

giving a literal version of "You never can tell," but he was not writing idiomatic French.

It is well to recall these facts before discussing this second appearance of Mr. Shaw and Mr. Henderson, because the point to be emphasized is, not that M. Hamon did not do the best he could, or Professor Henderson the best *he* could, but that George Bernard Shaw has shown a consistent predilection for the inappropriate and incongruous in matters of this kind. M. Hamon was a Belgian Socialist without any literary qualifications whatever. Professor Henderson was a mathematician in North Carolina; the one had to translate some of the wittiest dialogue in English for people already handicapped by complete unfamiliarity with the circumstances of Shaw's plays, the other had to write the life of a man who was the centre of an economic and intellectual movement utterly remote from American life, and for which the teaching of mathematics in a Southern University was no preparation. In both cases it was *tu Pas voulu*, *Georges Dandin*, and George declared himself satisfied. The utter failure of his work and influence in France he regards as just an example of the intellectual stagnation of that country, and not as a proof that he is unreadable in what Robert d'Humières called the *bas-breton* of Augustin Hamon.

So far as Professor Henderson is concerned, it is surely no fault of his that his mentality is so unattuned to Bernard Shaw's that their table-talk is something of a joke, and—once more—a joke at Shaw's expense. His mental furniture is not of the kind that would stimulate G. B. S. to the point of making him talk well. Consequently, whatever is characteristic in these conversations is a few Shavian truisms; the topical subjects raised by the Biographer simply produce *non sequiturs* or commonplaces. Unlike George Moore, on such occasions, Mr. Shaw does not reduce his interlocutor to the subsidiary rôle of the disciple of Socrates. Professor Henderson holds the floor at regular and lengthy intervals, but his eloquence, I suspect, did not, in its turn, hold Shaw. Thus he launches out into a sort of after-dinner oration about "the extraordinary material progress of the United States" leading up to the question: "What unmistakable contributions to the world of art . . . has my country made, in your opinion?" Whereupon Shaw replies that he has never been in America, that his information, such as it is, must be out of date, and that he never reads books, American or others, if he can help it. He has never read "Ulysses," being unable to afford the price of it—£3/3— but all this does not prevent the Biographer from asking for Shaw's opinion of Mencken, Cabell, Dreiser, Willa Cather and so forth, nor from rehashing all the arguments about the filthiness of "Ulysses" and the dreadful state of modern sex fiction. And so we get a chapter, supposed to be talk about literature by Shaw, which consists of a list of the authors he has not read and never intends to read, evasions of Mr. Henderson's discourses about matters that apparently do not interest Mr. Shaw, and finally a restatement of all that one knew Shaw thought on the subject of censorship and pornography.

When the chapter on the drama opens, there is an irrelevant speech by Mr. Henderson at the outset, describing to Shaw himself how Shaw slipped away from the theatre at the first night of "Saint Joan" in order not to be present when the call for "Author!" came. Whereupon a conversation about the movies begins, Shaw making no comment whatever on the detailed description of how he did not make a first night speech. His views on the cinema present no divergence from what has been said repeatedly by lesser men: that money is wasted, that plays should be written for the screen and not for the theatre, that Charlie Chaplin is a great comedian. Mr. Shaw reiterates that he does not go to American plays, that he has never been in America, but yet, the tireless Professor Henderson plies him with questions and introductory exhortations upon these unanswerable topics. He asks: "What do you think of sky-scrapers—which the French attractively call *frotteurs du ciel*?" This piece of information, being thrown in to make it harder, evidently so impressed Shaw that he did not at once correct Mr. Henderson by telling him that the word he was looking for was "*gratte-ciel*." Instead he argues that the space wasted on elevators must make the rents of skyscrapers high, and suggests that such buildings shut out the sun from the streets and should be isolated.

The final chapter is taken up with a discussion

of the War, of Shaw's attitude towards it, of Wilson's part in the Versailles Treaty, and the problem of Germany today. It has, in common with the the rest of the table-talk, the quality of irrelevance and one-sidedness. Shaw delivers a sharp comment on Wilson, but he is not challenged to enlarge upon his reasons. His Biographer just sings Wilson's praises, in that tone of deep reverence which usually exasperates Shaw when other people employ it. Professor Henderson reviews the treatment of Shaw during the war and listens to the statement that the authorities did not arrest G. B. S. for his heresies because they were not so stupid as the patriots who reviled him. The fact that men of less prominence were pursued and persecuted is omitted from the discussion. The financial manipulations of the Dawes plan are acutely analyzed, obviously in a manner quite over the head of the listener, but Shaw does not enlighten him. And so the table-talk meanders to its close. At no point has one the impression of two minds that can stimulate and understand each other, nor is there any vivid picture of Bernard Shaw's personality, such as Paul Gsell and J. J. Brousson have given in their records of the conversations of Anatole France. A facsimile shows that the answers to some, at least, of Mr. Henderson's questions were written down by Shaw—a strange kind of "table-talk." However, the mechanics of such a book as this are of no importance. Such records depend for their success on the clash of two personalities. Here there is no clash. George Bernard Shaw and Professor Archibald Shaw, A. M., Ph.D. are two parallel lines, they have met only socially.

Geographical Notions

THE GEOGRAPHICAL LORE OF THE TIME OF THE CRUSADES. By JOHN KIRTLAND WRIGHT. New York: American Geographical Society. 1925.

Reviewed by CHARLES H. HASKINS
Harvard University

IN all the history of science there is nothing more fascinating to the general reader than the history of geography. Even the least travelled now retain enough of their school geography to read the illustrated supplements with interest; even the least imaginative can see the results of exploration and discovery and perhaps catch something of the spirit which bade the seamen of Columbus "sail on." Probably no other large subject in science keeps so near to average mentality.

Dr. Wright has chosen a period when the traditional ideas of antiquity were first becoming enlarged by exploration and observation, the age of the Crusades. Men's geographical notions were still shaped by Pliny and Isadore, yet they had reached a new world to the West and were on the eve of Marco Polo and the new cartography. They had a good acquaintance with the shores of the Mediterranean and with Europe west of the Elbe, a fair amount of information respecting Western Asia and North Africa. "Beyond lay the third group of regions known only through the vaguest of rumors—the domains of fabulous monsters and legendary men. To some writers India was such a land, to others Russia and northern Scandinavia, to still others the legendary isles that lay concealed in the Western Ocean," while the antipodes were in the zone of complete ignorance.

Besides reviewing these regions one by one, the author treats of cosmology and physiography and the characteristic ideas of an epoch when the geography of observation was subordinate to the geography of authority and tradition. As the use of the word "lore" implies, there is much on popular beliefs as well as on the sterner side of science. "The errors of an age are as characteristic as the accurate knowledge which it possesses—and often more so." Again and again we touch the fringes of romance, as in the voyages of St. Brandan, with their strange combination of actual icebergs and glowing images from Ezekiel and the Apocalypse, and that vivid picture of Judas let loose annually from his volcano to cool him on the floe of the western ocean, theme of Matthew Arnold and of Kipling.

The volume rests on a broad basis of scholarship, while the material is attractively presented; it is creditable both to the author and to the Research Series in which it appears.

California Vignettes

By CHRISTINE TURNER CURTIS
CAPISTRANO

"Jan Juan Capistrano," said our toothless guide in the Norfolk jacket. Descending from the bus we picked our way sedulously to a luncheon spot of fine dry grass, backed by a little picturesque adobe. We quartered the loaf we had guiltily concealed under a coat, and spread it thickly with tomato and cheese. By that time the perfect lunch spot had exhausted its excellences. We spent the rest of the day removing excruciating long prickles from garments—outer and nether. It was our first experience with the wild oat.

Then the mission with its white walls, its bells, its bright yard clotted with flower heads, its seductive pepper-tree,—that rainy sprinkled green, the red littering berries, the simpering soft curves, the gnarled trunk, bulged with knots!

Within, the long dim Mission chancel like a tunnel of darkness, the gold and blue altar at its mouth, Spanish oils with saints and waxy angels;—we passed more quietly into the courtyard and lingered by the pepper-tree, recapitulating, revisualizing, reliving the Mission's sad and simple past.

SANTA CATALINA

I held in mind a picture of the glass-bottomed boats as we should see them,—small pointed pyrex row-boats, with glittering glass oars, semi-translucent. My visualization was foredoomed to defeat.

At Avalon we stepped from the pier into the hold of a small steamer, divided into neat white pews like "King's Chapel." Bending our foreheads as for prayer on the seat in front, we stared down into a rectangular box floored with a thick pane of glass.

The sea lay robin's egg blue under us,—we slid over an ocean bed of wrinkled white sand. Above the submarine gardens we idled,—saw the long dark gelatinous sea-cucumbers moored to the rocks, blue sea bass with wide bulbous eyes staring like the whales in the "Forsaken Mermen."

Great forests of brown kelp swung softly in the ebb, the dull rough backs of abalones humped among the rocks, little orange fish dove like arrows of light into the crevices. The uncanny slumbers of the sea bred strange languors in our bones, and we breathed in unison with long soughings of the tide.

MUIR WOODS

After the climb from Mill Valley we walked on the shoulders of the world, on the humped ridges of the coastal mountains, pale and crinkled like an elephant's hide. We moved in the upland wind that whisked us briskly along the slopes. Looking back we saw the delicious folds and hollows of those fawn-colored hills, lovely bisque mounds, and interstices of faint bluebell water, almost as blanchéd as the sky. We saw Mill Valley like a Swiss village perched in the pointed firs. Tamalpais, green and rugged, cut across the horizon, with deer-brown paths winding up and down. On we tramped till ahead of us rose the thin steeples of the redwoods, tiering sharp and jade-green from the valley. At last clear of the dusty road, and we stand under the roof of those heroic trees.

Trunks grouped in great circles,—chestnut-spindling into the unseen sky. The fine-needled leaves let in flickers and splashes of light that fall into those deep glades and sow pink lashes about the redwoods, so the great trees under their thatched green towers swim in layers of rose light. The silence engulfs one in those brown glades, the darks, the thick mats underfoot, the sense of ancient, world-old imperturbability, where men walk and their footsteps die unechoing to the distant tops.

GOLDEN OPHIR

Now and then in this flat new-sprung city of Salinas I walk by a dooryard and see a delectable little rose-tree, as prim and perfect as if it had sprung from a gilt and purple illumination of the Middle Ages. A slim little trunk, and above it the domed bouquet of blossoms, leaves, dust-green with the long drought, flower colors pale and exquisite, round thick-petalled heads, and buds pursed deliciously in the clear silver-pale peachy bloom.

Sometimes I stand before the Golden Ophir, pink outer-edged, with inside petals of the faintest buff. A tint of angels, that sheer fainting from

mere blush to the bare cool fresh lemony gold. I marvel then, at that ethereal blooming, that hue of fading Paris day, that sheer attar of poetry that clings about this rose-tree sprung so unpoetically from a callow soil.

CALIFORNIA GARDENS

When I see heliotrope, geraniums, fuchsias, lemon verbenas rioting here in great profuse bushes and hedges, I think of Grandma C. and the little pots she tended in her sunny New England window,—the "slips" carefully wrapped in cotton, cherished and exchanged with anxious neighbors. How she nursed them in that south window, often banked with snow, how she painstakingly trained a languid rose geranium to trail up the woodwork, how every spring she set the plants out in the little corner garden, and every fall repotted them before the first sharp-toothed frost. What would she have said, if her New England eyes had caught sight of these hedges, shoulder high, of scarlet geranium, these red ringed fuchsias, swinging their purple beads to the eaves, or white-petalled with red drops like ear-rings tapping the tops of the lintels? These bushed and exuberant verbenas scenting the walks, these waist-high heliotrope?

PEPPER-TREES

I have transferred my allegiance from a weeping willow to a pepper tree. There is no more luscious tree in the world. Hung with a million of the finest fern sprays, limp, dangling, soft as fleece,—fine-cut threaded leaves on the delicate sprays, laces ruffling in the slightest wind!

The gnarled, hunched and twisted trunk, all lumps and bubbles, and that fluff of greenness caught over it like a vagrant cloud.

Always the bright new green of pasture grass, and when the berries ripen, long sprays of microscopical rose grapes swing in the leaves like Christmas baubles.

When those divine tatters droop over a burnt adobe wall, out of an old Mission garden, they pencil romance unutterable with their thin green fingers.

PINK LILIES OF MONTEREY

How often climbing those hills, I beheld, flanking the most tottering and decrepit house, a walk rimmed with the regal pink upland lilies. Tall bare stalks, beginning at the root in a lovely mauve, and gradually mounting through shades of violet-brown to whorls of the most passionate and burning pink—a raw, ripe, magnificent color in the dingy doorways. Lily heads, the form, the bell of the Easter lily with the scent of the narcissus, a magnetic flower in the clean open, with the bright air, the pines glooming and the brisk sea below.

Those amaryllis used to fascinate me, their graceful tall stems bent with the weight of those glorious crowns. There they stood, vivid, stunning, adequate—a dashing style that lingered in the eye like a Japanese picture. Crisp and perishable on the supple stalks, there was an iridescence on them, a tartness, an *élan*, as of having triumphantly wrung that unthinkable color from the wan adobe soil.

RETURN AT EVENING

The bay lay as before in its wing of dunes, a purple cloud like an immense deep-breasted bird overhung the east, the Salinas hills stood in wrinkles of rich pearl and mauve: on the white scroll of the sands shadows drew alternate cones of raspberry and pale gilt. The water floated a glazed crust of beryl, a cool metallic Nile-green under the violet feather of the sky.

SUNNY MORNING

Morning broke in quartz crystals on the Salinas hills, and the early bay was seen as Carmel artists love to paint it, a burning, intense, riant peacock. We tramped around to the dunes at Asilomar—here the eloquent ocean outdid its most fiery representations.

Dazzling, pure, singing, cobalt—as far as the eye could see—that ring of absolute and incredible color. In the sand we saw yellow verbena, poppies, and that quaint, orange-tipped smoky flower called Paint-brush.

THE RANCH

Into that scalloped cup of the bare hills drained the California moonlight, chalk-white on the house, on the even rows of the orchard, on the dumpling hills with their mammoth intermittent parasols of live oak. Only the crickets lisp in the dry burnt grass, no sound in the hollows, and that wash of floury whiteness as the California moon lets fall her inimitable snow.

The BOWLING GREEN

The Haddock

IF the train goes from Grand Central, there are two things one can do. One can stop in the office of the SATURDAY REVIEW and borrow from the shelves of volumes not yet assigned to reviewers something that looks as if it might be amusing. Or you can halt at Liggett's Drug Store, in the same building as the Station, and study the famous counters of publishers' "jobs." The latter course is always profitable: not only can you almost always find, among the wounded and slain of the publishing world, something of real merit; you can also observe the different policies of various publishers in regard to selling off their overstock. How rapidly do X and Company, if they find a book not "moving," pass it on to Mr. Liggett (whose private library, if he has a taste for collecting, should be excellent and acquired very reasonably). Whereas Y. Z. and Company hang onto their plugs more loyally, hoping faintly, perhaps, that some back-draught of fortune may yet plump those idly flapping sails. And no one has yet told, I suppose, the queer blend of feelings with which an author meets for the first time a pile of his own children on one of those counters. At any rate, he says to himself, it's in the 50-cent lot, not the 25.



On this occasion, however, it was in the SATURDAY REVIEW office that I gleaned my train-reading. What I had really hoped to find was Earl Derr Biggers' new novel—"The House Without a Key" I think it is called—for I know Mr. Biggers' spirited skill in mystery tales, and I believed it was just the sort of thing I needed. For the qualities desirable in train-reading are not easy to find. The flying world, striped like a ribbon beside you, makes the mind too uneasy for commercing with high sobrieties. Though I admit that I found Compton Leith's *Sirenica*, which I bought the other day in the beautiful Mosher edition in Mr. Mosher's own shop in Portland, perfect miracle for my travelling mood. But then few moderns have written as that book is written, almost in the deep tenderness of Sir Thomas Browne.—I could not help being pleased, by the way, when I at last had opportunity to make my often-imagined pilgrimage to Mr. Mosher's, that even the shops just across the street did not seem to know exactly where T. B. M.'s place was. This was so exactly as it should have been, for Mosher lived, I guess, little known to his neighbors; and few of them guessed that his little books, like the sailing ships of older time, had gone round the world with the name of Portland on their sterns.



But on this trip—and I write in the train, an indignity to which I have never before been reduced—I found myself with *This Quarter*, another of those expatriate Anglo-American reviews that keep bursting forth in foreign capitals. The two great Dioscuri whose spirits brood over this magazine, seem to be Ezra Pound and Brancusi. I do not mean that they are the editors: the magazine starts its career by dedicating Volume I Number 1 to E. P. and reproducing nearly fifty of Brancusi's drawings and sculptures. I heartily approve of all intellectual magazines of this sort, as long as I can see them occasionally without having to pay for them. Whether large and unwieldy like the *Broom* or small and tight-stitched like *S4N* (I admit I am behind the times, for I think both these vanished some time ago) I always enjoy them; and they help to keep cheerful and busy a number of people gifted with terrific capabilities of melancholia. The way to keep a litterateur happy is to give him plenty of proofs (of his own writings, of course) to correct.

The one thing that *This Quarter* insists most upon is being fresh from the pan. It "pledges to its writers and audience to maintain its character as a periodical by presenting the artist in his latest mood. The editors of *This Quarter* realize that to a sensitive artist and to a critical audience a mood of yesterday is a painful thing. . . . Contributions will be paid for on acceptance. The editors especially urge donations to *This Quarter*

of large sums to be awarded to contributors." On the whole I think I rather envy the kind of people who contribute to *This Quarter*. They are under no obligations to think out whatever notions are in their minds and try to make them intelligible. They don't even have to finish the job in hand, for several contributions are fragments "from Works Now in Progress." This is not to say that the experimentalists do not every now and then accomplish some astonishingly fine thing: I remember, for instance, some of E. E. Cummings's poems a few years ago. But they don't seem able to tell the difference between intelligible beauty and Tristan Tzara's formula for writing a dadaist poem:—

Take a newspaper. Take a pair of shears. Choose an article in the newspaper of the length you wish to give to your poem. Cut out the article. Then cut out carefully each of the words in the article and put them all into a bag. Shake gently. Take out one cutting after another, and copy each conscientiously as it leaves the bag. The poem will look like you: And there you are, an infinitely original writer with a charming sensibility, although still incomprehensible to the vulgar.

M. Tzara, I should say, is a humorous fellow who succeeded, for some time, in gulling the young Earnests of other movements. But even *This Quarter* admits that Dada is dead. A later excitement is Super-realism. Of this we learn that it expresses "the disinterested play of thought, without any aesthetic or moral preoccupation. It tends to ruin definitely all other psychological mechanisms, and to replace them in the solution of the principal problems of life. Vows of ABSOLUTE SUPER-REALISM have been pledged by M. M. Aragon, Baron, Boiffard, Breton—" etc, etc.

How useful, I am thinking, the dadaist formula would be at a time like the present; when, owing to a number of circumstances, I try to write a piece on the train. I should even be tempted to try it if I had a pair of scissors. The chief difficulty is that newspapers are printed on both sides of the sheet; and suppose some irrelevant words got in? The greatest of poets, according to some modern theories, is the man who hitches together a string of Pullman cars.



It doesn't really matter very much: I don't mind what theories people pretend to believe about art as long as the result is thrilling and exciting. As the man said in Chesterton's "The Man Who Was Thursday," "who am I to quarrel with the wild fruits upon the tree of life?" What I really wanted to do today was write about the queer thrilling feeling of having been in Maine: of the clean stringent air, of those divinely pointed fir trees—which, I suppose, the New England church steeples imitated. I'd gladly fall back on any formula of "super-realism" that would help me, without taking the time and trouble of slow stupid brooding, to describe the sensation of some side-streets in Portland. In a lecture-hall at Bowdoin, where a celebration in honor of Hawthorne and Longfellow was going on, I could see, far away at the other end of the big room, a blaze of scarlet. As I was thinking about Hawthorne it seemed somehow oddly significant, but I was too short-sighted to make out just what it was. Afterwards I saw: it was the bright red dress of a charming little girl, a child as gay to look upon as Hester's daughter.

On one of the piers in Portland an old fishmonger told the legend of the queer markings on the haddock. Just abaft the fish's gills are two dark blotches, like bruises, one on each side. And from each of these marks runs a straight dark line back toward the tail. The haddock, said this fisherman, was the fish with which Christ fed the multitude (though that sounds unlikely!). This so annoyed the devil that he tried to avenge himself on the species. He seized one, holding it tightly, (hence the bruise-mark) but it slipped away. The Devil's finger-nails made the long scratches on each side; since when all haddocks carry that pattern. And beauty, in any art, I guess is just as elusive as that haddock. It can't be nabbed between the thumb and finger of any manifesto.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

A notable exhibition of painting and sculpture by the leading contemporary artists of America is being held under the supervision of Emil Gelhaar, the artist, at Lehigh University at the time of the Bach Festival (May 26-June 10). The Bach Festival itself occurs on May 29-30, but the exhibition will continue over a longer period.