Library. 1931.

THE ULSTER COUNTY GAZETTE Found at Last. By R. W. G. VAIL. The same.

FOR many years one of the most persistent annoyances of librarians and book dealers has been the quite obviously spurious copies of the *Ulster County Gazette* of January 4, 1800, announcing the death of George Washington. Some of the copies offered possessed a verisimilitude which was perplexing: many of them were so obviously impossible as to be grotesque. But although some seventy-five variants have been collated and noted, no one could find a genuine *Gazette* of that date, although such a newspaper existed, and its history was pretty well known.

In 1930 Mr. Vail wrote the first of these monographs, devoting forty-eight pages to listing and illustrating the various claimants, and telling the story so far as it was known or surmised. And then, in November of last year, out of a clear sky the Library of Congress obtained the genuine *Gazettes* of December 28, 1799, January 4 and 11, 1800! At last the whole story could be written, and so Mr. Vail wrote the last chapter in a twelve-page addendum.

The history of the lost newspaper and its "illegitimate offspring" makes fascinating reading, and ought, as well, to steady the nerves of librarians and booksellers who have been pestered with spurious copies.

R.

Libraria

THE HUNTINGTON LIBRARY BULLETIN. Number One. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1931.

THROUGH the Harvard University Press the Huntington Library has brought out the first number of its *Bulletin*, a well gotten out quarto of over two hundred pages. There are two photogravures, of the Library and of Mr. Huntington. The contents include descriptions of the treasures of the Library.

ADDRESS AT THE DEDICATION OF THE STERLING MEMORIAL LIBRARY at Yale University on April 11, 1931. New Haven: Yale University Library. 1931.

THE addresses included in this volume are those of Librarian Keogh, Mr. John A. Garver, President Angell, Mr. Herbert Putnam, and Rev. Henry S. Coffin. One hundred and fifty copies have been bound in blue boards and cloth back, with a paper label.

R.

Leonardo da Vinci

THE ROMANCE OF LEONARDO DA VINCI. By DMITRI MEREJKOWSKI. New York: Random House. 1931. \$5.

THIS is an unlimited edition of the complete and unabridged translation of Merejkowski's story of Leonardo, by Bernard G. Guerney illustrated with reproductions of da Vinci's drawings and one color reproduction of the "Head of Christ."

It was a pretty considerable task to make a wieldy volume out of the very long story of da Vinci. But the volume at hand, containing some 580 pages, is clearly, almost delicately printed. The only flaw is an occasional line too tightly spaced to be easily read. The paper is thin and easily turned. The binding is in ornamented cloth. Altogether a very satisfactory library edition.

R.

BOOKS PUBLISHED BY WILLIAM EDWIN RUDGE and by the Studio. 1931.

THIS is a complete list of books issued by Rudge and also of *Studio* books taken over by him for sale in this country. There is a complete index and a note on Rudge books now out of print. The list is very finely printed in Baskerville type, and the arrangement of titles and other information has been well handled.

TYPOGRAPHY: A Catalogue by BIRRELL & GARNETT. London. 1931.

THIS is a priced catalogue of books on printing, supplementing and continuing, though in brief entries only, the same dealers' "Type-Specimen Catalogue" of 1928. Any printer will become ravenous just by looking through its pages.

R.

The Latest "Colophon"

THE *Colophon* has now become an institution, welcomed both for its contents and because it is a "printer's holiday." Just as there is no warrant to suppose that a given subject must have a definite typographic dress, so there is no reason why all magazines should be printed in uniform typography. The *Colophon* has achieved a pleasant and provocative distinction by having each of its contributions printed in a different way, and by a number of printing houses. On the whole the present number offers some attractive variations on the typographic theme: for instance Stanley Morison's account of Captain Edward Topham is set in Caslon type and printed in three columns to the page, savoring of a newspaper of the eighteenth century which only could beget a Topham.

The recrudescence of nineteenth century type faces of doubtful antecedents and more than doubtful character goes on, encouraged by the Pynson Printers and the Grabhorns. Alongside them appear Caslon (of course), Baskerville (in the recent admirable linotype cutting), Janson, Garamond, and Brimmer. None of the recent fine English monotype faces appear: they are so admirable for book work that one regrets not to see them in American printing. As for the newer school of German printing, its absence is scarcely to be deplored, since it looks out of place in this country—some of the results of the modernistic trend in typography have been almost as bad as the architecture of the New School for Social Research!

Of the contents it is not so easy to write: for a printer it is difficult to see the wood for the trees at times, and to know whether the text supports the typography or *vice versa*. One gets that way after dealing with type for many years. But even if there is a hint of amateurishness in the editing one forgives it because of the firm conviction that the best work is always done by intelligent amateurs.

Mr. Underhill's opening article on first editions of Huck Finn would have delighted Mark Twain, might even have provoked him to a humorous outburst on collectors of "firsts." The details of the long-forgotten shop-operations which now perplex the collectors of Mark Twain's story are amusing enough. Mr. Rogers's rambling reminiscences of Edwin A. Abbey when that superb draftsman was with the old *Harpers Magazine* will be good, if somewhat sad, reading for those who bemoan the rise of the half-tone plate and the consequent deterioration of the "standard" magazines.

Mr. Harding writes of the "Pacific News," Willa Cather and A. E. Coppard of their getting into print, Burns and Richard Savage are considered in different phases by Mr. Ferguson and Miss Osborne, Miss Taylor writes of "The Way of the Best Seller," and Mr. Morison of "Captain Edward Topham."

There is an unusually good linoleum cut by K. M. Ballantyne. And to lend preliminary zest to the whole number Mr. Cleland has contributed a cover of a grace and charm which are so often lacking from American work as to make this one exceptional.

R.

HOMER: The Iliad. Pope's translation. New York: Random House. (London: Nonesuch Press.) 1931. \$33.50.

ASTROPHEL AND STELLA, by SIR PHILIP SIDNEY. Edited by Monica Wilson. New York: Random House. (London: Nonesuch Press.) 1931. \$5.

OF all the modern presses devoted to continuous publication of books, none, I think, can compare with the Nonesuch Press for the soundness of its titles and the