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To the reader who is interested in the first appearance of a novelist of great talent, we recommend LAUGH AND LIE DOWN. We also recommend it to the larger public which read, or saw in the movies, and apparently enjoyed, *An American Tragedy* and *Street Scene*. We believe it is one of the most important novels of this or any year.

LAUGH AND LIE DOWN

By ROBERT CANTWELL

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LAUGH AND LIE DOWN

He could see it all in proportion, the clear gray eyes that looked at him and never saw him, the even curving eyebrows marking her smooth forehead, the thin lips she reddened against her teeth before she marked them with her lipstick. She could look at him and never see him, and listen to him and never hear him, and there was no way he could ever make himself real to her. No, more than that, he knew that if he said anything the words would glance off the bright metallic surface of her mind, she would hear him, but that was all. He wondered with a dim rising fear at the familiarity of the wary earlier, when he had been at the farm.

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Points of View

Long Short Stories

To the Editor *The Saturday Review*:
Gentlemen:

We were naturally interested in William McFee's review of "S. S. San Pedro," by James Gould Cozzens. As you know the story originally appeared in *Scribner's Magazine* in the first long short story contest.

We mention this because of the paragraph in Mr. McFee's review in which he says:

The answer, of course, is that the publishers and editors, in their solicitude for the supposed taste of the public, have steadily refused to have anything to do with the short novel. Most editors would shake their heads over a manuscript of the length of the "S. S. San Pedro" which is 23,000 words. There is not an author now practicing who has not been told, at some period of his career, that 25,000 words is "a very awkward length." As he has his living to earn, he either compresses his book into a short story or expands it into a standard novel. If publishers want short novels they will find many authors eager to supply them. Whether the public will buy them is another question, not easily answered.

We are glad to tell Mr. McFee that *Scribner's* is anxious for stories of this middle length. Our desire for them is so great that we are having at the present time a second long story contest for manuscripts of between 15,000 and 30,000 words. It closes on February 1, 1932.

K. S. CRICHTON,

Associate Editor, *Scribner's Magazine*,
New York City.

Goat Songs

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

Mr. James Norman Hall, in his review of "Manga Reva, the Forgotten Islands," makes the following statement: "Perhaps I am prejudiced in this matter of Polynesian tupaupaus, but I have this to offer in defense of my prejudice: although I have spent more than ten years in French Polynesia I have yet to learn of a single case—authenticated, that is, by men whose evidence is at all trustworthy—of a Polynesian ghost, in whatever form, having been seen by a white man."

I happened to meet Mr. Burbidge, the President of the Tahitian Mission of the Church of the Latter Day Saints (the Mormon Church), shortly after this criticism reached Tahiti, and said to him: "You, too, probably think I am mad or crazy,—perhaps both—as I still recall the strange incidents which I may as well call supernatural and which happened in Maupiti and Manga Reva. I'm absolutely sure I saw and experienced the episodes related in my book as well as many others of which I did not tell."

Mr. Burbidge said:

"Well, I have had a number of unusual things happen to me during my fourteen years on these islands, but the strangest of them was witnessed by two other white men, also Mormon missionaries, and by an entire congregation of natives of our Church as well. The occurrence took place in the spring of 1917 on the island of Takaroa, a coral atoll in the Paumotu Group.

We had that day buried a native girl of about fifteen at four o'clock in the afternoon, in the little white cemetery near the church. That evening, during a "himene" (singing) in the church, at, I think, about half past eight, suddenly, in the middle of a hymn, the sound of fine gravel or small stones was heard, rattling all over the roof. Everybody present heard it, and, as these himenes are an important part of the natives' social life, that means everyone on the island. The singing quickly stopped.

Being on a raised platform I could see easily through a near-by window, and what I saw was something indistinct and white floating past the window, not unlike a great bird in its movements. We all ran outside, and there we saw a white figure soaring away from the church towards the near-by graveyard. The thing floated until it came to the freshly-made grave and then descended and disappeared into the ground.

The natives were greatly excited and declared that the white thing was the tupaupau (ghost) of the dead girl. They all said she used to play tricks when alive and that the stone throwing was her last fling before leaving."

Mr. Burbidge added that I might use

his name if I desired to submit the experience in answer to Mr. Hall's disbelief in an actual experience by a white man with the supernatural in Polynesia.

Here I may add that in my experiences as well as in those of others these Polynesian tupaupaus are often quite amusing in their behavior. They differ, moreover, from the nearly extinct, powerful evil spirits of the old cannibal days, or "tiaporo," as the Church has since taught the natives to call them. They were far different in their actions and attributes.

Naturally, on the islands of Tahiti and Moorea, which were never cannibal islands and where quantities of tourists wander ecstatically every steamer day, these ancient tupaupaus no longer exist; but the traveller interested in these matters will find plenty of evidence regarding them if he is willing to undertake long and unpleasant trips to islands like the Marquesas or the Gambiers.

M. Julien, the Governor of Tahiti, warned me, upon my return from Manga Reva, against spending more than six months at a time in such an archipelago, especially as I was susceptible to the "overtones" of old Polynesia. He told me of his own experiences in the Marquesas, and said that the curious psychic atmosphere of those dead and nearly deserted islands almost overpowered him.

"I go back whenever I find the time," he said. "The peculiar essence of the place acts like a drug, and I have grown to like it."

Mr. Ducorron, who has known the Marquesas islands intimately for over half a century, makes the same observation.

These are but a few of the many white men who were more susceptible to the "old" spirit of Polynesia than Mr. Hall admits to being, and I believe they better perceived the natives' viewpoint because of their sympathy with their so-called superstitions.

I do not wish to be placed on record as championing in any way the cause of "night shades" and banshees and such. But if they happen to enter into my experiences while living in Polynesia I see no reason for not setting down quite frankly whatever might be my reactions to such phenomena. Arthur Machen seemed to feel the ancient pagan atmosphere lingering over the ruins of Roman camps buried in the English countryside, while Arnold Bennett saw the "Five Towns" there.

The point I am trying to make is that the writer or painter selects his material consciously or unconsciously from his surroundings, be those surroundings the shadows that linger behind the real and substantial world about him, or be they that solid world itself. As a painter I have gone through the various phases of the public acceptance of modernism, and I did not expect a writer of Mr. Hall's high reputation to take such a mid-Victorian attitude toward another's point of view.

To quote Mr. Hall further: "Mr. Eskridge's matter, whether considered from the personal, historical, anthropological, or the purely archaeological, viewpoint is, to put it mildly, somewhat open to criticism."

I did discover the burial place of the Manga Revan kings and that discovery has real anthropological value. No museum has yet sent a representative to Manga Reva, but Dr. Gerritt Wilder of the Bishop Museum, Honolulu, in accepting my collection of artifacts, tells me that they expect shortly to send one or two men thither to follow up the work I began.

I could name many sources of information—obscure articles in Catholic Church magazines, the Manga Revan Dictionary, native legends, etc.—but if I have succeeded in presenting new data even in a very informal way, surely I should not be reproached if I fail to handle it in the precise manner of a scientist or with the brilliant exactness of a highly developed literary mind.

For let me say that always I looked at Manga Reva, with its dramatic foreground—and background—as a painter; and, with the aid of my editor, Miss Tietjens the poetess, we produced a book presenting my purely personal reactions to a "swell adventure!" And I wonder if, after all, it isn't just a difference in temperaments, this having or not having an ear for "goat songs?"

ROBERT LEE ESKRIDGE.

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The Bentley Press

WILDER BENTLEY of Pittsburgh has established the Bentley Press for the limited production of books by hand composition of type and hand printing. The first effort is at hand—Chaucer's "Frankleyns Tale." As may not wholly have escaped the notice of the readers of this column, the writer is partial to hand printing and has tried to call attention to the occasional production of such books. This tender concern for an archaic method of printing may seem absurd and hopeless, but it is not without justification.

In the first place it must be recognized that we do not treat machines as tools, but as dominant, compelling engines of production. This is a crude and naïve point of view, due to our extreme preoccupation with means rather than with ends, and our universal inexperience with the results of machine production. Samuel Butler treated the matter of machinery in fiction: Austin Freeman pointed out with great clearness that the use of the hand press is actual economy if the edition is only a few hundred copies: Gina Lombroso has recently written a brilliant, emotional attack on the machine; and only a few days ago a hard-boiled Highway Department let a contract for the construction of a road with the stipulation that no machines were to be used.

It cannot seriously be proposed that daily newspapers revert to hand composition and hand printing, but equally it cannot seriously be maintained that small and limited editions of books can be as well or as economically produced by elaborate machinery for type setting and printing as they can by hand processes. The hand processes necessarily must abandon also the great intangible machinery of commercial production—high overhead, division of labor, high rentals, excessive commissions to middle-men, etc. But on the simple basis

of all handicraft work, hand printed books can compete in quality and price with machine made ones under many circumstances.

Mr. Bentley's book is a comely twelve mo., set in Poliphilus and lettre batarde, with two colors on the title page and first page of text. A fine grade of modern paper is used, though the unities had been better preserved by the use of a hand made paper. Color, impression and register are better than on most machined books: and so far as is practicable the book is the work of one man. Perhaps it is sentimental (*à l'Américain*) to regard a hand made book as better than a machine made one, but I believe that it has distinctive qualities of interest and excellence.

Mr. Bentley, however, is not easy in his mind. He has used in the book a mark of his press designed for him by a "commercial artist" of Pittsburgh—only to find that he has unwittingly trespassed on someone else's preserve! He accordingly wishes to make public amends, to wit:

A PUBLIC APOLOGY

"The Bentley Press announces with chagrin that, much as it deplores current practices among commercial artists, it has been made the dupe of 'dope.' In its first publication, and in the several hundred prospectuses of the same, a device has been used which is as obviously a copy of Mr. Rockwell Kent's mark for Mr. Elmer Adler as it is inferior to it in design and execution. The Press wishes to apologize publicly . . . to both Mr. Kent and Mr. Adler, while denying any deliberate attempt on its part to steal their ideas. . . . (Signed) Wilder Bentley."

Mr. Kipling has reminded us of what happened when 'Omer smote 'is bloomin' lyre—so with Mr. Bentley's "Commercial artist," except that the latter stole too obviously, and his "borrowing" was printed. If all the trouble and annoyance

of five hundred years could have been foreseen, some kindly nurse might well have strangled John Gutenberg in his cradle! R.

Limited Editions Exhibit

BEGINNING on October 5 and continuing for two weeks, the Limited Editions Club will hold an exhibition of its publications at the Art Center, 65 West 56th Street. The books will be shown in three sections—Books made in America, Books made in Europe, and Books made in Asia. There will be twenty-five titles in the show, including all of the books so far issued. In addition to the books there will be original drawings by some of the artists whose work has illustrated the books, Mr. Dwiggins's stencils, Mr. Goudy's type, binding materials, process blocks of various kinds, wood engravings, etc. R.

King's Printers' Editions

THE Viking Press, agents in America for Messrs. Eyre & Spottiswoode, announce the publication early in October of an important historical document, "Some Materials Towards Memoirs of the Reign of King George II," by John, Lord Hervey. Now for the first time the public will have access to those portions of the Memoirs which were suppressed in the edition published in the middle of the nineteenth century, for there has lately been discovered in the archives at Windsor Castle a copy of the original MS., containing passages which it had been thought were destroyed. There will be 900 sets printed, at \$30. R.

Book Auctions

THE book-auction season of 1931-1932, of which it is impossible to expect much, opened the sixth of October when the Chicago Book and Art Auctions sold the library of Dr. Gottfried Koehler, with additions from other sources. This sale, aside from certain groups of material dealing with the history of Chicago, with the general history of Illinois, and the Mississippi Valley, and with Indians, had little to arouse anyone's interest. It was respectable, but so exactly like other sales in the past that it seemed almost hackneyed.

On the afternoon of the fourteenth of October the American Art Association Anderson Galleries will sell the library of J. William Smith, of Syracuse, and selections from the Page and Nelson family libraries. The Smith library contains a

first issue of Hawthorne's "Scarlet Letter" with a cheque signed by Hawthorne laid in, and a manuscript criticism in Coleridge's handwriting, signed by him. The Page and Nelson books come from the family plantation in Hanover County, Virginia: many of them belonged to the late Thomas Nelson Page. There are: Keat's Bible, a farewell gift to him from John Taylor with an inscription in the poet's own hand; Charles Lamb's copy of "A Collection of Several Philosophical Writings," by Dr. Henry More, London, 1712, with marginal notations by Lamb; Coleridge's copy of Petrarch, with a twenty-three line inscription in Latin; a presentation copy from Izaak Walton to the Bishop of Salisbury with fifteen marginal manuscript notes in Walton's handwriting; James Boswell's copies of eleven of Goldsmith's works; Dr. Johnson's copy of Thomas Browne's "Pseudodoxia Epidemica"; and President Madison's copy of Diogenes Laertius. Later sales during October will include the autograph collection of the late William Winslow Crannell, of Albany, and the George W. Riggs collection of early Americana, with manuscripts and letters of great interest to collectors of Franklin and Washington. G. M. T.

Round about Parnassus

(Continued from page 188)

though he can frame many a notable phrase. And at the very end of the book there is a movement like a litany that takes strong hold of the emotions. I wish I could read so much of this kind of philosophizing, however, without being tempted to sing through my nose, "Go, tell Aunt Sally, the old gray mare is dead!" Which really brings us by contrast to that strange enthusiast, the late Harry Crosby, who died of worshipping the sun. In "Poems for Harry Crosby," his wife, with what seems to me to be but slight poetic craftsmanship in most of her work, has wrung certain striking brief declarations out of deep and genuine emotion. Particularly is the poem "Invited to Diet" poignant. The whole little book is gallant. You feel a proud appreciation of the subject informing it. Let me end by quoting this final passage from the last poem:

*Reverberation stirs the ring-starred pool
The trumpet shrills, then spills its faded
utterance beyond the hills*

*But you are more, much more,
You are not echo
Or not scar
Nor are you the reflection of—
You are.*

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