

# BOOKS OF THE SPRING

By AMY LOVEMAN

**P**oor, sick world. It has no part so remote but has its ills to study. The publishers' lists again attest by books whose very titles are an earnest of disorder to the sorry plight the nations are plunged into. "Is Germany Finished?" asks Pierre Vénot's new volume which Macmillan has recently issued, and "The German Crisis" (Farrar and Rinehart) H. R. Knickerbocker entitles his analysis of a state which even as we write is registering the opinion of its voters on its present government. In "Manchuria, Cradle of Conflict" (Macmillan), Owen Latimore traces the course of events which have led to the acutely dangerous situation which now confronts the Orient, presenting description, history, and interpretation in illuminating combination, while in "China Speaks," by Chih Meng (Macmillan), and "Japan Speaks" (Macmillan), by K. K. Kawakami, the two nations involved in the Manchurian dispute are given a chance to present their points of view. Those readers whose concern over Pacific affairs carries them further than a particular entanglement will find matter for their attention not only in these books but as well in such a volume as Foster Rhea Dulles's "America in the Pacific" (Houghton Mifflin) and in G. B. Sansome's "Japan: A Cultural History" (Century). And, for the matter of that, since the Soviet State is vitally interested in whatever may develop from the Sino-Japanese controversy, the same reader, as well as any other who is awake to the great historical events of the time, will find food for many interested hours in Leon Trotsky's "The History of the Russian Revolution" (Simon & Schuster).

Alas, "man never is, but always to be, blest." That revival of trade which in 1929 seemed to lie just around the corner of the New Year, and which ever since has flitted like a will-o'-the-wisp before the business community, still lurks somewhere in the future. As it delays, interest in the means to its insurance grows constantly more eager, and although official counsels have lost their potency, still discussions of the road to renewed health command attention. Of the many volumes dealing with international economic conditions recently to have come from the press none surpasses in interest the just issued "Recovery" (Century) of Sir Arthur Salter, a work in which the former British economic expert of the League of Nations analyzes with remarkable lucidity the various factors responsible for the present predicament of the world. Sir Arthur is able to reduce even so difficult a matter as the flow of gold between nations to a form simple enough to have meaning for the lay reader, and to present his general discussion in so absorbing a fashion that, added attraction though they are, his book hardly needs for its enhancement the character sketches by which he has enlivened it. It has had high praise from Walter Lippman, whose own "The United States in World Affairs" (Harpers), written in collaboration with W. O. Scroggs, is one of the volumes which students of international matters would do well to read. And while we're still on the subject of international politics we might as well call attention to Bernard Shaw's "What I Really Wrote about the War" (Brentanos), which concerns itself with politics that are now history, and which is a singularly entertaining book despite the seriousness of its content, and is so, of course, because of the highly personal quality of Mr. Shaw's incidental comment. Needless to say, Mr. Bernard Shaw highly approves of Mr. Bernard Shaw as a prophet, and is at no small pains to say to the powers that be or were, "I told you so." Never was a more plausible advocate of himself than G. B. S. Almost he persuades the reader that all that he wrote in 1914 and the later war years was the whole truth about the conflict. At any rate, he is convinced that he was on the side of the angels.

Speaking of angels reminds us, by one of those purely unnecessary connections which derive from a familiar quotation, that among the new biographies of the Spring are two on Huxley, one by Clarence Ayres (Norton) and the other by Houston Peterson (Longmans, Green),

both interesting, and both well adapted to the purposes of the non-professional reader. And having been reminded by the angels of Huxley and the controversy in which he played so valiant a part over evolution, we are promptly put in mind by that doctrine of what we think one of the most interesting books of the season, Homer W. Smith's "Kamongo" (Viking). We are reminded of "Kamongo" by evolution because, despite the fact that the book starts off in the manner of a Conrad novel (and a good Conrad novel), it springs a surprise by developing into a discussion of science and philosophy, its discussion being focussed about a remarkable creature, the lung fish, and its place in the general development of life.

There's no use apparently in our plotting out carefully an order of books to follow in our summary, for no sooner do we get launched on one set of volumes than a title we had relegated to another pops into our mind. Just because we mentioned the word science Sir Oliver Lodge's autobiography, "Past Years" (Scribners), "chisled" into our thoughts, and now, for no reason at all, we remember that we ought to have mentioned before when we were talking of Bernard Shaw, Archibald Henderson's "Bernard Shaw: Playboy and Prophet" (Appleton).

Well, we seem to have returned to biography, and though we had no intention of giving it priority of fiction, we suppose we might as well continue on its trail. As a matter of fact, biography constitutes one of the most satisfactory divisions of the spring publications, with such works to its credit as Matthew Josephson's "Jean Jacques Rousseau" (Harcourt, Brace), Emery Neff's "Carlyle" (Norton), Marcia Davenport's "Mozart" (Scribner's), the chronicle of a life so dramatic as to make as vivid reading as a novel, Gordon Craig's study of his mother in "Ellen Terry and Her Secret Self" (Dutton), and Richard Lockridge's "The Darling of Misfortune" (Century). The latter volume recounts the story of a life lived always before the public and yet in its incidents little known to the present generation, that of Edmund Booth, whose career was continually saddened by personal unhappiness despite all its triumphs in art.

If we go on enlarging on our books in this fashion we'll get nowhere at all with our list in the restricted space at our command, so, in order to expedite matters, we'll merely enumerate titles for a paragraph or two. As a matter of fact such books as Van Wyck Brooks's "The Life of Emerson" (Dutton), Ford Madox Ford's "Return to Yesterday" (Liveright), E. F. Benson's "Charlotte Brontë" (Longmans, Green), "The Letters of Jane Welsh Carlyle to Joseph Neuberger" (Oxford University Press), and Gertrude Atherton's "Adventures of a Novelist" (Liveright) need no word of comment; their titles are sufficiently self-revealing.

Elderly readers who can look back over the past half century at least, will read with that sense of satisfaction which comes from the remembrance of things past, Frances M. Walcott's "Heritage of Years" (Minton, Balch), the recollections of a life laid in pleasant places and in contact with the influential of many lands, and "I Would Live It Again" (Harpers), in which Julia B. Foraker, wife of the late Senator, recounts first the experiences of her young life, lived in the Middle West under conditions of almost pioneer-like simplicity, and then the events of her later years when her husband was playing a part in public life. The many who delighted in the sprightly "Men and Memories" (Coward-McCann) of Sir William Rothenstein will rejoice to learn that the second volume of his reminiscences is about to issue from the press, and the same group, or certainly those in it specifically interested in the arts, will fall with avidity upon the autobiography of Frank Lloyd Wright (Longmans, Green). Mr. Wright, considered by the cognoscenti one of the few men of America to whom the title of genius can be attached, has had a life so full of striking incident as to invest the chronicle of it with almost melodramatic interest. His book is many-faceted, presenting in its earlier chapters descriptions of a life (like Mrs.

Foraker's) lived under the simple conditions of a newly developed state, advancing to a recital of a Dick Whittington like success in the architectural circles of Chicago, and proceeding through a tempestuous personal history to a thrilling account of architectural triumphs in Japan, and finally ending with discussion of architectural principles and prospects.

Again we linger, and already we see descending upon us the doom of continuing our list in next week's number. Fiction, which we had hoped to tackle ere now, is slowly fading out of our reach. Biography still has numerous titles to present, among them Captain B. H. Liddell Hart's "Foch: The Man of Orleans" (Little, Brown), Clarence Darrow's "The Story of My Life" (Scribners), General Rafael de Nogales's "Memoirs of a Soldier of Fortune" (Harrison Smith), "Once a Grand Duke" (Farrar & Rinehart), by the Grand Duke Alexander of Russia, "Stalin: The Career of a Fanatic" (Viking), by Essad Bey, and the third volume of "Memories of Prince von Bülow" (Little, Brown), covering the years 1909 to 1919. Those for whom American annals hold fascination will find a curious chapter of history unfolded in David Karsner's "Silver Dollar" (Covici-Friede), the chronicle of HAW Tabor, silver king of Colorado, who dressed with incredible magnificence, filled his home with extravagant possessions, slapped a President on the back, and ended by borrowing quarters from his former friends in his indigent old age. Others will turn with interest to Arthur Chapman's "Pony Express" (Putnam), Wayman Hogue's "Back Yonder" (Minton, Balch), a study of the Ozark country and folk, and John G. Neihardt's rendition of an Indian's reminiscences in "Black Elk Speaks" (Morrow).

No Sinclair Lewis could more scathingly reveal Middle Western lapses than has Irina Skariatina in the course of her "A World Begins" (Harrison Smith), wherein she recounts her experiences in the employ of a wealthy Middle Western woman of incredible personality who treated the former Russian countess with all indignity except on the rare occasions when her title would appear to have proved a valuable social asset. Against such unlovely aspects of American character it is a relief to set up the career of Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes of whom Silas Bent has furnished a new life (Vanguard), and those fast-dimming but still lustrous figures of "The Samaritans of Molokai" (Dodd, Mead), Father Damien and Brother Dutton, of whom Charles J. Dutton writes. A sore aspect of American life finds chronicle in Warden Lawes's "Twenty Thousand Years in Sing Sing" (Long & Smith), a book which is shortly to appear. Naturally the appalling length of years designated in the title means the sum of the prison terms which fell under the Warden's charge; it is a moving account which he writes. The bitter is mixed with the sweet in Louis Adamic's "Laughing in the Jungle" (Harpers), the narrative of an emigrant's experiences in the United States. Again the cryptic title needs the explanation that the author regards the American scene as a jungle through the tangle and gigantic and grotesque difficulties of which he has made his way, preserving despite all bitter experiences faith in the country of his adoption.

One of the briefest, as it is one of the most delightful, of this season's grist of biographical works is Clarence Day's "God and My Father" (Knopf), hardly more than a fragment from a life history, but one altogether delectable in its wit, its humor, and its gracefully phrased satire. It is a book to read in an hour but to preserve permanently. Another volume, this time not American and not of the present day, which has much quiet charm, is "The Memoirs of Gluckel of Hamelin" (Harpers), the diary of a Jewish woman of seventeenth century Hamburg, which, in its unpretentious narrative of daily incident and routine, conveys the flavor and even some of the urgency of a bygone time. Here, since we have dropped from the present to the past, we might as well insert the information that there has just

appeared an entertaining life, by Bellamy Partridge, of Sir Billy Howe (Longmans, Green), Commander-in-Chief of the British forces during the Revolution, who had so tender a heart for the ladies as at times almost to forget war for love, and an illuminating study of Queen Victoria's consort, Albert the Good (Appleton), by Hector Bolitho.

And now we have finished the tale of biography except that we have not yet noted the vivid and pictorial "Way of the Lancer" (Bobbs-Merrill), by Richard Boleslavski, wherein is set forth the adventurous career of a member of the famous Polish Lancers in Russia, nor have we mentioned T. Y. Ybarra's "Hindenburg" (Duffield), or Jonathan Norton Leonard's "The Tragedy of Henry Ford" (Putnam). Horrors! We have reached the end of our space and must stop abruptly until next week.

## The Publisher Visits

(Continued from preceding page)

over the long time future. Some feel that in the past conditions have been almost equally as dangerous as the present ones.

"Too many people think the book business is doomed," declared one very able Chicago bookseller. "One of the few things that I think is assured for the long time future is a plentiful supply of good books. A hundred years from now a railroad train may be a curiosity,—but books, and the man who sells them, will still be here."

Such are the opinions of the booksellers as the writer senses them, not in all ways unanimous, of course, but giving the impression he carried away.

With three exceptions, who requested that their names be not used, those who were interviewed for this article are:

### Boston:

Mr. John C. Campbell (Personal Bookshop)  
Mr. William Combie (New England News Company)  
Mr. J. M. DeWolfe (DeWolfe Fiske and Company)  
Mr. Arthur Dragon (Old Corner Bookstore)  
Mr. Richard Fuller (Old Corner Bookstore)  
Miss Adah F. Hall (Personal Bookshop)  
Mr. J. W. Jennings (Old Corner Bookstore)  
Miss Bertha Mahony (Bookshop for Boys and Girls)  
Mr. E. A. Pitman (Jordan, Marsh & Co.)  
Mr. I. Webber (Charles E. Lauriat Co.)

### Chicago:

Mr. A. C. Brewer (Western Book and Stationery Company)  
Mr. W. J. Flynn (Walden Bookshop)  
Mr. W. Goodpasture (Brentano's)  
Miss W. Harper (Doubleday-Doran Bookshop, Mandel Bros.)  
Mr. C. G. Kendall (A. C. McClurg & Co.)  
Mr. A. Kroch (Kroch's Bookstore)  
Mr. Ralph Henry (Carson Pirie Scott and Co.)  
Mr. Will Solle (Kroch's Bookstore)

### Cleveland:

Miss Mildred Clino (Shaker Bookshop)  
Miss Veronica S. Hutchinson (Halle Brothers)  
Mr. Charles K. Jackson (Burrows Brothers and Company)  
Mr. H. V. Korner (Korner & Wood)  
Mr. Richard Laukuff (Laukuff's Bookstore)

### New York City:

Miss Harriet Anderson (Channel Bookstore)  
Mr. Chas. A. Burkhardt (Dutton's Bookstore)  
Miss Ellen Ennis (Lord and Taylor's Book Dept.)  
Mrs. L. Gurney (Gimbel's Book Dept.)  
Mr. Frank Magel (Putnam's Bookstore)  
Mr. M. G. Michaels (Brentano's)  
Mr. Carl Placht (Beacon Bookshop)

### Philadelphia:

Mr. Walter Cox (John Wanamaker)  
Mr. Benjamin Freud (Gimbel's)  
Mr. Chas. Sessler (Charles Sessler Bookstore)  
Mr. Edward Schlamm (Snellenberg & Co.)  
Mrs. M. A. Zahn (Charles Sessler Bookstore)

### Pittsburgh:

Miss Hazel Clifton (Priscilla Guthrie's Bookshop)  
Mr. J. J. Estabrook (Joseph Horne Co.)  
Mr. William McGhee (Kaufmann's)



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## Round about Parnassus

By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

IN the first place I wish to make a slight correction in regard to my recent review of Dennis Murphy's *Boy with a Silver Plow*. I acknowledge a letter Mr. Murphy was kind enough to write me concerning the review, but *Kaleidoscope: A National Magazine of Poetry*, 702 North Vernon Street, Dallas, Texas, informs me that my remarks about the nature of the contest in which Mr. Murphy won a prize were inaccurate. As a matter of fact, it seems, the contest was not conducted by the Wednesday Club of Saint Louis, was not restricted to the state of Missouri, nor was Mr. Neihardt the judge. The contest was conducted by *Kaleidoscope*, was nation-wide, and was judged by the editors of *Kaleidoscope*.

### PADRAIC COLUM'S POETRY

*Poems*, by Padraic Colum, brings together his verse from "Dramatic Legends," "Wild Earth," "Creatures," and "Old Pastures." He has also added several new poems. Colum is one of the best Irish poets of his time. The only three names that may be mentioned with his are those of William Butler Yeats, James Stephens, and "A. E." Naturally Yeats stands head and shoulders above all living poets, English, Irish, or American, in the bulk and calibre of his accomplishment. Stephens may possibly be ranked next for his inimitable originality. I myself should put Colum a close third, and I am not at all sure that it would be third at that. For all the lovely poetry that "A. E." has written, Colum's has a trenchancy and firm grain that I do not find in the rather cloudy idealism and symbolism of "A. E." This *Poems* of Colum's is a satisfying book. I can remember when I first came across Colum's own adaptation of an old Irish poem that I think Douglas Hyde also put into another version. The burden of it is "Shall I go bound and you go free." The last two of the three verses Colum has written moved me like the sound of a trumpet, to paraphrase Sir Philip Sidney:

*And must I run where you will ride,  
And must I stay where you abide?  
Not so; the feather that I wear  
Is from an eyrie in the air!*

*And must I climb a broken stair,  
And must I pace a chamber bare?  
Not so; the Brenny plains are wide  
And there are banners where I ride!*

This was early work, in the volume *Wild Earth* in which he makes the acknowledgment that "A. E." fostered him, in which are such famous poems of Colum's as "The Plougher," "A Drover," "An Old Woman of the Roads," and "A Cradle Song." No one has interpreted, in verse, the plain folk of Ireland so beautifully as Colum. But he was to range far beyond his beloved green isle. Both back in time—as in the splendid poem "Minoan"—and through wanderings all over America and as far as Hawaii. Let me first quote just the opening verse of "Minoan," to give an idea of Colum's ringing line:

*O what a hound he has! A hound so high  
Might follow Talos, him, the Bronzen  
Man,  
And fill the Labyrinth with just a cry!*

*As bronze-topped spear his height, and  
there, besides,*

*A horse that bends a neck that's like a  
bride's!*

As for his travelled muse, take this exquisite tribute to the

### HUMMING-BIRD

*Up from the navel of the world,  
Where Cuzco has her founts of fire.  
The passer of the Gulf he comes.*

*He lives in air, a bird of fire.  
Cheated by flowers still he comes  
Through spaces that are half the world.*

*With glows of suns and seas he comes;  
A life within our shadowed world  
That's bloom, and gem, and kiss of fire!*

In nine lines, with a varying of only three end-words, what marvelous glamor he creates! His book *Creatures*, indeed, describing as it does various animals and birds, is to me one of the most delightful contributions he has made to contemporary letters. And no experience I have ever had in connection with the reading of poetry has been more thoroughly satisfying to me than hearing on a number of occasions Colum read his own verse in the inimitable brogue he has—thank God!—never lost despite his long sojourn in America. It is a strange reading, for the quality of his voice carries one back to the bardic days, to things more ancient and more important than modern civilization, to eternal beauty that broods in the highest, windiest boughs of the Tree of the World.

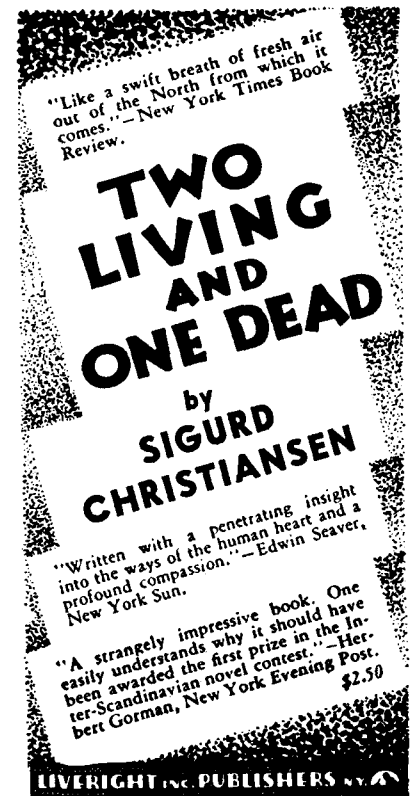
### THE CHARACTER OF COLUM

I know of no better human being than Padraic Colum, and when one calls a person "good" in this day and generation one is thought to mean sanctimoniousness or some such thing—which is not at all what I mean. This man, in his intelligent seriousness, his superb drollery, his wealth of learning, his native wisdom, his chivalry of spirit, and his enchanting simplicity, is beyond argument one of the great people of our time. He is of no classification that I have ever known. Even an occasional over-emphasis in his expounding of doctrine does not jar upon me, an occasional absorption in the letter rather than the Word. For if, in regard to religion, dogmatism is deep in his blood, he possesses in its perfect essence the intelligence of the poet which surveys the world on pinions that tower high above dogma. His is a moving sympathy with the creation, a search always for fundamental things. Those who frantically seek happiness in all the non-essentials of modern life, so curious about the impermanent that they can never truly enjoy either life or love,—or find either in its enduring virtue, in the Roman sense,—are apart from this man. His charity and his counsel I have found great things. Drama and romance and legend are rich in his imagination, and he can tell a merry story in an inimitable way. These qualities must all be apparent in this collected volume of his to anyone who sees clearly with the eye of the mind. Likewise the courage that is able so to love the world.

## Lincoln Steffens wrote us a letter—

"I have been reading Dos Passos. I think that every young writer should read '1919' and read it, too, with his eye sticking to the fact that this writer is one of the three or four young men in literature who are breaking away from the old schools and seeking, and in this case, finding, a new way to get nearer to the art of showing things as they are—beautifully."

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## CHRISTOPHER MORLEY says of

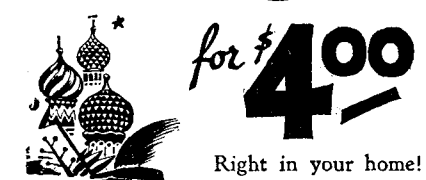
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