

gives an excellent picture of the intellectual trends that challenged and influenced him. Divorced from the time of their appearance, Schiller's famed verse dramas suffer, no doubt, from a certain amount of rhetoric and the outspokenness of their author's idealism. But it is too often forgotten that he died at the age of forty-six and that his failing health in the later part of his life, together with his nearly endless financial troubles, could not but impair the full development of his gifts. Yet he never grew bitter. Dr. Garland's study does not try to peer into Schiller's mind; wherever he interprets him as a person he does so on the strength of his writings and letters. Very well written and arranged to be read easily even by the uninitiated, this book should be a welcome addition to the narrow shelf of recent studies of German literature.

—ROBERT PICK.

THE TRANSCENDENTALISTS, by Perry Miller. Harvard University Press. \$6.50. Perry Miller has skilfully edited the articles, essays, poems, and addresses of the New England transcendentalists, who roused such a vital tempest in the Boston teacup in the romantic 1830's. In compiling this anthology Mr. Miller has arranged the material to give a clear view of the early beginnings of the transcendentalist group, their flowering, and their disintegration. Emerson and Thoreau take a backseat in terms of space in order to give the other figures an opportunity to be heard. Some editorial cutting was necessary and welcome, in view of the fact that brevity was not a transcendental virtue. Hitherto unpublished material like the sermon by George Ripley and portions of the Bronson Alcott journals is included in this collection, which also does a discerning job of representing the influence of the English and German romantics and the political and social efforts of the transcendentalists.

Mr. Miller warns against either minimizing or exaggerating the importance of the transcendentalist group. Their attempts at social reform were disorganized and ineffectual; their political and literary views were divergent and confused. The one ground of common agreement was the parochial issue on which they hewed to a line of stricter Puritanism than the Unitarianism of their fathers, against whom they were rebelling. The introduction and editorial notes provide an adequate historical backdrop to the selections and make an interesting and convincing case for the importance of the parochial issue to the transcendentalists.

—SIEGFRIED MANDEL.

Is the female criminal deadlier than the male?

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BY OTTO POLLAK

Assistant Professor of Sociology, University of Pennsylvania



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Seeing Things

FINDERS KEEPERS, LOSERS WEEPERS

ALTHOUGH I am looking at the announcement I cannot believe my eyes. It comes from a recently formed publishing house called New Fathoms Press, Ltd. "Here!" it proclaims, "The Publication Sensation of Our Time! THE LOST PLAYS OF EUGENE O'NEILL* — The first works of the Dean of American Playwrights — Never Before in Print! Four One-Act Plays and One Three-Act Play. First edition—\$3.00."

I have read these plays. I have read Lawrence Gellert's introduction to them, too. And my eyes remain unbelieving. Certainly in no sense of the word can these early efforts by O'Neill be described as *lost* plays. That is, unless a lost play is one which just happens to have come into the public domain; in other words, a play which has been deposited in type-script for its author's protection at the Library of Congress and which, twenty-eight years later (our laws being what they are), has become everybody's property because of an unrenowned copyright.

Mr. Gellert and his publishers however, appear to have their own notions not only as to what is *lost* but as to what are ethics and taste. Although the public domain seems to be their idea of a cache, they are not frank enough to mention it or the within-the-law means by which they have been enabled to publish plays Mr. O'Neill did not want to have published.

Without actually saying so Mr. Gellert creates the impression that the plays he has appropriated are treasures he stumbled upon in a forgotten trunk. He retells in his own words what Susan Glaspell said when she learned in 1916 that a young man had come to the Wharf Theatre in Provincetown with a trunkful of plays. "We don't need a trunkful," exclaimed Miss Glaspell, "but if he's got one good play bring him around." The script he brought was "Bound East for Cardiff."

*LOST PLAYS OF EUGENE O'NEILL. Introduction by Lawrence Gellert. New York: New Fathoms Press, Ltd. 156 pp. \$3.

"Other O'Neill productions," writes Mr. Gellert, "quickly followed. Remaining manuscripts—the very bottom layer of the 'trunkful' lay hidden away through the years. And here they are, brought to light at last, exactly as they were originally written and tossed into that magical trunk almost four decades ago."

To put it mildly, this is a whimsy — legal or illegal. Moreover it raises its moral questions. Most people, if they should happen to find in a trunk some manuscripts by a living author, would feel conscience-bound to return them to the author in question. They would regard them as the writer's property, not theirs. Certainly they would not be tempted to behave on the dubious principle of "finders keepers, losers weepers." If they did subscribe to such a code and did feel guiltless in hotfooting their way to a publisher instead of to the writer's doorstep, in their triumph they would probably describe the place where they found the trunk and even name its owner.

As I have hinted, Mr. Gellert is only indulging in a whimsy when he

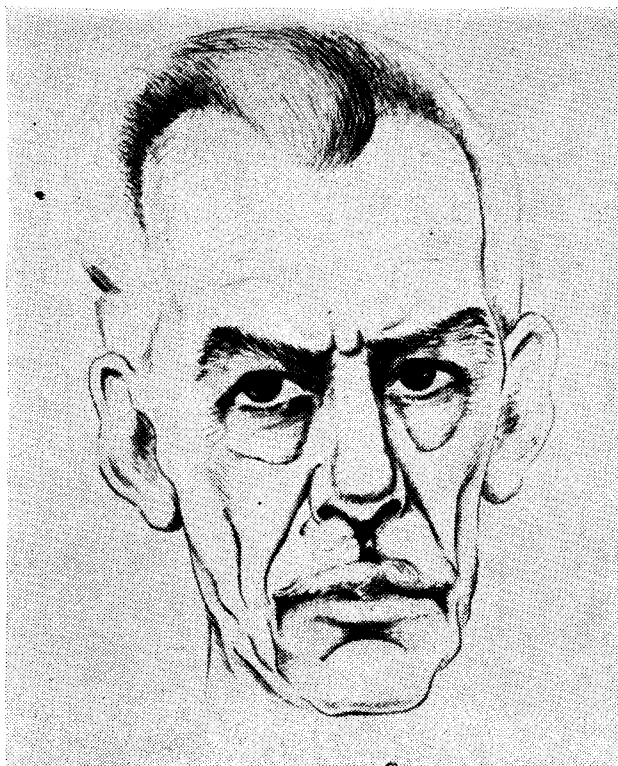
refers to O'Neill's "magical trunk" and implies that Mr. O'Neill gave him access to it. He is being no less whimsical when he would have us believe it was in this trunk, rather than in the Library of Congress, that these fledgling O'Neill scripts have been hidden away all these years. But Mr. Gellert seems to be as partial to whimsicality in explaining the facts of how he came into possession of these plays as he is in stating his opinions of them.

"We are not, like latecomers to a rich banquet, gathering left-overs from the table," says he. "Rather, we enjoy from the vantage point of the plays here presented an Alice in Wonderland-like serving of the hors d'oeuvres [sic], the first course on the menu, last." Few statements could be more pixilated and involved or less likely to merit copyright.

DURING the course of his other murky paragraphs Mr. Gellert does achieve a welcome moment of candor. He writes, "I would not wish it implied that in my critical judgment I consider the plays in this volume masterpieces." Nonetheless he insists that "within certain limitations, in invention, power of execution, and psychological intensity, . . . [they] are truly startling." Warming up to his job as barker, he goes even further. He salutes "the uncovering of this important group of O'Neill 'firsts'" as "an outstanding publishing event"; an event which he would have us believe adds "to the rich store of our theatre repertoire."

Mr. O'Neill, who only wrote these plays, is of a different opinion. He has described them as being "wretched" and "worthless." That is why he never published them himself and was anxious to avoid having them printed now.

A man of Mr. O'Neill's importance is condemned to having students interested in everything he ever wrote. This is a penalty he must pay for his pre-eminence. Not unnaturally, however, he wishes to be judged by his best work rather than his worst, and to defend the mature dramatist from the scribblings of the immature one. His attitude towards his early efforts was long ago made clear by his refusal to permit subsequent printings of the one-acts which, in a moment of youthful rashness, he once brought together in a volume called "Thirst." Un-



—Mai-mai Sze.

Eugene O'Neill—"an ugly business."