

Points of View

From M. Hamon

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

I read in your interesting weekly an article by Mr. Ernest Boyd, "Shaw en Deshabille," which contains a few errors of facts. I think you will be kind enough to publish the present letter in order to put matters straight.

Mr. Boyd writes "M. Hamon was a Belgian Socialist without any qualifications whatever." I am sorry to say that Mr. Boyd writes with much assurance about things that he is utterly unacquainted with. I am not a Belgian, but French, and I can show French ancestry going back to the middle of the XVIIIth century. When Bernard Shaw asked my wife and myself, in 1904, to be his French translators, he was asking this of a man who had "some literary qualifications." The fact is that I had at that time published seven volumes and contributed to several "young reviews" (*La Société Nouvelle*, *L'Aube*, *L'Art Social*, etc.), and had founded and edited, from 1897 to 1903, a review, *L'Humanité Nouvelle*.

Since that time, Mr. Boyd might have known that I lectured from 1909 to 1912 at the Sorbonne, "Faculté des Lettres de Paris," on Bernard Shaw's Theatre compared with that of Molière, ten to twelve lectures yearly. To be allowed to lecture at the University, you must either be a "Docteur ès Lettres," or the works that you have published must be declared equivalent to a doctor's degree by the council of the University.

You will own that if I am still "without any literary qualification," Mr. Boyd's exigence is indeed without its like.

I doubt not that Mr. Boyd is a master of the French language and knows all the niceties of our language, and his appreciation of our translations certainly has a great weight. However, I hope he will allow me to attach a much greater weight still to an appreciation by Rémy de Gourmont, who wrote: "I have received the first volume of your Bernard Shaw. . . . Yours was an excellent idea of translating those plays which are so curious ('Widowers' Houses,' 'Mrs. Warren's Profession,' 'Philanderer'), and besides do not seem to be translations, so natural does the French language appear."

For your readers and not for Mr. Boyd, who is too well acquainted with our French literature to ignore it, I shall recall that in France, Mr. Rémy de Gourmont is considered one of the greatest French critics and writers of the period between 1890 and 1915.

It is true that Mr. Robert d'Humières has declared that B. Shaw's works were unreadable in the Bas Breton of Augustin Hamon. This was the expression of his dissatisfaction with G. B. Shaw and myself. After the production of "Candida" in Paris, in 1908, Bernard Shaw wrote to M. d'Humières a letter so full of plain truths that he took care not to publish it. Bernard Shaw sent me a copy, and it is probable that the letter will be published some day.

As for myself, I gave the reasons of the failure of "Candida" in 1908 in my book "Le Molière du XXe Siècle: Bernard Shaw" which was caused by M. d'Humières's miscomprehension of the comic art of Bernard Shaw.

Such truths offended M. d'Humières and he took his revenge without any analogy with the French language. It is only sheer ignorance which can make anybody compare it with "bad French" or to call the latter "bas breton."

I have just given you Rémy de Gourmont's appreciation in 1913; you will allow me to add the following appreciations written in 1925, by well-known men of letters after the triumphant production of "Saint Joan" in Paris.

From M. André Rivoire (*Le Temps*): ". . . we have been particularly sensible of the naturalness and strength of this French version of 'Saint Joan.' It is only fair that the two translators after having had the trouble should now reap the honors."

From M. Pierre Véber (*Le Petit Journal*): "The translation by M. et Mme. Hamon is excellent because none of the intention of the author has been lost, and this was not easy. M. Shaw has not been betrayed, and he may be thankful to those who have dressed his Joan in French attire."

From M. Paul Reboux (*Le Journal du Peuple*): "The author, admirably served by M. and Mme. Hamon, first-rate translators . . ."

From M. Fernand Vandérem (*La Revue de France*): "'Saint Joan' has had the

greatest success at the Théâtre des Arts, thanks to the admirable interpretation of M. et Mme. Pitoëff . . . the excellent translation of M. et Mme. Hamon . . ."

Such estimates prove that Bernard Shaw was right in upholding our translations and that Mr. Boyd is grossly mistaken when he asserts that "G. Bernard Shaw has shown a consistent predilection for the inappropriate and incongruous in matters of this kind."

This also shows once more that G. Bernard Shaw was justified in writing in one of his prefaces that he was endowed with a normal eye that saw men and things just as they are, a very rare normalcy, he writes. Alas, for Mr. Boyd, who is not among those who possess it.

A. HAMON.

Penvénan, France.

Thanks Are Due—

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

It seems to me the review of "Margery the Medium" in the current *Saturday Review* is the first, or almost the first, intelligent notice of a psychic book I ever saw in a reputable high-brow publication.

Yours sincerely,

EDWARD S. MARTIN.

Life, New York City.

A Poe Find

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

I wonder whether there are many other Poe collectors who have had such luck over such a short time as I have had! For many years a host of men have hoped that theirs might be the good fortune to turn up a file of *The American Museum*, the short-lived, inglorious periodical edited at Baltimore in 1838-39 by N. C. Brooks and J. E. Snodgrass, in which first appeared those two incomparable and wholly characteristic works by Poe, "Ligeia" and "The Haunted Palace." Nevertheless, the Peabody file, and the separate numbers owned by Mr. J. H. Whitty, of Richmond, remained all that were known. I have just found another, complete and sound, save for a missing page and defects in two others, and in the original calf binding.

This, together with my copy of the 1831 "Poems" and an autograph presentation copy of Mrs. Whitman's "Edgar Poe and His Critics," inscribed by Mrs. Clemm, are the result of a year of collecting only. Their total cost was merely nominal—a few dollars. Can any other match it, I wonder?

KENNETH REDE.

Baltimore, Md.

THE REVIEW OF ENGLISH STUDIES, a new quarterly, edited by R. B. McKerrow, is published in London by Sidgwick and Jackson. Its first number (January, 1925) frankly announced its intention of devoting itself to research "in all departments of the English language and literature," but proceeded to lay stress on a liberal concept of what constitutes research. It is the task of literary historians, we are told, "to discover not only the facts, the dry minutiae, but the relations between them, their reactions upon one another, those slower changes and developments to which the most clear-sighted of contemporaries must be ever blind. . . . This *Review* will therefore welcome new facts—however disconnected and in themselves unimportant they may be—but it will welcome no less cordially attempts to weave such facts into a large unity. . . . Its pages will be open to all new matter, to all new interpretation of the old; the one kind of article that it is hoped to exclude is the mere compilation which has nothing fresh to say."

The *Review's* "advisory panel" contains a number of the most distinguished names in contemporary British scholarship, and the contributors to the first issue are stars of the first international magnitude. One can not help wondering whether no American philologist was deemed worthy of inclusion in this initial galaxy. Professor Schuecking attacks afresh the tricky problem of Shakespeare and Sir Thomas More, Mr. E. K. Chambers adds some "Gleanings" to his massive volumes on the Elizabethan theatre, and in the form of a "Note" on certain chapters of that monumental work the eminent dramatist and actor Mr. Granville Barker contributes a brilliant remonstrance on the subject of Elizabethan staging. There are other names, no less shining, and the range of subjects extends from the Ancren Riwle to Byron.

Trade Winds

BEST Sellers in my shop the past fortnight:—"The Common Reader," by Virginia Woolf; "Anatole France en Pantoufes," by J. J. Brousson; "The Polyglots," by William Gerhardt; "Concerning Evolution," by J. Arthur Thomson; "Woman and the New Race," by Margaret Sanger; "Drums," by James Boyd.

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And when I say Best Sellers, I mean anything that has sold as much as three copies. Business, officially described by the Booksellers' Board of Trade as "quiet," has been almost inaudible here in the East Fifties. Fortunately it doesn't matter so much to me, my good old grandfather, who invented Danish pastry, left me an adequate income (every visitor to Aalborg, Viborg and Ringkjøbing knows the Quercus pastry shops) so my young Amherst assistant and I beguile these warm mornings by discussing theology. I entirely agree with him that these intellectual English bishops and archbishops who want to discard some of the XXXIX Articles must be a great embarrassment to the American ecclesiasts who are all for *rigor mortis* in the church. I came to this country as a young man because I could see it was the last hope of Toryism; and entered the book business because it is almost the only way, in America, that a man of taste can be sure of losing money with dignity. I know exactly how the American bishops look upon their colleagues of the Church of England. They feel as I do toward the bootlegger on 47th Street who sold me a case of *Old Orkney Relics*, apparently intact from the Stromness Distillery, Orkney, Scotland. (Stromness, a Scandinavian word, observe.) But on examination I found that a neat circle had been cut out of the bottom of each flagon, the contents diluted, and then the round of glass cemented in again. It looked like Old Orkney, and the seal and cork were perfect; but somehow its hind legs had been sprained.

But I am training up young Amherst to be a good sound conservative in the book business. Some day he'll be able to look a publisher's salesman in the eye as calmly as Joe Jennings of the Old Corner in Boston, play pinochle like Andy Pierce of Little, Brown and Co., and preside over a convention with the wit and readiness of Walter McKee himself. I'm not going to spoil him by letting him read too many books. *The Publishers' Weekly* is enough, and perhaps also the Grosset and Dunlap lists; and he is learning something of the seamy side of the business by making a tabular analysis of the plugs that appear on the 25 cent counters at Liggett's. Did you ever see the publishers' salesmen lined up waiting to sell overstocks at the Liggett buyer's office? Dante didn't divulge a moiety of it.

Of course Amherst and I don't altogether neglect literature in our chats together. I've introduced him to the "Gallant Ladies" (not Barney's but Brantome's) and to Paul Morand (whose "Nordic Night" reminded me so amusingly of the muscular gymnosophist symmetries who used to go bathing along the Mariager Fjord in my young days; I always wanted to write a story about Katie of the Cattergat) and to Edmund Lester Pearson's "Studies in Murder." Because I do believe that a man who, so to speak, had never tasted anything stronger than Clicquot Club ginger ale ought to know that there's another member of that family—I mean Veuve. I was amused to find him looking over a book called "The Best Love Stories of 1924," of which, in a rash moment, I bought one copy. How much further will the mania for annual "Bests" carry us? How about a volume (will Frank Harris oblige?) of *The Best Unprintable Stories of 1925*. And my pupil is getting a good deal of fun out of Brann the Iconoclast. He made rather a shrewd remark after reading some of Brann's vertigoes. "He was the Mencken of his day," said Amherst.

Philadelphia book-circles look forward pensively, I gather, to the Sesquicentennial (whatever that is) arranged for 1926 by Edward William Bok. The enterprising Walter Cox, who runs John Wanamaker's book department over there, is already staving off publishers' salesmen wanting to buy him lunches at which they can explain why their books about Philly should have preferred position in the grand Sesquicentennial window-display that Walter dreams of. The new Gimbel building will completely island Leary's famous store, but this will not dismay Governor Stuart and

his genials. The great newspaper war in Philadelphia continues. Rumor hath it that when the *North American* was bought by Mr. Curtis the *Inquirer* gained 75 thousand subscribers. I prefer to wait for Audit Bureau figures before advising publishers where to place their advertising. Philadelphia, much later than most cities, was invaded by the Little Bookshop fever: I wish them luck, and grandparents. Particularly lively seems the Locust Street Bookshop (1527 Locust Street) which issues a monthly leaflet of its enthusiasms. Mr. T. A. Daly, the well-loved Harp of Germantown, is busy editing an anthology of American humorous verse for the David McKay Company; no man in the world is better qualified, provided he includes some of his own. And Mr. Bart Haley, who once collaborated in a humorous novel with (I believe) the late Marshall P. Wilder, has started a column in the *Evening Ledger*, also syndicated to the New York *Evening Post*. As soon as Mr. Haley's column was started every publisher in America began bombarding him with books in the hope of getting them mentioned. It is a well-known fact that friendly mention by the right columnist is the most valuable assistance books or booksellers ever get. No columnist ever mentioned me, so I had to start a column of my own.

Other book traders luxuriating abroad: Mr. George H. Doran, Mr. Alfred Harcourt, Mr. John Hessing (of Doubleday's), Miss Grace Gaige (of Macy's), Miss Emily Street (of Stokes), Miss Marion Dodd (of the Hampshire Bookshop) and three of her staff, who are combing such nooks of enchantment as Heffer and Sons, Cambridge, England, for oddities to delight the coonskin-coated demoiselles of Smith College next Christmas time.

The best detective story I've read lately—and one that has that very rare asset, a sense of humor is Earl Derr Biggers' "The House Without a Key." The scene is laid in Hawaii, among emigrants from Boston, and there are some most quaintly amusing waggishnesses about the *Transcript* and other Boston institutions. Mr. Biggers, whether writing about Seven Keys or Waikiki, knows his job. He and Mr. Tom Beer and Mr. Elmer Davis are my three nominees as middlewesterners who have preserved untarnished their native sense of the ludicrous. Mr. Biggers' allusions to surf-boarding and young *bainsdemeristes* make me sigh for the beach at Elnore. The South Seas edition of Stevenson, at 90 cents a volume, announced by Scribner's, seems a very sound publishing venture. There is a perpetual sale for Stevenson and rightly. Before you begin to make up your Christmas lists, consult my favorite publisher, T. Hasegawa, 17 Kami Negishi, Tokyo, Japan. His booklets (in English) of Japanese fairy tales, printed from woodcut type and divinely illustrated in colors on Japanese crepe paper, are without exception the pleasantest Christmas novelty I know. Some of his Japanese fairy tales are translated by Lafcadio Hearn. Mr. Hasegawa also publishes beautiful postcard reproductions, in color, of Hiroshige prints. No American publisher has ever done anything that seems to me one tenth as charming. I have never forbidden anyone to write to him for his catalogue.

P. E. G. QUERCUS.

In his "Die Umschichtung der Europäischen Vermögen" (Berlin: Fischer), Richard Lewisohn, a noted German writer on finance and economics, presents a survey of the social and political changes which have resulted from the condition of exchange since the war. His book is at its best when dealing with the period of inflation in Germany, but is always an instructive and interesting volume.

Paul Morand, in his "L'Europe Galante" (Paris: Grasset), presents a number of sketches with cosmopolitan settings, illuminated by his quick and biting humor and frequent cynicism. His vignettes are of all parts of Europe and in the main show European life in its fantastic and depraved forms. Apparently it is a Europe which he personally finds most unlovely at the present moment.

Jean Kessel and Helene Iswolsky have collaborated in a historical novel which is an adroit tale, with considerable of plausibility, even if it is not a work of any depth. "Les Rois Aveugles" (Editions de France) is the chronicle of the events which preceded and attended the death of Rasputin; the story itself is slight but it serves as an excuse to introduce the Czar, the Czarina, and some of the figures of their court.

The World of Rare Books

By FREDERICK M. HOPKINS

"THE BOOKMAN'S GLOSSARY"

"THE BOOKMAN'S GLOSSARY," by John A. Holden, published by R. R. Bowker Company of this city, is a handbook that every printer, librarian and collector, who desires to be well informed or who needs this information, should own and keep easily accessible. It is an octavo, containing 127 pages, well printed and substantially bound and is intended for those interested in any branch of book production, distribution, collecting, or selling. It is a compendium of information, a glossary of bookish terms used in the several industries allied with book publishing: paper making, printing, binding, illustrating, and cataloging, much of which would be difficult to find elsewhere, and it brings a great deal of material into compact space that has heretofore been widely scattered through various works of reference. Mr. Holden's definitions are concise, clear, and comprehensive, and one will be surprised to see how thoroughly his book covers its field. A well-known cataloguer of this city in a letter says: "I keep the useful volume within hand's reach and find frequent use for it. I have read it from beginning to end and find it admirably comprehensive and well done. You should tell the young collectors and cataloguers about it for it will be invaluable to them." These are the words of a well informed bookman. In the course of a year scores of letters are sent to this department containing questions that this book is planned to answer. To this class of readers we would say by all means add "The Bookman's Glossary" to your shelf of books about books, for it will help you to a clearer and more accurate knowledge of bookish words and terms that will give you great satisfaction to understand. Mr. Holden has given us a reference that will be widely useful and many will be grateful to him for making it.

MSS. OF SCOTT'S "ANTIQUARY"

AMONG the rarities to be sold at Sotheby's in London this month is the original manuscript of Sir Walter Scott's "The Antiquary," comprising 310 quarto pages, numbered by the author, together with several letters in regard to the manuscript, one by the author himself. This magnificent manuscript was sold at Evans's, together with twelve other manuscripts of Scott's works in August, 1831, and came into the possession of Captain Basil Hall, the friend who in the same year, when the author's health was failing, ob-

tained permission from the British Admiralty for him to take a voyage in one of the ships of the navy and accompanied him to Portsmouth to see him off. Captain Hall mentioned to Scott that he had become the possessor of the manuscript and the author remarked that he "preferred it to any other he had written" and if he could see the manuscript for a few minutes he would give his reasons why.

The manuscript was placed in Scott's hands and in a letter dated "27th October, 1839, Portsmouth," he goes into details as to the original of the Antiquary:

"Among the numerous creatures of my imagination, the author has had a particular partiality for 'The Antiquary.' It is one of the very few of my works of fiction that contains a portrait from life and it is the likeness of a friend of my infancy, boyhood, and youth—a fact detected at the time by the acuteness of Mr. James Chalmers, solicitor-at-law in London. This gentleman . . . when he read 'The Antiquary,' told my friend, William Erskine, that he was now perfectly satisfied that Walter Scott, of whom personally he knew nothing, was the author of these mysterious works of fiction; that the character of Jonathan Oldbuck, of Monkbarrow, was drawn from the late George Constable of Wallace Craige of Dundee, who dined, when in Edinburgh, twice or thrice with my father every week & used to speak of my sayings and doings as a clever boy. . . . I owed him much for the kindness with which he treated me . . . he taught me to read and understand Shakespeare. . . . The sort of preference which I gave and still give this work is from its connection with the early scenes of my life."

The manuscript is closely written in Scott's customary regular and rapid hand, with small inner and no outer margins. Numerous additions, some of considerable length, appear on almost all of the blank pages opposite the main body of the text; erasures and interlineal and marginal corrections are as usual few. The condition is excellent throughout. The cataloguer says that "probably this is the finest existing manuscript by Sir Walter Scott, the manuscript of 'Waverley' being incomplete."

"BOOK AUCTION RECORDS"

"BOOK AUCTION RECORDS," established in 1902 by Frank Karslake and recently under the new management of Henry Stevens, Son & Stiles, London, will be published for the American

market by the office of the *Publishers' Weekly*, and the first bound volume under the new editorship will be ready for distribution this month. The index now completed covers 15,000 books of the auction year ending July, 1924. The new publishers plan to increase the speed of publication, so that the next yearly volume will be closer to the date of the completion of the season. In the meantime, many improvements of typography and arrangement have been worked out, so that the book is of much more value than heretofore. The reception given to the index of "Book Auction Records," for the first ten years, covering 200,000 entries, published a year ago, has encouraged the undertaking of a second decennial index which is being pushed forward rapidly by a large staff.

FORTHCOMING LONDON SALE

THE last catalogue received from Sotheby's of London is that of a sale occurring July 27, consisting of selections from a number of consignments, comprising highly important manuscripts, books, bindings, and autograph letters. The manuscripts include an Italian Psalter of the fourteenth century, one of the finest of its kind known; an English "Concordance of the Bible" of the twelfth century; a twelfth century Seneca; a thirteenth century Bible; and leaves of fine miniatures and several from the Orient. Rare early English literature is represented by such items as George Chapman's "Phyllis and Flora," 1598; Nicholas Breton's "An Olde Man's Lesson," 1605; Thomas Campion's "The Description of a Maske," 1607; Thomas Lodge's "An Alarum Against Usurers," 1584; and Captain John Smith's "The Sea-Man's Grammar," 1653. Among bindings by the masters is a fine large type Grolier example and two choice Maoli bindings. Rarities of a later period include tracts of Erasmus, a book annotated by Gabriel Harvey, the first issue of the first edition of Defoe's "Robinson Crusoe," first editions of Smollett, Fielding, Sterne, a fine copy of Kipling's "Schoolboy Lyrics of 1881," and many choice modern French bindings. Among the autograph letters are fine specimens of Washington, John Eliot, Carlyle, Thackeray, Stevenson, Lamb, and Napoleon.

NOTE AND COMMENT

COLLECTORS are looking forward with interest for the index of "The American Book Prices Current" for the ten years of 1912-1922 promised early publication by E. P. Dutton & Co.

The announcement comes from J. B. Lippincott of a memorial edition of the "Life of Charles Dickens," by John Forster,

which will be sumptuously illustrated with 500 portraits, facsimiles and other illustrations collected by B. W. Matz, editor of *The Dickensian*. It will be handsomely bound in blue buckram, stamped in gold, and issued in two volumes in the Fall.

After much comparing of notes, it appears that the oldest retail bookselling organization in New York is the Methodist Book Concern, which was formed in 1789 in Philadelphia and removed to this city in 1804 where it has remained. It began business in Gold Street. After several changes in location it became established at 200 Mulberry Street where a printing plant was added. In 1869 it moved to 805 Broadway and twenty years later into its own building at 150 Fifth Avenue. This unbroken record of 120 years of retail bookselling is one hard to beat in this country.

The death of Col James H. Manning, editor of the Albany *Argus*, ends the career of a great autograph collector, the outstanding feature of whose collection is a magnificent set of the autographs of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence. Some years ago he paid the then sensationally high price of \$4,600 for a Button Gwinnett signature, which completed his set. When interviewed, he said that he expected to live to see the Gwinnett signature double in value. He called attention to this prediction last winter when a Gwinnett signature brought \$14,000 in the same Philadelphia auction room in which he had made his purchase only a few years ago.

American interest in the Gutenberg Museum at Mainz is shown in the practical efforts being made to put this international monument on a firm and enduring basis. The American fund of \$25,000, and more if it is needed, will be raised, and the first instalment of \$5,000 has already been forwarded. Edward E. Bartlett, who has awakened interest in this country in the museum, has been elected to the governing board of the Gutenberg Society. The American patrons include the Grolier Club, American Institute of Graphic Arts, the Printing Arts Club of Evansville, Indiana; New York Employing Printers' Association, Franklin Typothetae of Cincinnati, Rochester Typothetae, Southeastern Master Printers' Federation, and the Houston-Galveston Typothetae, Inc., and the work has only just begun. Contributions for the fund are steadily coming in from authors, printers and booklovers. Checks should be made payable to John A. Wilkins, Treasurer, 461 Eighth Avenue, New York.

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GENERAL ITEMS

BOOKS REVIEWED in this issue sent post free anywhere. Special attention to kinsprits. Greenwich Village Book Shop, 4 Christopher St., New York City. Spring 8416.

MODERN FIRST EDITIONS, current books of English and American fiction, poetry, drama, criticism, art, essays, can now be procured from Eugene Pell, 1203 Locust St., Philadelphia, Pa.

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CURRENT ENGLISH BOOKS. The Holliday Bookshop, 10 West 47th St., New York.

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