

American writing. But his scholarship was in European literature, particularly French letters; and the college lectures fortunately included in this volume are a lesson in the performance of function by an American humanist—the sympathetic exposition of values from “outside” a culture in order to eliminate parochialism. Equally the letters to Wilson tacitly assume that the business of being literary is more than the task of being literate: Gauss, with all his crotchets, holds Wilson to what I may call an international standard of achievement.

For the dean had his crotchets. He could not stand Browning, he took a distant view of some of Wilson’s literary contemporaries, and an essay on the “Lost Generation” is dated. His views were conservative because he knew so much more history than his students knew, just as he knew that the forts of folly do not fall under the assaults of youth. He was in one sense a twentieth-century Voltairian. But his Voltairianism was of the wide prospect, not the shallow wisecrack, and the man who had his regular seat in the football stadium looked upon modernity without scorning it. He went to see a movie of “What Price Glory” and loathed it, but the book also contains notes for an introduction of Clarence Darrow. A final memory of Dean Gauss at the end of the volume contains the sentence: “‘This is good Scotch,’ he said, with an emphasis that suggested that we were responsible for its excellence.” Perhaps the final cause, as Aristotle might say, of the humanist

is that he knows how to live and to let other people live.

In one sense the “Papers of Christian Gauss” is eminently Princetonian. Its contents appeal to alumni of that institution who want to conjure up and retain memories of the great dean. Inevitably his decanal reminiscences are of Princeton problems; perhaps not so inevitably the literary correspondence here printed concerns two Princeton alumni. But the book begins: “In one lifetime, I have lived through the history of civilization.” The writer of such a sentence looked beyond Nassau Hall to wider horizons, and fragmentary though the volume must be, it frames a personality of import to our present bewilderment about the place of the humanities and of humanistic scholarship in the national culture. The lineaments of an ideal American humanist look very much like the lineaments of Dean Christian Gauss.

ROMANTIC YOUTH: Alexandre Dumas’s “Mes Mémoires,” with its action-packed narrative and sweep of colorful detail, has long been an indispensable source for those writing on the “uncrowned king of Paris.” But the work covers only the first thirty years of his life for all the twenty-two volumes in the original edition. “**The Road to Monte Cristo,**” by Jules Eckert Goodman (Scribner’s, \$5.95), is a condensation under a single cover of this gigantic autobiographical work. The task was a difficult one, confronted as the editor was by the amount of tempting material from which to choose. He has chosen well.

A strong sense of continuity has been maintained, and we are presented in bold relief with the essential Dumas from his formative years to his first heady triumphs. Events tumble one after the other in quick succession. Childhood is highlighted by a series of brief reminiscences, some bordering on the tragic, others gay and mocking. His early struggles in the nation’s capital lead to the first sensational successes in the Parisian theatre. The youthful celebrity knows most of the famous and near-famous of the day, dallies in the boudoirs of dazzling actresses, sires two illegitimate children, and participates in more than one encounter on the dueling field. He emerges from the revolution of 1830 as something of a hero.

All of this and more Dumas tells skilfully and often epigrammatically, with perspicacious observations on the political, social and literary life of his times. —OTIS FELLOWS.

DREAMER: A new biography of Jules Verne is welcome, for interest in him ripens and multiplies as translation of his stories into film remind new millions of the nineteenth-century foreteller of the twentieth century. In “**Jules Verne, Prophet of a New Age**” (Coward-McCann, \$3.95), Marguerite Allotte de la Fuye has written freshly of his youth and, as his kinswoman, is able to use many personal letters to reveal him as a man, a son, a brother and husband, as well as pioneering artist. Son of a conservative Catholic lawyer who had counted on his eldest son succeeding to his sober and prosperous practice, young Jules was also the descendant of ship owners and merchant adventurers in the West Indian trade. Jules was thwarted in his first essay at running away to sea.

But at last he gets to Paris to study law, and always a versifier, discovers the delight of words, the theatre, the excitement of new discoveries in the sciences. He rises at dawn to write, to create a world of his own. Finally he strikes the gold that all writers look for in the person of the publisher Hetzel. His book “Five Weeks in a Balloon” is only the first of an encyclopedic program. The rest is history. All ages delight in his books. Edition after edition, and translations into every European language follow.

When Jules Verne died in 1905 he left as legacy to all nations forty volumes plus eight manuscripts which were published posthumously. Verne was a humanist, not a scientist but a respecter of science. He can still lift readers by his imagination out of fear into freedom. —ERNESTINE EVANS.



Your Literary I. Q.

Conducted by John T. Winterich

SPELLING BEE

The authors’ names listed below are susceptible to occasional misspelling. An unspecified number of them are misspelled here; there is only one error in each misspelled name, and the error may be in first, second, or last name. If you haven’t time to fool around with this turn immediately to page 47.

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|---------------------------|--|
| 1. Rupert Brooke | 16. Eugene O’Neil |
| 2. Haywood Broun | 17. Katherine Ann Porter |
| 3. Irvin S. Cobb | 18. William Sidney Porter |
| 4. (Captain) James Cook | 19. Edward Arlington Robinson |
| 5. John Esten Cooke | 20. Carl Sandberg |
| 6. Walter D. Edmunds | 21. Sacheverell Sitwell |
| 7. T. S. Eliot | 22. Ernest Thompson-Seton |
| 8. C. S. Forrester | 23. James Thomson (“The City of Dreadful Night”) |
| 9. Thomas Gray | 24. James Thomson (“The Seasons”) |
| 10. Zane Gray | 25. Glenway Wescott |
| 11. Du Bose Heyward | 26. Edward Noyes Westcott |
| 12. Aldus Huxley | 27. Thomas Wolfe |
| 13. Vachel Lindsay | 28. Virginia Woolf |
| 14. Howard Lindsey | 29. Elinor Wylie |
| 15. John Middleton Murray | 30. Philip Wylie |

FICTION

Girl in a Daydream

"The Loving Eye," by William Sansom (Reynal, 253 pp. \$3.50), describes the infatuation of a middle-aged Londoner with a girl spied through a window across the way.

By Walter Havighurst

IN BOOKS that rove as far as Spain and Scandinavia William Sansom has shown a special feeling for place and for the characters and actions which his sense of place suggests. His new novel "The Loving Eye" stays at home, in London, but again he shows his preoccupation with a special place and what *could* happen there. It never becomes inevitable, but one is persuaded.

The place is a block of brown-front houses in the West End of London—or rather it is their back windows, looking on the small walled gardens and to other windows beyond. The half-seen lives of people in a row of middle-class flats and the infatuation that focuses upon one of them are the substance of this novel.

Matthew Ligne, a bachelor of forty, is recuperating from an ulcer. His enforced quiet and his surfeit of living—"too many directions taken and abandoned"—led him to a fascination with the girl in the opposite window. For a while he is content with curiosity and daydream—"our dreams are the only real innocence"—and he is not looking at her so much as at what she might have been. When he emerges, bent on meeting her, he fears the actuality. Mr. Sansom's special facility is his power to suggest, in terms of irony that does not disallow

enchantment, the dual life of fact and imagination.

The loving eye is not only Matthew Ligne's but also Mr. Sansom's. Only a writer with a loving eye could spin out this slow-motion narrative, keeping it alive and nervous to the end. In subject there is no more here than in some of his short stories. One of them, "The Girl on the Bus," is quite this same tale—of the man who sees the girl, who unknown to her suffers infatuation, who alternates between distress and elation, and who at last finds her undiminished by actuality. That short story, moving through Sweden and Denmark to England, has an elaborate background.

In Mr. Sansom's new novel the loving eye is turned inward to complex and contradictory feelings; the narrative lingers over states of mind—ennui, curiosity, expectancy, misgiving, wonder, and delight. When the view turns outward Mr. Sansom likes particularly the end of day—the wild sad splendor of the London sunset, the dusky streets, the fading of traffic and the quickening of life behind drawn curtains.

A word for Mr. Sansom's technique. At intervals he gives the narrative to Matthew Ligne's raffish man-servant, and the effect is mocking. That mockery makes a brittle counterpoint to the wistfulness and yearning of the middle-age daydream, which happily becomes reality.

This simple novel, light as the puffs of April wind which stir the new-leaved trees in those back gardens, looks fondly at the familiar world. The loving eye makes it all strange and new.



—Walter Bird.

William Sansom—"... feeling for place and characters."

Departed Elegance

"A Legacy," by Sybille Bedford (Simon & Schuster, 311 pp. \$3.50), is the story of two aristocratic families, one of birth and one of wealth, one Gentile and one Jewish, in Germany before the First World War.

By Ben Ray Redman

SELDOM has an English novel crossed the seas so garlanded with praise by discriminating judges; seldom has praise been more justly bestowed than upon Sybille Bedford's "A Legacy."

This first novel is all that the British critics say it is—brilliant, witty, fascinating, astonishing, unconventional, unclassifiable, elegant, radiant, enchanting—but even the impressive sum of these adjectives fails to describe and define the book's character.

Perhaps one should content oneself with saying that it is very, very clever. But it makes one wish to say more. In an attempt to reduce the unfamiliar to familiar terms one might make use of a figure of speech both biologically and chronologically impossible and say that "A Legacy" is by Jane Austen out of Marcel Proust, with Ronald Firbank acting as *accoucheur*. The dry, pervasive detached, penetrating humor is reminiscent of Miss Austen's; the milieu, in which two aristocracies meet and wed, the one of birth, the other of wealth, one Gentile and one Jewish, is a milieu in which Proust would feel at home; the conversations, casual, slipping, sliding, elliptical, sly and al-



Surmise

By John Moffitt

HEAVEN is out of hearing.
But God conceivably
Could find it rather wearing
To pass eternity

Listening to lean angels
Clad in organdie,
Nimbuses and bangles
Echoing Emily.

