

at times seemingly contradictory details. And through this cloud of coordinated and cleared dates and details presented entertainingly in spite of their inherent dryness and monotony, comes compellingly something of the absorbed and lasting enthusiasm of Professor Odell for his subject. Valuable as the volumes are in themselves they prove absolutely the inestimable value of such collections of theatrical portraits, programs, and other memorabilia as that in the Harvard University Library—a lasting memorial to the foresight, wise selection, and enthusiasm of its late curator Robert Gould Shaw. Without it the priceless gallery of theatrical portraits these seven volumes offer must have been meagre. Without its programs, Professor Odell, facing the lack of newspaper files, often for a considerable time, must have shown blanks where now he provides pages of helpful information.

In brief, whether, as is to be strongly hoped, Professor Odell brings his history down to the present day, or not, he can with the finishing of these seven volumes, sink back murmuring in the words familiar to us in our schooldays: "*Exegi monumentum aere perennius.*"

A Strange Idyll

THE MAN WHO DIED. By D. H. LAWRENCE.
New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1931.

Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT

THIS tale (which was published in Paris in 1929 in a limited edition under the title of "The Escaped Cock") is an interesting illustration of the philosophy of the late D. H. Lawrence. His philosophy was essentially stoicism, since its basis was a conviction that the only good is the freedom of the soul, which it is necessary to maintain against the church, against the state, against the weaknesses of the soul itself. But whereas most stoic philosophers have taught that the senses are slave-drivers which must be overcome, Lawrence (who had the excessive admiration for physical strength and hardihood so often found in invalids) believed that the soul can find its freedom and its highest expression only in acceptance and use of the body. It is an attractive thesis, but it is, of course, opposed to the main current of Christianity, not to the teachings of the church alone, but to the mysterious words of Jesus himself: "There be eunuchs which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it."

Lawrence recognized this, and in "The Man Who Died" he has taken the bold course of representing Jesus as a convert to his view, just as Mr. George Moore has represented Jesus as a convert to the view that he was not divine. In this book, Jesus (whom Lawrence of course conceived as simply human), having recovered in the sepulchre from his swoon, comes forth, still weak and with his wounds unhealed, to begin life again. All men have looked forward to death to set them free from their desires, the "too much love of living" of one poet, the "heats of hate and lust" of another; even so has the sepulchre set Jesus free from his excessive desire for pure spirit, his uncontrolled passion to do good to men whether they would or no. He says, soon after his waking:

How good it is to have fulfilled my mission, and to be beyond it. Now I can be alone, and leave all things to themselves, and the fig-tree may be barren if it will, and the rich may be rich. My way is my way alone.

Now he recognizes the greatness of matter and of the flesh; when he finds a young cock, "the crest of a short, sharp wave of life," which in the fulness of its lusty strength has broken the cord that tied it, he says to it, "Surely thou art risen to the Father, among birds." So in his own new life, he finds a priestess dedicated to Isis, the Seeker of Osiris, who has kept her virginity for the man whom she feels destiny will send her, and he becomes her lover.

The aim is impossibly bold; the book necessarily falls short. It is written with such delicacy and tenderness that it will hardly offend the most devout, but that is also partly because one cannot feel that one is reading about Jesus; it will hardly convince the most radical. It is strictly comparable to Mr. Lewisoyn's "Last Days of Shylock," in which Shylock is represented as a munificent patriarch of Israel; that may be nearer the eternal truth of the Jewish character, but it is certainly not Shylock; and whatever one thinks of the philosophy of this book, its

proponent is not Jesus. The review of "The Last Days of Shylock" which appeared in these pages well said that it would be the more successful the less one remembered of "The Merchant of Venice"; and "The Man Who Died" will be the more successful the less one remembers of the Gospels.

If one forgets the impossibility of the book's postulate, there is much in it that is poignant and beautiful. The philosophy (of which it is impossible to give an adequate idea in a short space) is noble and appealing, as stoicism always is. The setting is hauntingly lovely. And the love of the man and the priestess, with its consummation from which he shrinks at first, because his wounds are still painful, and accepts at last as an offering to the ecstatic, untender force that is making the world, is a strange idyll, of the most powerful conception and the subtlest execution.

Vermont Background

SLOW SMOKE. By CHARLES MALAM. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1931. \$2.50.

Reviewed by DOROTHY CANFIELD

REGIONAL literature is as many thoughtful people have said, the answer to the problem of getting any literature at all out of so vast and sprawling a country as ours. The difference between what one knows about his own countryside and what one can learn later about other people's is qualitative not quantitative. It is comparable to the difference between the way one knows his mother tongue and the way he knows one learned—though ever so well—in later life.

Every experienced reader's heart leaps up, therefore, when he comes on a story laid in a definite corner of the globe, written by someone who grew up there. At least one of the conditions for true and deep literature is there. "Slow Smoke," a story from the mountains of northern Vermont, was written by a young man who grew up there, though quaintly enough, like Kipling writing "The Jungle Book" in Brattleboro, Vermont, Charles Malam wrote his story of the Montpelier region in a room of New College, Oxford.

The reader opening the book, hoping for a taste of the inimitable intimacy with the scene which is the hall mark of good regional fiction comes at once on a rewarding passage:—

A light September frost had come during the night. He savored it deep in his throat, like a rare wine, as he stopped on the small back piazza. The withered grass and dry, broken stalks of what had once been sweet peas were white and crisp looking by the parsonage gate. A tiny cobweb between two of the stalks had become a most intricate piece of jewelry, flashing with diamonds in the first bright sunlight. This was beautiful—too beautiful; and the air too precious, rich with the tang of mingled frost and sunshine. Beauty in nature was a very real thing to the Reverend Stanley Gregorson; it was the handiwork of God. Even the long day ahead of him must wait for a moment while he paid tribute; nothing of man's needs could come before the need of praise to God.

Already the village below the church was awake, and bustling about in the sweet chill of morning. Roosters crowed hoarsely among the houses; a door slammed on the back stoop; a confused murmur from henyards reached him as he leaned with one arm upraised against the verandah post, looking down upon the small cluster of roofs and barns and garden patches.

The story runs deep and quiet, with one or two furious boilings up to the surface that make its drama. We follow the troubled inner life of the minister who looked down lovingly on God's people in the mountain village. We see him struggling, first with his own vigorous natural temperament, forcing it into the narrow channels decreed by his religious faith. Later the struggle is with his only and much-loved son when the inevitable battle begins between a rigid old and a fresh-flowing new generation. Because of the strength of the older man this battle turns into war, tragic war which like all wars ends with the defeat of both sides.

The book closes with the birth of the old minister's grandson, the only one alive on the battle-field, left in the care of people who presumably have learned something about life from observing the drama of his family, and so perhaps will give the little boy a better chance than they had.

This story, recognizable by everyone with experience as a universal one, is unfolded against a real Vermont background, both indoors and out, every detail accurate with the loving, instinctive rightness of good regional writing.

A Tale of the Road

A JOURNEY TO CHINA, or Things Which Are Seen. By ARNOLD J. TOYNBEE. New York: Richard R. Smith. 1931. \$5.

Reviewed by FLORENCE AYS COUGH

I AM a conscientious reviewer. Books consigned to my care are read, and scored. The scorings are duly considered when I deliver judgment, but what am I to do about this enchanting volume? The proverbial egg was never so full of meat! It is not a question of which scored passage to mention, but the many, which I must omit to mention.

Professor Toynbee accepted, in 1929, an invitation to attend a Conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations which was to meet in Japan. Instead of making the journey from London to Tokio by the luxurious, if prosaic, P. & O. or C. P. R. steamships he elected to blaze a new trail which drew a circle around the Eastern hemisphere and which took six months to follow. Starting from London in a "new Ford," his wife at the wheel, Professor Toynbee motored to Chorlu, Turkey-in-Asia; from that point he proceeded by train, motorbus, and ship to the Far East and, via the trans-Siberian railway, back to the Far West. The essays and sketches assembled in this book are his "tale of the road"—and what a delightful tale it is! A mere recital of the chapter heads titillates the imagination, but when one adds thereto the humorous, the profound, the intuitive, yet ever practical, remarks of Professor Toynbee one is transported indeed upon a voyage into space.

I look at my scorings. Despair enters my soul . . . page eight: that wonderful summing up of the spirit of the Stefanskirche, the spirit of postwar Austria . . . no, no time to go into that. Page 14: what a characteristic example of Hungarian chauvinism! Pps. 19-20: yes, that is the epitome of the under-dog-turned-top-dog question, the question which is racking Southeastern Europe—can't stop. Page 26: must stop to congratulate intrepid Mrs. Toynbee on her heroic crossing of the Danube, on her skilful avoidance of "Bulgarian Atrocities" 1929! Page 47: that amazing analysis of "Americanism," that appreciation of the pioneer spirit, evincing itself now in Turkey as it evinced itself some years ago in the Middle West, may I quote it? no, I may not, nor may I add thereto, apropos as it is, my own pet theory regarding the genesis of American humors. But I must quote this bit on page 93:

I can only say that Adrianople, the westernmost city in Turkey, is one of the most "Oriental" places in the modern world. . . . you must push on into the Heart of Asia Minor and pay at least a flying visit to Angora in order to see the leaven of Western civilization at work. For here, in Asia Minor, the Turk is engaged on a thoroughly European—or rather, American—enterprise. He is trying to trans-

(Continued on next page)

A Balanced Ration for Week-End Reading

THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF SIR EDMUND GOSSE. By the HON. EVAN CHARTERIS. Harpers.

The biography, told largely in his own letters, of one of the most polished and distinguished English *littérateurs* of recent decades.

THE WAY TO RECOVERY. By SIR GEORGE PAISH. Putnam.

An analysis of the present economic crisis of the world and a program for its reform.

TANTE. By ANNE DOUGLAS SEDGWICK. Houghton Mifflin.

The reissue of an early novel by the author of "The Little French Girl," presenting a study of the artistic temperament.

The Saturday Review of Literature

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form himself from an Oriental conqueror in to a Western pioneer: a man who goes out into the wilderness and wrestles with it until it brings forth skyscrapers a hundred-fold.

And now Professor Toynbee speeds across five hundred miles of uncharted desert in the "safe-ways" six-wheeler motor bus operated by the brothers Nairn, New Zealanders who remained in Asia Minor after the war. Damascus—Baghdad, but not by the road followed by Nebuchadnezzar, nor even that which Alexander chose; no these routes have been made obsolete by the brothers Nairn. Baghdad—Basra, where one leaves the Mohammedan world—world now taking to sewing machines and automobiles. Years ago it regarded these machines with "Whizz, whizz, all by steam! Whirr, whirr, all by wheels!" So did the Pasha express himself to Kinglake; now that attitude is stone-dead in the Islamic World.

From Basra by boat to Karachi; a tiny island journey in India. Ship once more from the island-city of Bombay "which hangs from India by a thread," past the "isles of the sea," as Professor Toynbee calls Bombay, Colombe, Penang, Singapore, and Hong-kong in which although "Bombay is a first-rate modern city, whereas Penang is a kind of tropical garden-suburb, and Hong Kong is a peak, while Singapore is a mud-flat" he yet finds a common feature. The continental Asiatic cities are dominated by monuments of ancient Oriental civilizations, while "these isles of the sea are exotic versions of modern European ports without an Oriental background."

The journey proceeds through China, Japan, Korea and Manchuria, to England via the trans-Siberian railway. Toynbee's observations are penetrating, his notes full of interest; and how he can describe those experiences. East with its problems, its sorrows and joys to lie in the hollow of my hand even our old world from Mr. Woolworth's, a pencil in the form of a tiny globe, is lying at my elbow. The whole discussion is so important that I cannot select isolated passages for notice—I can only beg my readers to turn to the book itself.

A Writer's Writer

HENRY JAMES: LETTERS TO A. C. BENSON AND AUGUSTE MONOD. Now first published, with an introduction by E. F. BENSON. Limited edition. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1930.

Reviewed by ARTHUR COLTON

THE Benson archiepiscopal family were satisfactorily Victorian, both words being used to indicate, not to derogate. For when the warfare of this *risergimento* has quieted down, we shall be saying Victorian in something of this sense, not combative, nor indeed for an impossible summing up of all that the era contained, but for some kind of blended selection; much as we say Queen Anne or Elizabethan for a mental picture of a generalization composed of things chosen partly because they seem to stand out, but more because they seem to fall in. They submit to the generalization. Satisfactorily Victorian is something more or less Tennysonian, Arnoldian, having something to do with Oxford, Cambridge, Eton, Rugby, and the better for a clerical suggestion. Its connections and contrasts with the big, bulky Empire of its time, the bilge of ships, and rattle of factories, were something like those of the American "genteel tradition" (as the late Vernon Parrington and recently Mr. Santayana, have called it) with the rest of the hurrying, slambanging continent, ivory towers wherein men wrote of British tars and Hiawathas with tempered enthusiasm. A. C. Benson was an Eton master and then a Cambridge don during the period covered by the correspondence in this volume, but from Henry James's ivory tower, yet more remotely sheltered, Benson's seemed a life of storm and stress, wind blown on by the world. The letters to Benson bring one very close to James's ultra-literary temperament, as well as offer glimpses of his daily life, in social relations as nicely discriminating as his literary practice. The letters to Auguste Monod are fewer, but perhaps of even more curious interest. For the interest of James is after all literary, and technically literary, and these letters are all about proposed translations from his works, many of them written in French. M. Monod notes "*un des cas très rares où Henry James se trompe de mot français*," in his rendering "The Two Magics" by

"Les Deux Magiques" (instead of "*Magies*"). To a Frenchman it would of course be more apparent than to an alien that James, naturally, does not write French with the flowing sinuosity of his English (the difference is apparent enough), but it is of interest to see how much of our familiar James comes through the foreign idiom. In all translations that so far had been made from his works he was obliged to confess that very little of his personal expression had seemed to get through. The French equivalent was nearly always a false equivalent. The false equivalent was "always the *lit de Procuste* for the *malheureux* translated." He was inclined to think himself an especially difficult writer to translate because so *nuancé*, so given to shades and modifications; and further, that translation from English to French was more difficult than the reverse, because French has more "constitutional prejudices," more inhibitions.

Mr. Hilaire Belloc in a recent volume has an essay on translation, in which he remarks on the unique situation of a culture like the European essentially similar for the educated classes of the continent, so far as customs, music, and the arts are concerned, but in linguistic expression various and divergent. "Here we are, all of one western world, dressing and living much alike, and all pouring out a mass of ideas perpetually, yet chained to languages in five great groups, separated each from the others as never were idioms of any united civilization before."

James might have said six instead of five and avoided the doubt whether it is Spanish, Italian, or Russian that he would not admit to be major. Moreover, it is debatable if a unit culture is desirable. The language resistance may save us from its deadening monotony. The inconvenience may be our salvation. But at least the situation is odd, and possibly serious. Few people are really at home in more than one language, and the best linguists in but few. Where one is not at home the depths, reaches, and shadows are not felt. A change of language is like a change of skins. Every language misunderstands every other. And here is Henry James, a technician of the kind that French readers peculiarly appreciate, but who knows French well enough to foresee the exquisite discomfort of a change of skins, of niceties murdered by false equivalents.

The possible terseness of the English language was not of much use to James. His modulated, parenthetical style was become the habit of his soul. "Wednesday, 1.40, at the Athenaeum, if convenient to you," would be ordinarily terse, but James's idea of it is: "Just a speeded word to say that tomorrow, Wednesday, at 1.40 (if you can allow me till then) will do beautifully for our meeting at the Athenaeum; and I shall accordingly turn up there to the time of that punctuality." The speeded word must not run without discretion, must attend to its draperies. The hastiest note remembers that she is a lady and never lowers herself to a cliché. There is no affectation about it. It is the habit of the soul. To write "speeded word" instead of "hasty note" is an instinct for distinction, the habitual preference for the fresh untired phrase over the phrase that is jaded and battered. James may be called the writer's writer as properly as Spenser the poets' poet. His feeling for phrase is so constant and sensitive. "Who reads Spenser now?" There is always somebody who does. A young collegian now and then discovers him (probably not as Freshman English, but by accident or at some wise man's casual suggestion) and *la belle dame sans merci* has him in thrall. Complex imponderables, the tenuous emotions of drawing rooms, conversation that is all indirection and inference, may become as obsolete as elaborate allegories peopled with magnanimous knights and immaculate damsels, or as haloed monks and archbishops surrounding Holy Families; but great craftsmanship is never obsolete to the appreciation of other craftsmen. Diffuse, fastidious, intense in minutiae, James's audience was never large, and never will be. But every now and then in the twenty-first century some young writer will discover Henry James and "go up in the air" about him.

He was, like Howells, a realist in theory, not in temperament. "The gracious culture," says Parrington, "that he persistently attributed to certain choice circles in Europe was only a figment of his romantic fancy—a fact that he finally came to recognize—Did any other professed realist ever remain so persistently aloof from the homely realities of life?" A two volume edition of his letters appeared some years ago, and probably there will be more hereafter. James himself, I fancy, would have critically approved of letters grouped, rather than letters miscel-

laneous, grouped by their bearing on a particular relationship as with A. C. Benson, or on a particular theme as are the letters to M. Monod.

Frederick A. Stokes Company, New York, in collaboration with Hodder and Stoughton, Ltd., London, make preliminary announcement of a \$20,000 Prize Novel Contest open to anyone in any country and with no restriction whatever as to subject matter. The award is guaranteed to the best manuscript received. Manuscripts must, of course, be written in English. Curtis Brown, Ltd., are in charge of the contest.

Pegasus Perplexing



NUMBER XIII

You will have to be told that my first may be gold,
You will roundly and rapidly curse-if-I
Make the clues incomplete when I lay at your feet
These trivial thoughts that I versify.
It may be of steel or it may be of wood,
A light little thing or a solid old pound.
'Tis stronger than battle; 'tis greater than cattle,
The servant of heroes whom laurel has crowned.

There's many a slip 'twixt the shore and the ship,
And I know that my box won't be sent-if-I
Fail to act circumspectly and mark it correctly
As a case I can quickly identify.
I pick up my second, and put it my third,
Secure me a porter (who growls at his tip)
And, rejoicing at last that the crisis is past,
Commit my effects (and myself) to the ship.

Dear reader, be kind to an ignorant mind,
Forgive me, if I haven't got any—
Be it statics, aquatics, applied mathematics
Biology, Hebrew, or botany.
Yet I do know enough mathematical stuff
To say that my whole is a figure in plane,
With sides rather few—less than ten, more than two—
And further than that I decline to explain.

NUMBER XIV

My First

When my lord's afloat in a tiny boat
To sail the surging sea,
My bark goes over the water
To bring my lord to me.

My Second

'Tis I who claim the dear little name
My mother heard from me;
And my heart goes out to my daughter,
The little one at my knee.

My Whole

The way was strait to the golden gate
When Mother was young; for she
Believed, as the stern men taught her,
The Calvinistic me.

Charade Number X printed in the issue of July 18 was mistakenly inserted, since its solution had been presented in the article introducing the Pegasus Perplexing contest. In its place should be substituted the following charade which, in mailing answers at the end of the competition, should be numbered X.

"What's this my first?" is my next that he sings
Who complains that my whole is unkind to him.
He alone wisely lives who accepts what she gives,
Nor rebels when the future is blind to him.

RULES

Throughout the summer months *The Saturday Review* will publish two charades in each issue of the magazine, the last charade to appear in the issue of August twenty-ninth.

It is our hope that readers of the paper will be interested in solving these puzzles and will submit answers at the conclusion of the contest. Prizes will consist of copies of the book from which the charades are taken, "*Pegasus Perplexing*," by Le Baron Russell Briggs, to be published by The Viking Press at the conclusion of the contest.

Contestants must solve correctly at least ten of the twenty-four charades in order to qualify. A prize will be awarded for each of the 100 highest scores obtained by those who qualify.

The highest score will win a copy of the book specially bound in leather.

In case of ties each tying competitor will receive the award.

Solve the charades each week as they appear, but do not send in your answers until the last charade is published on August twenty-ninth.

In submitting answers merely number them to correspond with the number of the charade to which they apply and mail the list to Contest Editor, *The Saturday Review*, 25 West 45th Street, New York City.

All answers must be mailed not later than midnight of September tenth, 1931.

It is not required that competitors subscribe to *The Saturday Review*; copies of the magazine are available for free examination at public libraries or at the office of publication. The contest is open to everyone except employees of *The Saturday Review* and The Viking Press.

The accuracy of the answers will be verified by the editors of *The Saturday Review*.