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The New Books Belles Lettres

(Continued from preceding page)

THE COLLECTED ESSAYS AND PAPERS OF GEORGE SAINTSBURY. 1875-1923. Vol. IV. Dutton. \$4.25.

THE CHALLENGE OF LIFE. By L. P. Jacks. Doran. \$1.25 net.

EARL PERCY DINES ABROAD. By Harold Murock. Houghton Mifflin. \$6.

PRINCIPLES OF LITERARY CRITICISM. By I. A. Richards. Harcourt, Brace.

AFTERGLOW. By Mitchell S. Buck. Nicholas L. Brown.

Biography

TWELVE YEARS AT THE IMPERIAL GERMAN COURT. By Count Robert Zedlitz-Trützschler. Doran. 1924.

It is difficult to believe that the mismanaged Germany of Count Zedlitz-Trützschler's book became overnight the Germany of the Great War. Efficiency does not breed on the pomp and ceremony which we might easily take to have been the chief interests of the German Court and Army during the years from 1898 to 1910. If all was vanity and illusion, what a prodigious and übermensichtlich oiling and adjustment of cogs must have been required to transmute the experimental apparatus of that latter year into the machine of 1914! It is impossible. The Count underrates. And yet, in his way, he underrates only by a constant implication distinctly an outgrowth of his dissatisfaction with the Kaiser. If something in William II is rotten, the whole German apple is rotten; and the author's extreme jealousy for the development and future of his Fatherland is too manifest for him to swallow, with inward equanimity at any rate, the bitter doses of mistrust, poor judgment, and wretched diplomacy administered by the late War Lord.

Count Zedlitz-Trützschler was appointed in 1903 Comptroller of the Household of the Emperor. His notes, presumably little altered, and adequately translated by Alfred Kalisch, give the impressions of the moment. It is always the Kaiser, brilliant personality, imposing figure, uncompromising, exacting, paradoxical. "We are all the Emperor's victims: he is our cross," said Herr von Tschurschky one day to the author. Random observations of his own are as damning. "The Emperor answered, very roughly and sharply: 'What anything that I want costs, is a matter of supreme indifference'" (in regard to his fleet of automobiles) . . . "Anyone who three months ago heard nearly every day that Count Zeppelin was the biggest fool in Germany, and is now told that he is the greatest German of the century, is prepared for any kind of change." . . . "He (the Emperor) has the gift of just absorbing enough of the superficial aspects of such a theory to enable him to talk about it as if he had been a professor of astronomy, who had worked for years and years in an observatory" . . . "The Emperor never penetrates the essentials of anything, and this shallowness explains why he so often goes off the rails" . . . "This nonsense alone (relating to Count von Bülow, Imperial Chancellor) shows how little the Emperor knows of the world" . . . The interest of the volume is continually changing; each event is particular grist for a pessimistic mill; the finger of warning is lifted at the horse-play of the Kaiser, pinching some royal ear, or holding Col. von B. for a long time in the snow, or because he is getting "into the habit of doing no real work." It is sincere, a book of disillusion, simple, fascinating, perhaps the most honest in the literature of a man who defeated himself.

THOSE EUROPEANS. By SISLEY HUD-
DLESTON. Putnam. 1924. \$2.50.

In this biographical corral of Europeans the author utters all the known platitudes about Ramsay MacDonald and spices it with a little imagery, such as "England knew she needed a new man." Clemenceau is adequately sketched and his chapter stands out the best in the book. President Masaryk as the heart and soul of Czecho-Slovakia is a picture of culture and efficiency. Anyone who knows anything about his sturdy republic knows that Masaryk is its backbone; those not so fortunate do not care. With less originality but with the same obtuseness ex-President Millerand is disposed of. The reader will be obligated to the author for the knowledge that M. Millerand used to play dominoes with Marshal Foch; beyond that he says nothing that is not most widely known.

Of the many other character sketches which figure in the book—ranging from Anatole France to the Pope—nothing pro-

nouncedly favorable can be said; therefore it had better be left unsaid. The author's method is good. He supplies political settings for his characters and does not fall into the error of placing them on the slippery tops of uncomfortable pedestals. He is indisputably a master of European politics, yet execution of his method has been poor. Too much has been accomplished in too short a space; the result is unsatisfying. The style is journalistic, but with distinct literary pretensions which are, however, marred by carelessness, as, for example, when the author refers to "father" succeeding "son" in "governmental affairs."

CHODERLOUS DE LACLOS: DANGEROUS ACQUAINTANCES. Translated by Richard Aldington. Dutton. \$5.

GUESTS AND MEMORIES. By Una Taylor. Oxford. \$4.20.

JESUS AS OTHERS SAW HIM. By Joseph Jacobs. New York: Bernard G. Richards.

OPEN CONFESSION. By Marie Corelli. Doran. \$2 net.

THE LIFE OF WILLIAM COBBETT. By G. D. H. Cole. Harcourt, Brace.

EVERYMAN'S LIFE OF JESUS. By James Moffatt. Doran. \$1.50 net.

THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF JOHN MUIR. By William Frederic Badè. Houghton Mifflin. 2 vols. \$7.50.

THE DIARY OF LORD BERTIE OF THAME. Edited by Lady Algernon Gordon Lennox. Doran. 2 vols. \$10 net.

THE LIFE OF CASANOVA FROM 1774-1798. By Mitchell S. Buck. Nicholas Brown.

LENIN. By Leon Trotsky. Minton, Balch. \$2.50.

JOHN A. BRASHEAR. Edited by W. Lucien Scaife. Houghton Mifflin. \$4.

RICHARD PRICE. By Roland Thomas. Oxford. \$1.70.

THE COMMONSENSE OF MONEY AND INVESTMENTS. By MERRYLE STANLEY RUYSEYER. Simon & Schuster. 1924. \$1.50.

Our financial literature contains numerous volumes that deal with different phases of investment problems but very few designed for the average person just entering the investment field. Mr. Ruyseyer, who has been a financial editor for several years, has studied carefully the 30,000 inquiries that have come to his attention as an editor and now writes a book with these in mind. Thousands of persons who had never invested a dollar before the war were brought permanently into the investor class by the Liberty loan campaigns. To them the new book will give a valuable introduction to a field that heretofore had been little understood.

Between the covers of this small readable volume may be found discussions on subjects as different as money, tests of a good investment, and how to keep a record of investment securities. In a chapter entitled "Investment Programs for Rich and Poor" the author sets forth model investment lists for persons in different walks of life. The book does not pretend to cover the whole subject or several objections might be made to important omissions, but the book does what it was intended to do—it tells the average man and woman how to earn money; how to save it; how to spend it, and how to invest it.

BOND SALESMANSHIP. By William W. Townsend. Holt. \$4.50.

BOOK OF BUSINESS STANDARDS. By J. George Frederick. Nicholas L. Brown.

Drama

REPRESENTATIVE AMERICAN PLAYS. Edited by Arthur Hobson Quinn. Century. \$4 net.

THE BRIGHT ISLAND. By Arnold Bennett. Doran. \$1.50 net.

Fiction

THE WOLVES AND THE LAMB. By J. S. Fletcher. Knopf. 1925. \$2.

Mr. J. S. Fletcher must typewrite à pas gymnastique. Twice a year, roughly, his publishers present his public with detective stories in uniform binding; and his public is never disappointed. For despite the rapidity with which his novels are turned out, they always stand near the top shelf of detective fiction. They are always plausible and absorbing; they are written clearly and forcefully; and their characters, unlike those in most detective stories, do not remind one of people in morality plays who stand for Hate, Greed, or Innocence.

The latest of Mr. Fletcher's books, "The Wolves and the Lamb," is, if not conspicuously superior to those that have gone before it, up to the average in both entertainment and workmanship. To be sure, it lacks high points and a series of thrills; but

Speaking of Books

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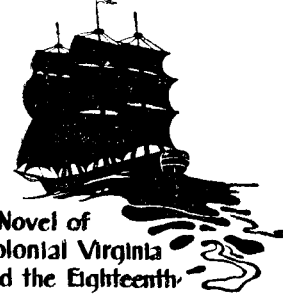
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the unfortunate professor, assailed on the one side by the ultra-moderns, and by the conservatives on the other—occasionally breaks the academic silence and gives us the benefit of his personal reactions supported by the full historical knowledge which he is able to turn upon them. A modern discussion of the modern writers who are giving America an indigenous literature is *Some Contemporary Americans* by Percy Holmes Boynton. \$2.00, postpaid \$2.10.

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for the reviewer at least, it has the charm of being centered about a young man with a large fortune, and of having most of its scenes in banks, first-class hotels, Bond Street, and the West End of London. The tale is concerned with the efforts of an unscrupulous man and woman to acquire the fortune of a quite human and likeable youngster of twenty-one named Richard Shrewsbury. The man becomes his trusted business adviser, the woman his fiancée. Fortunately, however, the two are matched by an honest explorer with Richard's real interests at heart, and a girl who is in love with him. Matters move logically until the very end when two murders, coming too late to provide thrills, complicate and then straighten out the situation. This dénouement of "The Wolves and the Lamb" is not quite the equal of Mr. Fletcher's usual last chapters, but it serves its purpose of bringing the story to a generally effective conclusion.

MISS PILGRIM'S PROGRESS. By CONCORDIA MERREL. Seltzer. 1924. \$2.

This is a better than average woman's novel of a young girl's life, written by a woman but more free from cloying sweetness than the books of most women novelists. Miss Merrel writes easily, and she is adept in conversation, giving the reader more than a semblance of reality; but her work fails of anything like greatness for the precise reason that the writings of women rarely top the peak: the mechanics of making the book show through plainly, there is not a rich enough background nor a sufficient depth in characterization, and the real issues of life are skilfully avoided. It takes knowledge of life, and courage, to write great books; and most women are protected from knowledge even where they are possessed of courage.

Hetty Carol, at seventeen, has thrust upon her the burdens of the household, where she has ruled her father and little sister since the mother's death. The coming of a step-mother, large and florid and with a horrible good humor, whom the father has married out of a tavern, makes it quite impossible for her to stay at home, and she departs for London. Jobs for inexperienced girls are apparently of one nature only, and it takes her some time to discover that London has no need of her. She takes to writing for a woman's magazine and makes a success of it. Her further adventures are timid love affairs and a final acceptance of one to whom she had been blind from the first. All this is told in a series of lively conversations interspersed with feminine philosophy of the introspective sort.

THE PRINCESS AND THE CLOWNS.

By JEAN JOE FRAPPA. Translated by Marie Louise Swinburne. Duffield. 1924. \$1.50.

Despite a somewhat misleading title, this is a book for the entirely grown-up. Kings and mountebanks, nobility and bourgeoisie (with some question in each case as to which are which) revolve about a bewildered little Princess in the development of a double thesis: first, that to the fit belongs the right to rule; and, second, that a paternalistic monarchy is the people's best chance for true democracy.—Of course, first catch your monarch!

But this, Jean-Jose Frappa has done most readably.

He has caught him, indeed, very surprisingly, on the stage of a Paris music-hall. And he has caught him with the bait of a lovely little Russian Highness who is disturbed when she goes afoot, because the French police do not halt the traffic. Yes, a rather arrogant little Princess, thoroughly imbued with inherited prejudices of caste; but an impulsive and lovable little Princess, too. Just the sort of delicate creature an inspired mountebank would die for—or occupy a perilous throne.

For once, one may justifiably quote from the "blurb"—"gay satire" it is, this story, the light touch; no bitterness. The author's keen eyes twinkle, entirely free from illusions even about adorable heroines and amazing supermen; he pulls a serious face that his nonsense may take you unawares; he has no reverence for persons, and will equally soon poke fun at a Grand Duchess's knees or a Bolshevik's income; but his tongue is never in his cheek. Life has shown him its little shams; but it has not soured in him.

The style is simple, unaffected, ingenuous, as suits a fairy-story; but make no mistake! It is style. (Credit here to the translator, also.) The tale is jolly, romantic, full of neat surprises. It suffers toward the end, perhaps, from a too insistent reiteration of the thesis; but that is easily forgiven and forgotten in the rich bubbling laughter provoked by its utterly delicious valedictory.

THE PRINCE AND THE PRINCESS.

By CLAUDE C. WASHBURN. A. & C. Boni. 1924. \$2.50.

This novel and its several parts derive their titles from the movements of Rimsky-Korsakoff's "Scheherazade"; garbled, however, and out of their order, nor does the tale fit the great golden structure of the symphonic poem. This is an honest, thoughtful, wordy, biography, carrying Conrad Brooke from the 1902 Harvard Class Day, via the proceeds of a successful novel, to a permanent residence in Italy, love, marriage, mild disenchantment, the War, further disillusionment, another love, renunciation, resignation. If the writing throughout gave the sharp sense of reality which it does in the episode of young love and courtship, its excellent picture of Florence and Florentine-American life would not be its major achievement; too often a resort to stating conclusions instead of furnishing data makes characters or steps in the narrative appear artificial. And where, as here, action is infrequent, conviction is essential.

A history intelligently conceived, and by no beginner, its style is yet calculated occasionally to irritate its proper class of readers. Be at once sophisticated and conscientiously explanatory and you become merely condescending. Point the clever remark you put into one character's mouth, by putting applause into another's and you invite critical scrutiny of the conceit in its nakedness. And one Firbank, by general consent, holds exclusive rights in the multiple exclamation point. *Habet!*

ONE HOUR—AND FOREVER. By T. EVERETT HARRÉ. Macaulay. 1925. \$2.

"Remarkable!" is the somewhat ambiguous comment upon a previous book by the author of this, by no less a personage than David Starr Jordan. "Remarkable" is quite inadequate as to this new one; it attains the rank of a literary curiosity, for it is, curiously, an example of some of the worst things common in current American writing in odd juxtaposition with some of the best. It is first of all an honest book: much of its emotion, in its passionate "high spots," is real, and much of its insight and understanding of human complexity are extraordinarily keen and accurate. But it is written, for the most part in a wildly absurd jargon, high flying, misfit adjectival monstrosities, tangled sentences so blown up and gassy that trying to read them leaves one with a feeling of indigestion. "High rock-gashed gorges where the first arbutus peaked its starry-pinken blossoms." The hero beside the inevitable "chiseled beauty" of the Greek statue, has "hair of an eerie moon-silvery silkiness." "Solemnical" gatherings are held in the parlor. And so on. Moreover, after the genuinely moving middle section of the tale it piffles out into stock melodramatic scenario stuff.

Yet the portrayal of the unfortunate girl in her relations to her acridly pious mother and her vicious, tragic elder sister, and also to her small town environment with its gossiping malice and nastiness, is finely understood, and through these passages even the author's manner becomes sane, often attaining a genuine realism and even a tragic dignity—when he forgets the idea of "fine writing." Here the situation itself seems to have overcome the writer's weakness and managed, somehow, to get itself stated in spite of him.

The book purports to be a "novelization of a story taken from real life," and much of it—up to the stagey conclusion—does suggest just that. It is the life history of a girl who has a voice and a "temperament," but who grows up in a hard, pietistic family, of which she is the odd member. Her much older sister is a desiccated spinster, a victim of "ingrowing virginity"—and there is only too much accuracy in the analyses of that unfortunate condition. Of course the lover appears, and disappears, and the girl is hounded out of town with her baby. Thereafter it is the story of her slow progress toward success as a prima donna: about half of it pure screen stuff, but with an odd underlying suggestion of realities.

TUMBLEBERRY AND CHICK. By William J. Hopkins. Houghton Mifflin. \$2.

THE LANE. By Helen Sherman Griffith. Penn.

THE DINNER CLUB. By H. C. McNeile. Doran. \$2 net.

BILL THE CONQUEROR. By P. G. Wodehouse. Doran. \$2 net.

THE EARLY ADVENTURES OF PEACHAM GREW. By Roy Helton. Penn.

EGBERT. By W. A. Darlington. Penn.

THE ROAD TO EN-DOR. By Louis Joseph Vance. Dutton. \$2.

TRIPLE FUGUE. By Osbert Sitwell. Doran.

THE KEYS OF THE CITY. By Elmer Davis. McBride. \$2 net.

(Continued on next page)

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The New Books Miscellaneous

(Continued from preceding page)

TOM MASSON'S ANNUAL FOR 1924. Edited by THOMAS I. MASSON. Double-day, Page. 1924. \$2.

Mr. Masson's "Annuals," for 1924 or any other year, bring to mind a familiar scene. It is, perhaps, the palm room of a large hotel where a party is under way. In the shadow of the most prominent plant stands a youngish couple. The lady remarks, with an enthralled glance in the direction of a gentleman who appears the obvious centre of attraction, "Who is that fascinating stranger?" And the answer (in this case, of course): "Somebody who has just read 'Tom Masson's Annual.'" By and large, that is about the size of it. The "Annual" for 1924 offers a compost of the "best" of the year in the field of jokes, epigrams, amusing short stories, parodies, verses, jingles, drawings from the pages of *Life*, the *Saturday Evening Post*, and such. A book to be swallowed in small doses; to be taken down on a rainy day, like Lewis Carroll or the bound volumes of *Punch*.

Among the relatively longer pieces of prose one makes satisfying discoveries: George Ade, Stephen Leacock, Will Rogers, Robert Benchley, Sam Hellman, Ring Lardner, Christopher Ward, Harry Leon Wilson, the best chapter from Donald Ogden Stewart's "Perfect Behavior," and a most delightful story by Richard Connell, called "The Heart of a Sloganeer." There is some rubbish. The verse is mostly poor and often cheap. A good percentage of the jokes sound rather stupid. The majority, however, will survive, and be laughed at another year. Altogether, Mr. Masson from wide sources has assembled over three hundred and fifty pages of variety. There must be something for almost everyone in that.

FARMERS' MUTUAL FIRE INSURANCE IN THE UNITED STATES. By VICTOR N. VALGREN. University of Chicago Press. 1924. \$1.90.

In this book Mr. Valgren, who is at present in charge of the Division of Agricultural Finance, a department of the United States Department of Agriculture, has rendered a service to farmers, insurance officials, and legislators alike. His exhaustive study of mutual fire insurance for farmers of this country offers constructive suggestions for a state law to govern the organization and operation of the necessary insurance companies. A model system of records and organization and management plans, as well as a suggested state law for those states which have not yet passed such legislation are also given. Mr. Valgren's book solves the problem of applying the best means for minimizing the burden of fire loss among farmers.

THE SALT WATER ANGLER. By LEONARD HULIT. Appleton. 1924. \$3.50.

This volume throws light upon many of the problems puzzling event to the most expert salt water angler. Well written, clear, its chapters, thirty-two in number, have the flow of a good style, and are very readable. In purpose the volume is directed to that army of fishermen who are these days finding that there is a charm and interest in the technique of "surf fishing" that is all its own. Some tang of the ocean itself gets into the blood of the ardent deep-sea angler. For such a one this treatise is designed.

But not only is the book written to interest. Its primary purpose is to assist the fisherman in getting better results in a sport that calls for vigor of body while aiding to relax and clarify the mind.

The book contains a biography of each species of fish angled for along the Atlantic seaboard, illustrated by authoritative plates from the United States Bureau of Fisheries. There is included in the contents a complete list of tackle and equipment necessary for taking various kinds of fish. Special attention is given to bait, and an interesting chapter deals with fish that insist on getting on the hook, when the fisherman wants some other species.

COSTUME AND FASHION. By HERBERT NORRIS. Dutton. 1925. \$10.

This book is the outgrowth of chronological notes and sketches on costume and accessories used in the supervision of costumes for historical plays, pageants, and films, and the basis of a course of lectures on costume. It is designed to be useful to students of the literature and history of European nations, and particularly of costume; artists who paint historical pictures; producers and actors in historical and Shakespearean plays and films, and teachers of history. It should prove of great value. The pictures are designed, not as works

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