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of Literature, Science and Art.*

Edited by SEUMAS O'SULLIVAN.

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The Woman of the Red-haired Man

By F. R. HIGGINS.

At home last year soft airs were growing
From Candlemas to Lammas night ;
Down my stone fields high dew was cropping
On edges of the twilight ;
And summer climbed, when she who was wedded
Came to me and said : " Let others find
Bees' comb and black ale in the meadows,
We'll love while scythes echo the wind."

O secret love, wild limb of beauty,
Your vest held summer stretched in silk ;
O secret love, would that your bosom
By me grew full of milk,
Then as a goldsmith working in sunlight,
In isles of humming or some white town,
I'd set your hips, once dipped in moonlight,
Into a bed of easy down.

A

But now while I lie down in bracken
 And foxes bark above my bed,
 As married maid to red O'Meara
 Your head lies by his head ;
 With black eyelashes, flags of mourning,
 You mark the graves where love is laid ;
 O dreamy head, by you I'm broken
 To run hare-brained and passion-flayed !

With salt I'm cursed, by church I'm banished
 Beyond your parish mearing stones ;
 This Lent I've left black fast and ashes
 With parish holy bones ;
 Salt days at table, nights without marriage
 Leave milkless paps in your female clan—
 But after Easter who'll ease your passion,
 O woman of the red-haired man !

Les Regrets de la Belle Heaulmiere

After the French of François Villon

By MICHAEL SCOT.

My pity for that tree of pride,
 The Armouress, once queenly, she
 Laments her beauty's blossom-tide,
 Who was the fair Heart-cherry tree.
 "Old age, thief of the world, has me
 Destroyed and changed," she mourns "the way
 I've nothing left for love to see
 What has me still above the clay ?

"Gone is my sway of pride : ah then
 My beauty had them queer and mad !
 Scholars and merchants holy men
 There wasn't one that would think bad
 To chance his soul and all he had
 For this poor body's mortal store :
 A rogue's corpse, hanging by a gad
 To-day, would move men's glances more.

"Many fine men (small was my guile)
 I drove with scorn towards the grave
 For a right playboy, full of wile :
 To him I made my beauty slave.
 I had him tricked, the gallows knave :
 Yet gave him love, by Mary's Son :
 The heavy word was all he gave
 And all his wish, the gold I won.

"And after all his belts and kicks
He'd coax me with the hand that beat
And I'd forget his thousand tricks
Because his honey-mouth was sweet.
That greedy thief with his deceit
Cut down each fragrant fruitful bough
And trampled all under his feet :
It's rotten sticks is in it, now.

"Ah well he's dead these thirty years,
And I keening what used to be ;
Grey-headed, darkened with the tears ;
When in my naked skin I see
Myself, a hollow cherry tree
Blasted with age from crown to heel,
Stripped, sapless, withered, straggledy,
It's nearly maddened I do feel.

"I keen the face so broad above,
The eyebrows curve, the brow of light,
The hair like corn, the look of love
That robbed proud men of craft and might,
Of sun by day, of moon by night,
The small neat ears, and delicate nose,
The cleft chin, cheeks of red and white,
And the thin ember mouth of rose.

"The grace of shoulder and of limb,
The small breasts, lamps of the bright air
The shapely palm, lime-white and slim
The hips fair sculpture, strong to bear
The girdle Venus places there :
And all the gifts desired of men,
The pitiful and royal store
Of treasure that was with me then.

"White head and wrinkled forehead, bare
Of eyebrows, dark the eyes that took
A host of lovers in their snare
With wonder of their laughing look,
The nose, a sharpened reaping-hook,
The wizened ears, the cheeks and chin
You'd say were made from some old book
That lost its yellow leather skin.

"My sharp destruction ! that's the end
Of beauty for the worst and best :
The claws of hands that scrawl and bend
The hips and shoulders, arms and breast,
Shrivelled to nothing :—and the rest ?
Och witch-wealth, withered to a bag
Of mouldy blight ! Sure, east or west,
What am I only an old hag ?

"So here we sit old crabbéd fools
Poor huddled hanks of misery
Crouched on our hunkers or on stools
Keening the times that used to be :
As these light sticks char speedily
Too quick to burn, to keep aflame
—And we were once so blossomy !
Och many a one could say the same."

Epitaph

(In the form of a ballad which Villon made for himself and his comrades, while he was waiting to be hanged along with them).

From the French of François Villon.

BY MICHAEL SCOT.

Brothers who live, while we are dead this day :
Let no hard wish fall on us from your eyes :
Pity us, poor rogues, as you go your way ;
God will so pity your iniquities.
See, here we hang, five—six—under the skies,
Long rotted and devoured, you yet may spy
The flesh that once we fed too tenderly,
While we, the bones, moulder through tattered skin.
Mock not at our ill fate, men passing by :
But pray that God forgive us all our sin.

We whom the law had every right to slay
Bid ye not blame us, brothers, nor despise,
Musha 'tis known, be justice what it may,
It is not all times a man will be wise
Sinners are we—so let your prayers rise
For us, to Mary's Son above the skies.
Pray that His crystal well of grace supply
Amid hell's flame our parching souls within.
Ah we are dead—torment us not ! we cry
But pray that God forgive us all, our sin.

EPITAPH

The rain has drenched and soddened our poor clay
The sun has cracked and scorched it, as it dries,
Magpies and crows have picked our eyes away
Plucked beards and eyebrows. In such grievous guise
We swing now here, now there, the unresting prize
Of winds that shift and vary, nor know why,
While birds, with pecking beaks of hunger, fly
Ever about us, as we dance and spin.
O let ye never join our company
But pray that God forgive us all, our sin.

Envoi

Prince Jesus, Lord of all, O Prince most high
Safeguard our souls from Satan's sovereignty
That we may be no slaves of his or kin
Men—brother men—make here no mockery
But pray that God forgive us all, our sin.

Epigrams from the Greek of Anyte

BY B. FARRINGTON.

Anyte was a Greek poetess of the fourth century B.C. In the age of Augustus, Antipater of Thessalonica refers to her, in an epigram on nine poetesses, as the female Homer. Twenty-one of her epigrams are preserved in the Anthology, and are here translated.

I. THE LANCE.

Rest here, man-slaughtering lance, nor ever more
From your bronze nail let drip the cruel gore.
Rest: and in Pallas' temple shew what was
The Cretan warrior, Echekratidas.

2. THE CAULDRON.

This cauldron holds an ox: the donor was
Cleubotas, son of Eriaspidas,
Of Tegea, to Athena: made therefor
By Aristotle of Cleitor, junior.

3. THE BILLY-GOAT.

See how the boys have tied a purple trace
On the old goat, muzzled his bearded face,
And play at horses round the temple court
So that the god may bless their innocent sport!

4. MYRO'S PETS.

A locust—that's the furrows' nightingale—
And tree-perched cicale Myro doth bewail,
Consigned with tears into one common tomb,
Two pets deaf Hades swept into his gloom.

5. THE COCK.

No longer as before with your shrill numbers
And clapping wings you'll break my morning slumbers:
Close on your sleep the stealthy prowler drew,
Tore with red claw that throat, and lightly slew.

EPIGRAMS FROM THE GREEK OF ANYTE

6. THE WAR-HORSE.

This stone to his true comrade in the wars
Damis sets up—his horse, whom bloody Mars
Smote through the breast. About the gaping hide
The black blood boiled, and jet by jet he died.

7. THE DOLPHIN.

No longer in the vessel's swelling track
Up from the deeps I heave my rolling back,
Race past the oars, and snort with curling lip
Where my own image beaks the saucy ship;
For a black sea flung me upon the strand,
And I lie dead, heaped on the soft fine sand.

8. PHILAENIS.

A mother often on this funeral stone
For her dead daughter made despairing moan,
Cleina for her Philaenis, who unwed
Beyond pale Acheron's stream untimely fled.

9. ANTIBIA.

My tears are for the maid Antibia's fate.
The suitors thronged about her father's gate
Hearing her wise and fair. But Death wooed best,
Won her and wed her and befooled the rest.

10. THREE MAIDENS.

Miletus, dear our city, here lie we,
Three maids who from the conquerors' lust did flee,
Three maids thy citizens, whom barbarous Gauls
Compelled to this but could not make their thralls.
When to their forced embrace we would not yield,
O'er us, for Hymen, Hades held a shield.

II. A NOBODY.

On earth this man shrunk by unheeded by us;
Dead, he is now as great as great Darius.

12. ERATO.

Her arms around her father's neck held fast,
Shedding pale tears, Erato breathes her last :
" Father, I die. Veil upon veil, descends
The blackness of the night that never ends."

13. THYRSIS.

Your mother thought to deck your bridal bed,
But on your marble tomb she set instead
A maiden with your stature and your grace,
Thyrsis, and whispers to that marble face.

14. A SOLDIER.

Proarchus, your own valour was the foe
That struck your father's house and you both low :
But on your tomb carven this song shall stand :
He perished fighting for the fatherland.

15. THE TEMPLE OF VENUS.

Here Venus dwells, for she was ever fain
To look from land out on the burnished main
And give fair voyage to men, while the hushed seas
Faint, when they see how smooth her image is.

16. THE HARVEST SHELTER.

Here, where the laurel spreads its generous shade,
Cup the clear stream, for here is shelter made
For your spent limbs, O panting harvesters,
Where the fresh breath of Zephyr wakes and stirs.

17. THE WAYSIDE HALT.

These wind-tossed branches and this grey sea sand
Near the cross-roads mark where I, Hermes, stand,
Pointing to weary travellers comfort meet :
A pure cool fountain bubbling at my feet.

18. BACCHUS' GOAT.

See Bacchus' hornéd goat ! The king-proud mien
With which he eyes asquint his bearded chin !
He swells to think how oft mid mountain rocks
The Naiad's rosy fingers combed those locks.

19. THE REST.

Stranger, this elm is where you find relief,
Hark how the breeze whispers in every leaf,
Taste the cool water from this running stream,
Here is the rest of which sick travellers dream.

20. PAN'S PRAYER.

" O woodland Pan, what play you, an you please,
On your soft pipes alone beneath the trees ? "
" A prayer that, as my heifers graze the hill
Knee-deep in dew, rich be the grass they pull."

21. TO PAN AND THE NYMPHS.

O hairy Pan and Nymphs that mind the sheep,
This gift from Theudotus the shepherd keep,
Because when he was parched with summer heat
Here 'neath this hill you showed him water sweet.

The Next Room

By VINCENT O'SULLIVAN.

July 14.—I moved into the house this afternoon.

Now that I am settled, let me set down exactly the events which have brought me here. This diary-keeping habit of mine is an immense aid, I find, to clear thinking. And it is more necessary for me than for most men to keep my thoughts absolutely clear—to think and observe *precisely*, without any intermixture of drama or romance or sentiment.

A few days ago, then, it being Sunday, I was strolling along a street in one of the older parts of the Brooklyn district of New York. It was growing towards evening, the end of a day that had been terribly oppressive. Now and then lightning flickered over the sky. How still some of those streets in Brooklyn are!—for all the world as still and plaintive as the streets of a small New England town. Trees border the street; a footfall sounds afar off. Yet not a quarter of a mile away is a street of roaring traffic, and only a few blocks down nearer the river a noisy tenement district of Italians.

There was nobody, I think, in the street. Many of the people in this quarter are well-to-do, and close their houses in the summer. No doubt a fear of the storm had kept the usual Sunday promenaders indoors, or they were elsewhere—down at the seabeaches or in the park. My footsteps sounded. Far off a bell for evening prayer tolled heavily.

Now as I came down the street I noticed a horse-drawn cab of the kind called a coupé standing in front of a house. Why should this have struck me as strange? Of course horse-drawn cabs are becoming rather an unusual sight in any district of New York, except for pleasure; and people do not take a closed cab on a very hot evening for pleasure. But it was not that. It was the cab taken in relation to the house.

It was a low wooden house, which had been left over from the first settlement of Brooklyn. On one side of it was a row of comparatively modern stone houses. On the other side was a vacant lot closed from the street by a high fence. The house itself looked shabby and dismal. The boards needed painting. Dingy green shutters were closed on all the windows, and tied together with

pieces of rag to keep them from blowing open. It looked like a house that had been given over to negroes or other poor folk till it could be pulled down.

I stood on the opposite side of the way looking at it. The street-door was standing about a quarter open. The cab driver had got off his box and was sitting on the steps bare-headed and in his shirt-sleeves. He had a rather long beard, and otherwise did not look much like a coachman. I could not have been standing there more than half-a-minute before some words which I did not catch were spoken rapidly to the driver from within the house, and the door closed with a bang. The man got up and stationed himself at his horse's head, eyeing me with mistrust and defiance.

"Go a few blocks down," he called out offensively, "and you'll have the boats and the river to look at. What do you want here anyhow?"

There was nothing for it but to walk away. As I strolled along I turned to have another look at the house. Two of the upper floor windows looked upon the empty lot. They were shuttered like the others, but through the chinks of the shutters I could see a crimson light in the back room—not the white light of gas or electricity—a crimson light. It was now quite dusk, and the light was plain.

I came to where the street ended, and I had to turn right or left. Half-an-hour later I came back through the street. The cab was gone; the house was in darkness. There was an atmosphere about it such as we sometimes, though very exceptionally, perceive, without being able to analyse it, around certain men—I have never observed it in women—an atmosphere of isolation, of loneliness and fatality, of being under a curse. Some secret lodged inside the shell and discomposed the features, as a dread secret in the heart sometimes ravages the human face.

During the next two days I could think of little else. What was the cab doing before such a house? Cabs are expensive in New York, and the house looked as if the kind of people it might shelter in the ordinary course of life would not be in the habit of taking cabs. Why was the door partly open, and then shut as soon as those inside saw they were being watched? And what was the meaning of the crimson light?

On Wednesday I could not resist an impulse to see the house again. A board had been put on it saying it was to let, and the

address of an agent was given. At once I was seized by a desire to live in the house. I was sure it had a mystery; perhaps I might fathom it. Besides, I have not been at all comfortable in the New York boarding-house which has been my abode since I arrived here from my engineering works in Mexico. The people were hostile and suspicious. I have never spoken at any length to any of them. I could tell by their looks and their veiled remarks that they thought I had been guilty of some atrocity. If you are different from the rest of the flock, they bite you. What a joy, I thought, to live in this little house away from faces and voices so unfriendly and exterior!

Yesterday I went to see the agent. The rent is exceptionally low. It seems they are only waiting to find a purchaser of the land before they tear down the old house. I took the house for three months, and paid in advance. I tried to find out something about the owner of the house and why he desired to let it, but the agent was evasive.

"He has only just vacated the house—last Saturday in fact."

"Saturday?"

"Yes. He brought us the keys." He added: "You will find the house sufficiently furnished. I don't say it is well furnished, but all that is necessary is there."

And here I am. I have arranged with a coloured woman to come in a few times a week and set things in order. She comes early in the morning and stays about half an hour. What food I want I can prepare myself, or go to some restaurant near at hand. What a relief to be free from the chatter of the boarding-house table!

July 17.—I am very happy here. There is nothing at all strange about the house—or only one thing. The house is very poorly furnished with dilapidated furniture. The carpets are colourless and threadbare. The only sight of the former tenants is a pile of medical journals and some surgical bandages in the room at the back downstairs, and a pair of woman's stockings, left over the back of a chair in the front bedroom upstairs which I occupy. There is a telephone apparatus downstairs, but the wire has been cut. The strange thing—it is a little odd—is that the back room next to my bedroom is locked. There is not a key in the house which will open the door. I thought of notifying the agent; then I decided to let it be. After all, I cannot use the room.

July 26.—It has been terribly hot these last days, a thick crushing heat under a sky tinged ruddy. Hardly any sunlight. I have been a few times in the street. Just below a dead cat lay for hours rotting under swarms of flies.

There is certainly something unusual about this house. When night falls, and I am sitting in the back room downstairs, I feel—I *know* that there is something alive in the house besides myself. Last night I placed W. J. Loudon's "Treatise on Rigid Dynamics" closed on the table, and went out of the room. When I returned the book was open and a leaf torn across. How did that happen? It may have been a lack of attention on my part. Perhaps I did it myself inadvertently? That is most likely. And yet I cannot escape the impression that it was done by somebody who is in the house and wants to attract my attention. There is no corner where anybody could possibly be concealed except the locked room. I could almost take my oath that I have heard footsteps up above and on the stairs—light footsteps and not sequential. This very night at twenty minutes past eleven a door upstairs banged. I hurried upstairs. My bedroom door stood open as usual. I tried the door of the next room. It was locked.

Several of the houses near by are empty. There are people living in the house two doors above. As I came in the other evening they were sitting on the steps taking the air. Their dog got between my legs, and by accident I trod on its paw. The dog yelped, and a woman on the steps violently accused me of kicking her dog. I noticed the singular hostility of the whole lot. As I entered my door, they were saying objectionable things about me. Is it possible that they know or suspect something against the former tenants, and identify me with them? In any case, a vague idea I had of calling on my neighbours with a view to finding out something about the history of the house and its owner had now been extinguished.

July 28.—I am persuaded that there must be somebody or something living in the locked room. Last night about one o'clock occurred a great thunderstorm. While it was at its height I, being in my bedroom, heard low cries on the other side of the wall. I listened with all my might, standing close to the wall. I rapped on the wall two or three times. Then the cries ceased; but it seemed to me that I could hear light footsteps in the next room.

I lay awake the best part of the night. About four o'clock I thought that I heard a cry again, and knocked on the wall; but there was no response.

This morning I made my way into the vacant lot which, as I have said, lies on the left side of the house. It is a dank, ugly place, into which cans, bottles, and other refuse have been cast. I found the shutters of the back room closed, just as they were the night I saw the crimson light behind them; but by standing in a far corner of the lot one can get a glimpse of the window-pane. I thought I saw a woman's face. It is difficult to say; perhaps my tired eyes played me a trick. Perhaps the sounds I heard last night are but imagination. Yet I was not used to be imaginative. And I can sketch the woman's face I saw. Here it is.

[A sketch is inserted at this place.]

But if a woman is really in the room, why does she not make some sign? She knows I am in the house: why does she not cry aloud for help? All I have heard up to this are moans so low and incoherent that I can scarcely be sure now that I did hear them. And how can she get food? If she gets any, it must be passed up to her window from the lot. But I have never heard a sound at the window. Is it possible that she is here voluntarily—that she is staying locked in a room, for some purpose of her own, or concerted with others?

July 29.—I heard the sounds again last night. There were the same low cries; and then the knocks came in reply to mine for a little, but soon ceased. This morning I asked the coloured woman, whom I have hardly set eyes on since I have been here, whether she could find a key for the locked door. But she said she knew nothing about the house: she had never been inside it till I came to live here.

I could easily break down the door with an axe, but the noise would be heard in this quiet street and draw the attention of the ill-natured neighbours, who would doubtless send the police to annoy me. Since the affair of the anarchist shells four years ago, I don't want any more of that kind of attention. Still, if the sounds continue, I must end by breaking in the door. I try the handle at least twenty times a day. It is a strong door and a strong lock.

July 30.—The terrible silence which replaces your thoughts, which is more terrible than anything *active*. The expectancy of what is going to happen. The imminent thing, unconditioned and appalling, perhaps atrocious. Whisperings.

July 31.—Last night, or rather this morning about two o'clock, I was lying awake in the darkness, with my ears strained to catch any sound in the next room. All day I had remained in my bedroom, sitting close up to the wall, or standing close to the locked door, lest I should miss the least movement. At one time I went out into the lot, and through the gap in the shutters I saw distinctly a head and shoulders. I could see no more than the back of the head, with a glimpse of the neck and shoulder, but enough to make out that it was a figure of utter desolation. It was as if she was standing with her face bent forward into her hands, in grief and hopelessness. For all the time I was there the figure never stirred, and I cannot say how this movelessness awed me.

But I heard no sound from the room all day or all night till two o'clock—2.14 to be precise—this morning.

I had just struck a match to look at my watch, and the match was still in my hand when I heard the street door being opened and then closed. It was done without haste, but very softly. Then somebody began to creep up the stairs, slowly, with infinite precautions. I could hear each stair creak, and then a long pause before another step was taken.

During this time I thought of nothing but the plain fact. Somebody had entered the house: he was coming upstairs to enter my room or the next room. To open the door and shout would be to ask for death. In New York a man who breaks into a house by night has made up his mind to kill if necessary.

That was all I could think of at the moment. Meanwhile the steps arrived at the landing, and I heard the door of the next room being unlocked.

With the utmost care, calculating each movement, arranging beforehand where I was going to put my foot and my hand, I got out of bed and placed myself full length on the floor beside the wall. I was like a man who has just got a blow on the head. Whatever worry or torments may be harassing him, he can think of nothing else but the blow. I thought: he will certainly come

in and kill me. In a little while I shall be lying here stabbed. If I open the window and cry out, he will stab me and then escape. I am in a trap. Why did I take the damned house?

It may have been only a few minutes, but it seemed to me like an hour that I lay there waiting for the man to come in.

Then voices on the other side of the wall reached my ears. Perhaps they had been talking all the time, and that I had now grown calmer and recovered my powers of attention. I could not distinguish the words. The woman's voice seemed to plead. The man's was emphatic and intense. He was evidently trying to persuade her to some action. As I listened, I forgot my fears of being robbed and murdered. I took sides with the woman. At the first cry of distress I would rush to the next room and take my chance. Something bound me to her—the fact that we were living in the same house together, as likely as not, and that I had seen her weary face.

What happened to me I cannot say. The man must have been with her a considerable time, and yet it seemed not long till I heard him open the door. I heard him going downstairs. I had the impulse to open my door and look at him. But no sooner had I thought that than I decided it would be better to wait till he came again, when I should be prepared. I heard the street door closed quietly.

I might have seen him by opening the shutters and looking out, but my first thought was about the woman. Had he left her alive? I knocked hard at the wall. There was no answering knock. Then I went out on the landing and rapped on the door of the next room, and called.

Nothing.

I turned the handle, but the door was locked as usual. Dawn was just breaking in the sky.

August 1.—I stayed in the house all day yesterday. In the afternoon I went into the lot, and once more I thought I saw her near the window in the attitude of affliction I have described; but I am not sure. Last night I lay awake listening intently, but the man did not come. In the dead of night I heard her crying.

August 2.—This afternoon, about three o'clock, the door-bell rang, and I opened it to a florid, well-looking, middle-aged woman,

almost fashionably dressed, who asked for Mrs. Purves. I said that Purves was the name of the owner of the house, but the house had been let to me. She seemed completely taken aback, and, as it were, stupefied at this news, and hurried away. No sooner was she in the street than she looked back with dismay at the house and began to weep.

Last night the cries came again. I hammered on the wall, and several times the wall was rapped in answer. I went to the door and called out: "Will you not speak to me? Do you want anything? Shall I break down the door?" Distinctly I heard a low voice say, "No." So I passed the night.

August 3.—I have been to see the agent. I complained that there was a room shut off from the rest of the house.

"Oh, yes," he said. "I ought to have mentioned it before you signed the lease. The owner stipulated that one room was to be reserved. It is not an unusual clause in letting houses of any size. As you told me that you were going to live in the house by yourself, I supposed that with the rest of the house at your disposal you would have no objection."

"I should not," I said, "in an ordinary case." I hesitated, for I did not wish to tell him everything—I wished to find out how much he knew. "I don't want to use the room, but it seems to me that some very curious sounds come from there."

I could see that his face changed. He looked defiant and cunning, trying to spy out just where I was. He began to shuffle some papers on his desk, pretending he was busy.

"You look as if you need sleep. Perhaps this hot weather in the city does not agree with you. Why not pack your bag and go down to one of the near beaches for a few days? Long Beach—there's a fine sea there. Fine place to rest up."

I smiled at him compassionately. Poor fool! Did he think to deceive me with his clumsy fencing? I could see that he knew something that he did not want to tell. Go away indeed, and leave Her alone for all the devilish machinations to do their worst on her!

I bought a revolver on my way back to the house, and it is by my hand as I write this.

11 o'clock in the evening.—I have not slept for a long time, and it is as much as I can do to keep my eyes open. But I dare

not go to sleep, lest while I sleep the man should come in. I am firmly resolved, whether she wishes it or not, to face him, and if possible to get her out of his hands. She must be starving unless food is passed up to her through the window, at night or while I am out.

1 o'clock in the morning.—To keep myself awake, I have been writing an account of these happenings to a friend in Massachusetts. I shall have his reply in two or three days, and be guided by his opinion as to whether I should force the door or not.

I have just been to the door and called out to her: "Shall I bring you some food?" She replied with the same moaning "No" as before. "Speak to me, for God's sake!" I said. I heard her crying.

3.25 a.m.—Have I been asleep? I was awakened by a loud cry. *He* is with her. He is torturing her in some way.

I am writing this deliberately. It may be the last entry I shall ever make. I am calm. I have put the time in the margin. In ten minutes, if he does not come out, I will blow off the lock of the door with my revolver.

The ten minutes are up.

NOW.

[*Note by Vincent O'Sullivan.*]

My poor friend, George Manders, was by profession a mining engineer. He returned about a year and a half ago from Mexico, where he had been working for some time. When he was found dead in the old wooden house he had rented in Brooklyn, I was sent for, because there was a letter on his table addressed to me.

Early in the morning of August 4, his body was discovered by the coloured woman who did the house work, lying face downward on the floor of the back room upstairs. He had shot through the lock of the door. A revolver with only one chamber emptied was found near him. He did not bear the mark of any wound.

The room looked like a commonplace bedroom without special character. I was told that the owner of the house, a Dr. Purves, desired to keep it shut because his wife had died in it only a few weeks before.

Donn Byrne: An Appreciation

BY ANDREW E. MALONE.

Just as he had begun to enjoy his well-earned fame Donn Byrne was killed in an accident to his motor-car. Only six years ago Mr. St. John Adcock, in his book *Gods of Modern Grub Street* (Sampson Low), seemed to be daringly prophetic when he wrote: "I daresay Donn Byrne will laugh to discover that I have put him among the gods; he is that sort of man. But it is possible for others to know him better than he knows himself. Abou Ben Adhem was surprised, you recollect, when he noticed that Gabriel had recorded his name so high in the list of those that were worthy; and though I am no Gabriel I know a hawk from a handsaw when the wind is in the right quarter." Personal preferences in literature, of course, there always will be, and criticism will continue to be as much an expression of personality as any other form of writing, but the great public which now as always loves a romantic story will certainly agree with Mr. Adcock in placing Donn Byrne among the gods. Since his death there has been some slight disparagement of his work, and some odious comparisons have been made, but no effort to belittle his achievement can have any effect upon those who have read his books. One critic compared his work with that of the late C. E. Montague and decided that Montague was the greater artist and the one more likely to survive. A matter of preference; perhaps a mere matter of prejudice; some people prefer ironic realism to that romantic realism in which Donn Byrne specialised. No critic would attempt to depreciate the great contributions which C. E. Montague made to contemporary English letters as a novelist, a critic, and a great journalist, and it is therefore not unkind to suggest that there is no more basis for comparison between the writings of C. E. Montague and Donn Byrne than between Dickens and Scott. Montague was essentially a rationalist, his appeal was always to the reason; Donn Byrne appealed always to the emotions and the more tender feelings of his readers, so that it might be said that if Sir Walter Scott had been an Irishman bred in the hazy atmosphere of Irish life instead of a Scotsman bred in an atmosphere of rigid philosophy he would probably have written somewhat like Donn Byrne. Sir Walter's atmosphere demanded facts, verified and credible,

while Byrne's atmosphere delighted in a juxtaposition which verged upon the fantastic. The romance of Sir Walter was that romance of actuality which eventuates in deeds of heroism, while the romance in which Donn Byrne delighted was the romance of the human soul in search of Quixotic adventures. In Sir James Barrie is found also something of that Celtic dreaminess which seems to set all the conclusions of philosophy at nought; that dreaminess which gives the soul freedom of the universe without any corporeal ties. Joseph Conrad, the dreamy Slav, delighted also in that leisurely exploration of the outer regions for the proper appreciation of which one must be prepared to be as Peter Pan or as the Knight of La Mancha. The test of actuality must never be applied, because if it is the dreams fade and only the noises of the streets will linger.

Certainly Donn Byrne laughed when he found himself placed by Mr. Adcock among the gods. He *was* that sort of man: in life he was something of a Peter Pan incarnate, jolly, frivolous, boisterous, full of vitality, and with a laugh that was tonic. And now Donn Byrne, the man who laughed and played, romped and joked, with all the simplicity of a boy, is dead. He has written his last story and played his last joke, and the world is very much the poorer for his loss. The charm of Donn Byrne is none too plentiful in this Vale of Tears, and the loss of one laughing man makes a very great difference. His intimate friends will miss him most, but the many thousands of his readers in all parts of the world will miss him very little less. Anyone who had come to know the man in his books will mourn a friend whose writing had all the intimate qualities of personal conversation. Something of irony was in the manner of his untimely death. He who loved the horse as a friend and a comrade, who loved to ride to hounds and experience all the exhilaration of the living animal in full career and journeyed to a race-meeting as to a sacred rite, met his death in a motor car on the lonely coast road beyond Bandon in the County of Cork. Motoring home one evening, alone in his speedy car, his vision seemed to have been obscured by the drizzling mist so common on that coast. He probably missed his way, and he was found dead at the foot of a cliff under his overturned car. For some years he had been living in England, in Kent or Surrey, or in the hunting counties, but he was in the habit of taking a holiday in Ireland and for a

couple of years he had leased the Castle at Coolemaine in County Cork as a summer residence. Here during the short Irish summer he would entertain his friends from Dublin and elsewhere, as they could be induced to join him and his family. It was a happy and jolly company always, presided over by that Madame Dorothea Donn-Byrne to whom *The Wind Bloweth* is dedicated, and to whose success as a popular dramatist in America the earlier fortunes of the couple were so much indebted. Amid the pleasantly romantic surroundings of the Castle the company seemed set in its appropriate *milieu*; on the one side the Atlantic lashing into Bantry Bay, on the other mountains towering to the purplish-blue low-hanging clouds, and all about that long history of the struggle between feudal Norman-English Baron and the peasant cultivators of the Valley of the Lee and the plains of the Blackwater. Shades of Raleigh and Spenser and Petty, of Essex and Desmond, of Brian Boru and the Spanish Armada, of Ormond and Mountjoy and O'Sullivan Beare, of Bards and Warriors, Kings and Hermits, Soldiers of the Commonwealth and Smugglers of the coves, must haunt that territory so that its soil and its people are the very quintessence of history, the concentrated spirit of two thousand years of struggle of man with man for ideas and possessions which is so generally assumed to be all that there is of romance. The little towns and villages bear the battle scars of all the centuries from the fifteenth to the twentieth, scars of the warriors of Queen Elizabeth as of those of Sir Hamar Greenwood and Michael Collins. Truly might it be said:

Around these walls have wandered the Briton and the
Dane,
The captives of Armorica, the Cavaliers of Spain,
Phoenician and Milesian, and the thundering Norman
peers,
The swordsmen of brave Brian and the Chiefs of later
years.

No necessity to seek far for romantic plots in that neighbourhood, every hill, every house, almost every stone breathes romance, exuding tradition at every pore, so to speak, so that the entire countryside has almost the air of a story by Robert Louis Stevenson. It was in this atmosphere, as it was in a somewhat similar

atmosphere that he first settled in Dublin County on his return from the United States, he chose to spend his holidays, living actually *in* historical romance, actual history that is sometimes so much more romantic than the imagined fiction. He had been only a few days there in 1928 when he met his death; so short a time had he been there, in fact, that few of his friends knew that he had arrived in Ireland at all until they read the account of his death in the newspapers. It was a sad and sudden termination to a brilliant career; a past of great achievement and every prospect of a future that seemed to contain all the promise of reaching the highest point of artistic accomplishment. Into the forty years of his life, he was born in 1888, he had crowded more of life and adventure and literary achievement than most artists ever know, even if they reach the patriarchal span of three-score years and ten. Every one of the five continents knew him and he knew them, and almost every nation, so that when he described men and places he was familiar with what he described, and to that extent he was an uncompromising realist in his writing. He knew ships as very few writers know them, not as a passenger in the luxurious saloons of Atlantic liners or the even more luxurious surroundings of millionaire's cruisers, but as the man before the mast knows his ship or the man on the bridge, in sail and rope and spar, in fair weather and in foul. Horses, too, he knew and loved as only huntsmen and jockeys know them, because he was a genuine lover of the horse and an enthusiastic horseman. As an athlete and a boxer he achieved some little distinction in his student days in Dublin; so his descriptions of boxing and wrestling contests are difficult to match in English. A piece of verse written while he was a student rather accidentally discovered to himself his possibilities as a boxer. His verses were too personal and they so affected a fellow-student that a challenge to fight resulted. From the encounter Byrne emerged badly mauled but with considerable credit as a boxer. After this he trained seriously for boxing and actually won a championship. So the wrestling-match between Shane Campbell and the dreaded Wrestler of Aleppo, in *The Wind Bloweth*, and the hunt and the race in *Hangman's House*, will be for the reader not so much descriptions as actual experiences. Always he was at his best in descriptive writing, vivid, fluent, vigorous, with colour and that elusive thing called charm, which

is only another name for personality. He was not quite so successful in his people; but in this there are exceptions sufficiently numerous to place him amongst the front ranks of creators of character.

Because his work first received recognition, critical no less than popular, in the United States many people believe that Donn Byrne was an American. There is even a silly story about him selling newspapers in the streets of New York at a very early age. There is no foundation whatever for that fatuous tale, yet responsible newspapers in England and Ireland printed it without any enquiry at the time of his death. There was never any necessity for Donn Byrne to sell newspapers for a livelihood in New York or elsewhere, and at the time he was supposed to be selling newspapers in Broadway he was actually at school in Ireland. True it is that he was born in the city of New York; but that was purely accidental, due to the presence of his parents in that city upon the professional business of his father, who was an architect of some distinction. It is also true that the earliest recognition of his genius came from the American critics and the great American magazine public. But he came back to Ireland with his parents when he was but a few months old, and in Ireland he lived continuously until he had reached the age of twenty-two years. He was educated in Dublin, and he came to love that old city with a passion that was ardent and enduring; so enduring that he could envisage it even amid the clatter and bustle of Fifth Avenue. Essentially, however, he was an Ulsterman though he bore a Leinster clan name from the Counties of Dublin and Wicklow, and to his native Province he was deeply attached, knowing its mind and its people through the medium of the Gaelic speech of the Antrim Glens. No other writer has yet exploited that kindly Ulster of the Glens and consequently the province is usually spoken of as hard and dour and Protestant. But behind the dourly granite façade of the Belfast Orangeman there still lives an Ulster which is as Irish as Cork or Galway, an Ulster which thinks and speaks in Irish; an Ulster which does not face the world with gigantic ships and fine linen, but which yet contains all that is valued most highly in kindly humanity and childish simplicity. That Ulster deserves to be known, if only because it does not bang drums nor proclaim its loyalty through two millions of national circulation every week. It is

a backwater, as unprogressive as Barrie's Thrums, and it may be very easily passed over in a hurrying world. Tourists know it, and the more discerning will miss many of the boosted things to visit those Glens of Antrim, to experience the thrills of crossing the Rope Bridge of Carrick-a-Rede, and to see the Waters o' Moyle which divide Ireland from Scotland and which have provided a theme for many Irish poets. Moira O'Neill makes her Ulsterman in America say:

Wathers o' Moyle I hear ye callin',
Clearer for half the world between,

and Donn Byrne's Shane Campbell was haunted by their noises around the world and throughout his life. "The Irish Channel they called it on the maps in school, but *Struth na Maoile* it was to everyone in the countryside, the waters of Moyle. Very green, very near, very gentle they seemed to-day, but often they roared like giants in frenzy, fanned to fury by the winds of the nine glens, as a bellows livens a fire. But to-day it was like a lake, so gentle And there was purple Scotland, hardly, you'd think, a stone's throw from the shore—the Mull of Cantyre, a resounding name, like a line in a poem. It was from Mull that Moyle came, *Maol* in Gaidhlig, bald or bluff a moyley was a cow without horns. The Lowlanders were coming into the Mull now, and the Highlanders being pushed north to Argyll, and westward to the islands, like Oran and Islay. He knew the Islay men, great rugged fishers with immense hands and their feet small as a girl's. They sang the saddest sea-chanty in the world." Thus mused Shane Campbell on his fourteenth birthday as he looked over the waters in search of Dancing Town.

Shane Campbell is the boyish dreamer whom *The Wind Bloweth* about the world in search of something that he was never to find. He could see the Dancing Town over the swirling Waters o' Moyle, but in a life-pilgrimage he failed to find it on earth. For brief moments occasionally he experienced something of its happiness, but the moments passed, and Shane continued to sail his ship from Belfast to Marseilles, to North and South and East and West, finding Dancing Town in strange places. What Shane saw over the sea on his fourteenth birthday is something that everyone sees at that age.

"He had thought to come up to the top of the mountain

where the cairn was, and the dark and deepest lake, and to sit down in the heather and wait half-an-hour maybe while the curlew called, and then have Dancing Town take form and colour before his eyes, hold it until every detail was visible, and then fade gently out as twilight fades into night. He had thought to be prepared and receptive.

"But suddenly it was upon him, in the air, over the waters of Moyle A sweep of fear ran over him, and he grew cold, so strange it was, so against nature. Clear and high, as in some old print, and white and green, the town and shore came to him. The May afternoon was in it, hot and golden, but the town itself was in morning sunlight. A cluster of great houses and little houses, all white, a great church, and a squat dun fort, and about it and in it were green spaces and palm trees that swayed to a ghostly breeze. And the green ran down to a white beach, and on the beach foamy waves curled like a man's beard. And in the air the town quivered and danced, as imaged trees seemed to dance on running water.

"On one side was Ireland, and on one side was Scotland, and high in the air between them was Dancing Town

"No one was in the streets that wee Shane could see, and yet the town was lifeful, some tropical city where the green jealousies were closed in the heat of the midday sun, and where no one was on the streets, barring some unseen old beggar or peddling woman drowsing in the shade. The town was sleeping not with the sleep of Scotland, that is the sleep of dead majestic, melancholy kings, nor with the sleep of Ireland, that is tired and harassed and old. It was not as lonely as sleeping lakes are where the bittern booms like a drum It slept as a child sleeps, lips apart and chubby fingers uncurled, and happy And all the time it quivered in the clear air."

Shane Campbell's father was a poet, his uncles antiquaries and naturalists and lovers of the sea; and Shane himself is a poet who sails his ship about the world marvelling at the beauty that millions would defile. In *The Wind Bloweth* is really the theme upon which Donn Byrne embroidered in all his books. It is no story as the purveyors of penny novelettes understand a story: but it is a story to anyone who desires to understand the life-pilgrimage of aspiring and sensitive humanity. What a gallery of portraits the book is, too! Uncle Robin and Uncle

Alan, and the morose Frenchwoman his mother ; Moyra Dolan and *La Mielleuse*, Fenzile and Froken Hagen of Buenos Aires "who is all the world's friend," and so to Granya O'Malley and "the bold Fenian men." Granya is a cousin to that Dona Rita who is so vividly portrayed in Conrad's *Arrow of Gold*, and Granya, too, is engaged upon political adventures. Men, women, places, and dreams : adventures of the soul and of the body, make *The Wind Bloweth* a book that will not be forgotten by any who read it, and those who neglect to read it are passing over one of the great books of our time. Once or twice in this book Donn Byrne suggests Conrad, notably in the description of the city of Marseilles, and much more compact as the Irish writer is few will dispute his supremacy. Conrad's Marseilles envelopes *The Arrow of Gold*, Byrne's Marseilles is merely a sailorman's view of the city in his walks ashore. "Obvious and drowsy it might seem, but once he went ashore, the swarming teeming life of it struck Shane like a current of air. Along the quays, along the Cannebiere, was a riot of colour and nationality unbelievable from on board ship. Here were Turks, dignified and shy. Here were Greeks, wary, furtive. Here were Italians, Genoese, Neapolitans, Livornians, droll, vivacious, vindictive. Here were Moors. Here were Algerians, black African folk, sneering, inimical. Here were Spaniards, with their walk like a horse's lope. Here were French business men, very important. Here were Provencals, cheery, short, tubby, excitable, olive-coloured, black-bearded, calling to one another in the *langue d'oc* of the troubadours, "*Te, mon bon ! Commoun as ? Quézaco ?*" A queer town that, as familiar as a channel marking, teeming as an ant-hill, and when darkness came over it, and he viewed it from the after deck, mystery came, too For a while there was a hush, and around the hills gigantic ghosts walked One thought of the Phocæans who had founded it, and to whom the Cannebiere was a rope-walk, where they made the sheets for their ships And one thought of Lazarus, who had been raised from among the silent dead and who had come there, so legend read, a grey figure in ceramic garments, standing in the prow of a boat." Description, legend, history, personality : there are all these in even the shortest of Donn Byrne's Stories, so that the reader marvels, as he does when reading Anatole France, no less at the erudition as at the style. One could quote dozens of passages from this delightful

book and yet fail to convey its infinite charm and its infinite variety. Quotation would but spoil the thrilling description of the famous wrestling-match between Shane and the dreaded Wrestler of Aleppo. That simply must be read, and no one who can read that will fail to read the entire book from Ireland around the world, and then back to that little patch of romance in the Antrim Glens.

It was with *Messer Marco Polo*, published in 1921, that England became acquainted with the work of Donn Byrne, and anything more delicately beautiful than this short book can hardly be conceived. It is the love-story of Marco Polo for the little Golden Bells as told by old Malachi Campbell of the Long Glen in his own inimitable Ulster way. *Messer Marco Polo* had an enthusiastic reception in England, so that critics and public with one accord called for more. But it was with *The Foolish Matrons* that Donn Byrne first caught the attention of the great American public with a book. It was in the magazines that they first became acquainted with his work, and they found that it was good, though not so good as the books that were to come after his return to Ireland. He had gone to the United States upon the completion of his studies in Dublin, and there for a time he wrote verses which he afterwards said were "the world's worst." One of his poems, however, when published in an American paper was republished by Arthur Griffith, no mean judge, in *The United Irishman*. It was with a volume of short stories that he first reached cloth covers. His first novel *The Stranger's Banquet*, had a good reception from the American public, but has not been republished elsewhere yet. It was with *The Foolish Matrons*, *Messer Marco Polo* and *The Wind Bloweth* that his artistic reputation was established. These were all written, and first published, in America, and there both critics and public thoroughly appreciated their worth. *The Foolish Matrons*, 1923, is something of a war-novel, but it is much more in that it is a searchingly critical examination of American life during a critical period. No other novelist, not a native American, has so vividly portrayed contemporary American social life in a gallery of studies that is perfect in psychology as closely observed in its sociology. The book enjoyed such a vogue in the United States that the name of Donn Byrne began to be known in London. In the States edition after edition of the book was called for,

and soon it began to be whispered in that childish American way of measuring everything by money that its author was making 30,000 dollars a year; and the crest of the wave had been reached. England then harkened to the American reputation, and in 1921 *Messer Marco Polo* was published in London by the firm which has since published all his work, Messrs. Sampson Low. In *Marco Polo* the story of the Venetian adventurer is told by the Ulster shanachie with a beauty of language, a charm, and simplicity, that are engaging from the very first word. Different critics have attempted to define its quality by using such words as fascinating, fantastic, clever, witty, strangely beautiful, a thing for laughter and tears: and they were all right, because the book is all these, and much more. As well attempt to define a celestial perfume as the quality of *Marco Polo*, because the book is really an exudation of the personality of its author. It belongs to no "school," it is not a novel in the accepted meaning of that term, least of all is it "modern"; but it is filled with an eager, vital, human feeling, as if the author had magically distilled himself into its words and were actually speaking from its pages.

In the volume of short stories called *Changeling*, 1924, will be found many moods and variations. Some of the stories have been filmed, but the best of them, *Delilah* and *A Story Against Women*, will never be filmed because they are of the quality and texture of his greater books. Nevertheless the volume is notable, as will also the volumes of short stories which have yet to be collected from the magazines. Donn Byrne was back in Ireland, in an old house in County Dublin, when *Changeling* was published in London, and out of that old house he extracted two very notable books, *An Untitled Story*, 1925, and *Hangman's House*, 1926. In each of these books is the living essence of an Ireland that is passing rapidly under the changed conditions. The Story of de Bourke O'Malley might have inspired Tchekhov, indeed O'Malley might wander aimlessly into *The Cherry Orchard* and no member of an audience would notice anything amiss. It is a sad story, but it will wring no tears from even easily watered eyes because of the dignity of the man. And he and his city were one in their dignified dilapidation, their air of "what's the use," and their habit of taking life easily as it comes. There is nothing of the braggart hero about either, but both are heroic though they suffer in silence, walking through life with head erect

and a smile on the lips. The world beyond may strive as it will; what is it striving for after all? But this is all changing now, and soon it will have gone.

So *An Untitled Story* opens with a description of Dublin which cannot be equalled in literature: "In any city you would have noticed that fierce old man, but in Dublin he called for no more than a passing glance, so many are there who seem exiled kings. At fifty-four you might have put his age, and you might have added as an afterthought, he might be ten or fifteen years older—a man who has lived outdoors all his life. He was a tall man, with white hair that rippled back as if it had once been a field of golden curls. Blue eyes that were washed out, it would appear to you, but were bold and fierce as some old eagle's. There was no stoop in his back. He was erect as any young soldier. He was invariably dressed, during the day, in tweeds that smelled of turf and moss, in a stiff white collar of the double variety, and a tie of blue dotted with white spots. His neat brown shoes were made for him, and he wore a deer-stalker hat. Gloves nor stick he had neither.

"As you saw him come up Grafton Street from College Green, and hesitate for an instant before going along Nassau, you might say, if you knew Dubliners, here is a man about to have a drink, and you would have prophesied Jammet's, where, after races, owners and trainers and betting men and other citizens of good Irish society stand one another drinks to celebrate victory or take the edge off defeat. Whichever way luck turns you have your drink anyhow. But the fierce old man went into one of the people's drinking houses. He did not have to order anything. The supercilious young jackeen behind the bar would just look at him. 'The same, Mr. Moore?' The old man would nod in his contemptuous way, as if contemptuous of the bar, of the assistant, of the drink, of himself. The assistant would give him a stiff glass of brandy, and add a little soda, collect his two shillings, and return to the end of the bar where he was discussing the chances of this or that greyhound for the Waterloo Cup, or what chance that disappointing steeplechaser, James Pigg, had in the Irish Grand National. If you were noticing the old gentleman you would have seen that his hand trembled when he brought the glass to his lips, and that in a little while his hand was steady again, which is a bad sign in liquor.

"Now when the old gentleman walked along Nassau Street, passing the green lawns of Trinity you would have said, the old gentleman will turn into the Kildare Street Club. But the old gentleman passed by, as if unaware of the existence of that most exclusive of societies. And he made his way towards that strange old Georgian quarter of the city where he lodged in two rooms in an ancient house. Angelica Kaufmann had painted the panels of these rooms, and they had lovely Georgian ceilings and Adam fireplaces. These were from many years ago, when Buck Whaley lived, who for a wager set out to play handball against the walls of Solomon's Temple, and won his bet; of the Duke of Wellington, and of Castlereagh, that great moody misunderstood soul. And these were the days of Boss Croker, and Mr. John Redmond, and one Timothy Healy. And Buck Whaley, and the Iron Duke, and great Castlereagh—their hatred and their envy is now perished, nor have they any place under the sun.

"Very quietly, in his two rooms, the old gentleman lived, a model to the lodging-house. The buxom landlady used him as an example to the other, as it were, guests—the howling poets, the mad medical students, the ancient lawyers' clerks, who would roll home obscenely under their load of drink. After dinner, which he would take in his sittingroom, the old gentleman would rest for an hour; and then, quietly letting himself out with a latch-key, he would go off to one of the quieter publichouses, where he would sit and drink in one of those box-like private apartments which are called 'snugs.' Occasionally other persons would drop in, and try to begin a conversation with him The old gentleman liked walking. He would go on a fine day out for a tramp through the streets and into the country. Curiously enough he chose the north side of the city, which is less interesting and more ugly side, for there are the mostly ghastly slums in Europe, and there by Clontarf are rubble heaps, dust, broken-down dwellings. And 'the Faynix,' as Dublin calls its Phoenix Park, is a flat uninteresting place, such as you will see in the Midlands as ordinary country, scarred by the most hideous statues in the world. Southward of the city is loveliest Ireland, Rathfarnham, Milltown, and the singing Dodder, the blue peaks of the Sugar Loaves, Two-Rock and Three-Rock Mountains, and there are little lakes in the hills. Further south still are Avoca, where the waters meet, and Glendalough of the early Christian

churches, the blue gorges of the Wicklow Hills. Because Killarney is near Cork, which is near London, and the Giant's Causeway is near Belfast, which is near Edinburgh, they are extolled as the beauties of Ireland—but tourists are always an unseeing folk. And Dublin itself pays little attention to its scenery, for there is always horse-racing, and good talk to be heard in the bars. Scenery we have always with us, but a fine finish between three-year-olds is a sight not to be missed by an Irishman, and a good story surpasses jewels."

Yes, Donn Byrne was very like the Dublin he described—and, surely, the story of de Bourke O'Malley, called *An Untitled Story*, is a good story that surpasses jewels.

To the mind of at least one of his readers Donn Byrne's great books are *Hangman's House*, *The Wind Bloweth*, *Messer Marco Polo*, and *An Untitled Story*. They are all, in a sense, Irish stories in as much as they are all concerned with, or related by, Irishmen. *Hangman's House*, published in 1926 is a romance of the Ireland of to-day written with a fervour, and in a style, that no other contemporary Irish writer has achieved. It must be read, it cannot be summarized; the atmosphere, the colour, and the glamour of the book cannot be conveyed in a summary of a mere plot. There is probably no writer of to-day less ridden by plot than Donn Byrne, and all his marvellous effects he secures by the method of the shanachie rather than by that of a vendor of thrills. In personality, style, is his secret. *Blind Raftery*, 1925, relating the wanderings and doings of a blind poet in old Connacht, exemplified his method as well as does *Marco Polo*. "The proper subject of conversation for an Irishman, you may have noticed," he says in the foreword to *Hangman's House*, "is Ireland. Where your average Englishman thinks that Jack Cade was a heavy-weight boxer of the reign of Edward II., and the Wars of the Roses something like the *bataille des fleurs* at Nice, we know every man and every engagement in every Irish war. Our legendary heroes are household words with us, even those whom the disciples of the English poet, William Morris, and the German musician, Richard Wagner, have fashioned for us; our babes lisp their names between debates as to the relative value of dominion and republican governments." So ere all the glories of the past are forgotten in the politics of the present, and the materialism of

the future "I have written a book of Ireland for Irishmen." A great book for everyone: a book that must not be overlooked by any lover of fine writing in description and characterisation. There are passages in this book which reach heights only scaled by the epic poets; indeed the entire book is an epic, an epic of transition. In Baron O'Brien and his daughter Connaught, Dermot Hogan and D'Arcy, are figures of an Ireland that is rapidly passing away: romantic Ireland is really dead and gone now, not "with O'Leary in the grave," as Yeats said, but being very steadily and surely buried by that materialistic Ireland against which it triumphed for so many centuries. *Hangman's House* is the description and the epitaph of that Ireland. A great book! What more can be said? Yet in an age when that adjective is so much misused the word may be received with a scepticism that is justifiable. For two passages alone this book will repay any effort that its possession may entail; the race and the hunt are so magnificently described that they are experienced by the reader, so magnificently described that nowhere else in English are they surpassed, and no hunting or racing man or woman could read them without a feeling that "here is the real thing, done by a master who knows his job." *Hangman's House* is no "romance for a few people," it is an Irish romance written by a master of language and an ardent lover of his country, for all who value literature.

In *Brother Saul*, 1927, and *Crusade*, 1928, Donn Byrne went for his material to the Holy Land, which fascinated Irishmen from the Crusades, even from early Christian times when the monks made the Pilgrimage, to George Moore. *Brother Saul* is a masterly study of the great Apostle, as fascinating as romance as it is a psychological study. Possibly some people may be repelled by that study, but no one can fail to be charmed by the vivid descriptive passages of the country, or by such incidents as the encounter with the Magician. In *Crusade* will be found Arabs, with authentic Sheiks, dealing with Norman and Irish Knights in that great struggle for possession of the Holy Sepulchre. There is something of *The Wind Bloweth* in this book: the unsympathetic mother and the misunderstood son, but there is also the clash of Norman and Irish civilisations as clearly depicted as the clash of European and Arab. In days when

young ladies crave for Sheiks *Crusade* must not be overlooked: and there is always the pleasant surprise of that beautiful Arab girl, Kothra. In both of these books Donn Byrne was fascinated by "the fascination of things difficult," and in both his genius for conveying atmosphere enabled him to achieve effects that no other contemporary writer could achieve.

Let it be known once for all, that Donn Byrne is no dry-as-dust writer of historical tales. He did not distract his readers with footnotes to air his erudition; rather did he take liberties with history against which Clio may be heard to protest. So the Black-and-Tans may be found raiding under Saint Paul in *Brother Saul* and the atmosphere of the eighteenth century envelope contemporary events in *Hangman's House*. But what of it? Writers of romantic tales need not fear Clio; the protests of Clio will be lost in the applause of thousands of gratified readers. And the applause of gratified readers is for Donn Byrne.

A Note on the Opera "Jonny."

The opera *Jonny Spielt Auf*, by the Tchek composer, Ernest Krenek, arrived in Paris towards the end of the season after what was said to have been a turbulent career through Central Europe. Those interested in musical events know that this work is an attempt to do grand opera in terms of jazz. The hero, so to call him, is a negro—not a noble Ethiop of the Othello brand, but a gent of colour as the United States has fashioned him and as Europe, whither he has floated on the waves of jazz, has developed him. Certain accessories up to now unused in opera, such as a train entering a station, may also be seen in *Jonny*. Beside such innovations are scenes which are the very fustian of the operatic stage, such as a chant to the sunrise amid mountain summits, warbled by the tenor. And while it cannot be denied that the opera keeps its promise to be a jazz-opera, for jazz is here and there used to the point where it ceases to be any kind of music and resolves itself into a mere tam-tam of the kraals which demands a setting it does not get of blacks squatted on their hams in a ring, it is true, too, that much of the score is academic enough to be called tame.

"Jonny" is not quite new enough to be novel, or quite forcible enough to be revolutionary. Lacking the essential dynamic, the focal blaze, what happens to it is what happens to all ambitious things which just don't come off. Still, it has shown a way. Some one some day may do something definite with the same formula. The question is whether jazz has anything left in it which can be developed.

But my object in this little paper is not to analyze "Jonny," which is now published and may be had from the music-dealers. These lines are confined to registering the kind of reception it got in Paris where, as I say, it finally brought up after its vicissitudes.

What vicissitudes? The press-agency which handles Ernest Krenek's advertising announced that in Paris *Jonny Mène la Danse* provoked the same violent scenes as in Vienna, Budapest, Munich, etc. But this statement, while it may be legitimate press-agency work, was not based on matter of fact.

Before the opera came to Paris the rows which it had caused in Germany and Austria were given a good deal of space in the newspapers. A considerable sum of money must have been spent

on this kind of advertising. A few days before the first performance in Paris the composer was interviewed for one of the morning papers, *Excelsior*, and said, among other things, that the disturbances round his opera in Central Europe were of an anti-Semitic character. "I can't understand it," he added. "I am not a Jew myself, and there is nothing about Jews in my opera." I don't know why Mr. Krenek thought fit to make this statement, for, as far as I can learn, the opposition to his work in Germany and Austria and Hungary was composed of Jews as well as Gentiles. Perhaps he thought to rally the French Jews to his cause. If this were really in his mind, he showed his ignorance of the French Jews, who never present a solid block as they do in some other countries, and never mingle questions of race with artistic questions. This has been shown time after time, and quite recently again in the dispute between Henri Bernstein and Gemier, the actor-manager. Most of the Jews whom the dispute interests are on the side of Gemier and most of the Gentiles on the side of Bernstein, who accused Gemier of running down the French theatre in a speech made by Gemier at a luncheon given to a Jewish company from Moscow. The Jew restaurants which have appeared in Paris since the war are the consequence of the immigration of Jews from other countries. The French Jews never felt the need of Kosher restaurants, and they don't go to them now that they have them.

It may, however, be contended, leaving the Jews out of the question, that nowadays in Paris an audience for such a piece as "Jonny" is composed of such international elements that the opinion expressed can hardly be taken as pure French. It is certain that if a pure French opinion on a much advertised foreign work is wanted it is better to put it in front of the public at Lyons or Bordeaux. But such as they are, the Paris audiences did not exhibit any violent reaction one way or the other before "Jonny." The Surrealists, who are about the only artistic group with enough vigour to fight for their opinions, stayed away—at least, collectively. Apparently they don't regard "Jonny" as a contribution to modern art worth boosting or throwing down. But the newspaper-critics are French, and their opinion may be taken as a certain kind of French opinion. They differ very little on the subject of "Jonny." According to them, the libretto is idiotic. The music deserves more respect, but chiefly as a promise

of what Krenek may do later. M. Jean Chantavoine, whose competence in all things relating to German music is well known, thinks that a good idea is at the base of the story. He writes: "If the poet of the *Bateau Ivre* and the musician of the *Mephisto Waltz*, supposing them living to-day, had joined forces to develop this parable, what a startling work they would have made of it!" That is to say, of course, Arthur Rimbaud and Liszt.

All the music critics declare that Krenek has borrowed with both hands from very familiar works. I myself thought while listening to "Jonny" that if it was Krenek's intention to make us forget all the music hitherto written he had gone a very strange way about it. Agreeable reminiscences of Wagner, Debussy, even of Puccini, and, I think, of Verdi went floating through the theatre. Mr. Krenek knows his classics and his pseudo-classics very well indeed.

I cannot say whether Mr. Krenek is satisfied with the singers given him in Paris. They were culled from various nations. All sung with that curious accent which singers who sing in five or six languages bestow on every language they sing in. Perhaps they understand one another; it is very hard for other listeners to understand them.

The principal woman's part, *Anita*, was sung by Mrs. Jefferson Cohn, the wife of a wealthy American, Jefferson Davis Cohn, known in France as an owner of race-horses. Some months ago he leased the Theatre des Champs-Élysées, where "Jonny" has been produced, from Mrs. Ganna Walska McCormick of international fame, and has been running it with varying fortunes up till now. Mrs. Cohn looked all to be desired as *Anita*, but did not seem at ease with the part musically. Perhaps she had stage-fright. The third night the part was given to a Russian, Marianna Goynitch, an admirable artist who evidently got out every ounce there is in it. As many in the house had heard Miss Goynitch in the *Don Juan* of Mozart and *Eugene Onegin*, they had the elements for a comparison. "Jonny" was given seven times in all, and Mrs. Cohn came in again at the finish. The opera was conducted by D. E. Inglebrecht, one of the conductors at the Opéra-Comique, and with him at least Krenek must have been satisfied, for he led with a conviction which was obviously genuine.

Paris, July.

V. O'S.

Travellers

BY L. A. G. STRONG.

The driver pointed with his whip towards a high round hill on my side of the jaunting car, and, shifting his quid, spat clear of the wheel with great precision.

"Just forenint o' where that cross is now—before it was stuck up there, d'ye see—there was a poacher met with a gamekeeper. The gamekeeper was out a long time lookin' for this same poacher, a lad that had bested him more than once, an' one night the' met, just forenint that cross: only the cross wasn't there, d'ye see: it was—hel' up!"

The mare pecked suddenly and recovered, and the driver broke off his narrative to pull on the reins.

"There's no knowin'," he continued, after a minute, "which one o' them seen the other first. Mebbe both the same time. But there was two shots fired, as near together as no matter; and there the two o' them was found the day after, dead corpses, lookin' at each other. The doctor said, judgin by th' examination of them, they was neither one killed off straight, but they must have stuck there some time watchin' one another die, and maybe with only the breath to let a curse on each other and they goin' off."

"The friends o' the two o' them met in Inchileenagh, and first they was for fightin'; but one o' them says, 'Let up, boys,' says he, 'sure it's a clean score, an' they're both quit. Neither one o' them is left livin' after the other,' says he, 'so it's a clean score.' So they made friends on that, and drinks all round, and they put up the cross between the lot o' them."

He shifted his quid once more, and we jogged on in silence. I was but fifteen; illness had kept me away from school, and so, when a cousin came back on leave from the East, my father had been glad to suggest that the two of us should travel about Ireland. For pretext, we left letters upon my father's old clients, but they were of no real importance, merely settling for us where to go, and taking us to out-of-the-way places. We were the best of friends, despite eight years between us, and the days were good.

We came to the top of a steep hill: the driver delivered a sudden exhortation to the mare, and clapped on the brake. Close before us, in a hollow, lay the little town of Inchileenagh; only

the sharpness of the hill had prevented us from seeing it sooner. The mare, her ears cocked, put her feet down warily, sliding forward a little with each step. The car lurched violently, and we sat at an angle, protecting our hip bones from the little iron rail above the cushion, and studying the view as best we might.

Near the foot of the hill was a sharp curve to the left. Sloping at improbable angles, we negotiated it somehow, but not until we were well round did we see what was happening in the road before us.

A big man, hot and uncomfortable, with a soft felt hat and a walking-stick, had appeared from a laneway and was walking quickly towards the town, pursued by a little woman in black. He hurried on, trying to ignore her, but she caught him up and began clutching at his sleeve, beating at him with her hands, and crying out something which we could not hear. The big man stopped, and we caught sight of his profile as he put out a hand to restrain her. Neither saw us: and as we came nearer she broke through his half-hearted defence and beat at his face.

Our driver gave a short bark of amusement, but I was shocked at the sight; the big man, his hat all crooked, his face red and sheepish, clumsily holding off the little old woman, trying to quiet her in tones of foolish expostulation: she beating in his arms like a black withered bird, repeatedly landing a blow on his chest and chin—the extent of her reach.

"Go to her, then," she screamed breathlessly, as we came close. "Go to her. You're free, do you hear! Free, free, free!"

And on each word she struck at him with all her might.

Suddenly the man looked up and saw us. Even so he could not quiet the woman till we were almost upon them. Then, seeing that they were observed, the woman stood aside, panting, dishevelled, to let us pass. The man, very red and flustered, straightened his hat and drew himself up in an attempt at dignity and unconcern; and, once we had passed them, I did not look back. It was the first time I had seen a grown person stripped of self-possession, and I felt that I had witnessed something indecent.

My cousin noticed my distress, and turned to the driver with a laugh.

"Queer things still happen in these parts," he said.

"Oh, indeed the' do."

And then, as we had reached the foot of the hill, he shot off the brake, flicked the mare lightly with the whip, and we drove into the town of Inchileenagh with a flourish. The Imperial Hotel had been recommended to us as the least villainous of three, so there we went, left our traps, and ordered an early dinner. Then we got back in the car, the hour being about half past five, and went on to discharge our one piece of business.

When we returned, we decided to spend the rest of the time before dinner in exploring the town. Inchileenagh was like many other small country towns in Ireland. The streets were narrow, rather dirty, and full of public houses. At one end was the river, crossed by an old bridge of singular beauty, with ivy-covered piers. Along it loafed a number of men, some sitting, some leaning, all spitting meditatively into the water. There was a police station, and a town hall; and as we reached the latter, we saw that something unusual was in the air. A number of crates and some pieces of tattered scenery, looking incredibly garish in the summer evening, were being unloaded from a lorry, and carried in at an obscure folding door at the end of the hall. Upon the crates, in large but faded letters, ran the legend, "The O'Donovan-Morgan Opera Co.": and a little further on we found a bill, with full particulars. Faust was the opera with which, "by special request," the town of Inchileenagh was to be favoured. Then followed a list of the company's *personnel*. Beyond such attributes as "the eminent tenor," "Ireland's favourite soprano," and the like, the bill was reticent about all the singers save one: but upon this one it let itself go with considerable freedom. At the end of the list was magnificently inscribed:

"and

MURTAGH MCCARAGH

The Celebrated Baritone.

Of The Royal Opera, Covent Garden; The Royal Carl Rosa Opera Company; The Moody-Manners Opera Company, etc., etc."

My hopes rose high. I had never heard a great singer, and had often longed to do so.

"Dennis," I said, turning eagerly to my cousin, "what luck. But what is a man like that doing here?"

"I can't tell you," he replied. "Probably some old crock on his last legs. Or drink, perhaps. Still, we'll go."

We booked seats there and then, the best to be had, and I went back to dinner reluctantly. I was fifteen, and so I suppose should have outgrown my first excitement about the stage. But there it was; and I gazed with great respect and a secret envy upon the slightly shabby persons who were congregated about the "stage door."

We had ordered our dinner, so nothing remained but to find and eat it. An attempt upon the "Coffee Room" was frustrated in the nick of time by an embarrassed damsel, who explained breathlessly that "it wasn't fit," and conducted us to the Commercial Room. Here we found a table set for three, and, in the window, the gentleman with whom we were evidently to share it. This gentleman, upon our entrance, lowered his paper, and gazed at us without expression. My cousin rose to the situation at once.

"I beg your pardon, Sir," he said, advancing with a charming smile. "I'm afraid we are intruders here: but really, we've no choice. They wouldn't let us into the other room. I hope you have no objection to our sharing this one with you."

The gentleman smiled amiably, and executed a courteous gesture with his fat hand.

"None in the world," said he. "Sure I'm glad of company. So they wouldn't let ye into the Coffee Room?"

"They wouldn't."

"An' small wonder. 'Tis stiff with shifts and chemises, it is, and they on the back of the chairs to dry. Ah, they've no idee. Look at that, now."

He pointed with the stem of his pipe at an object which had caught my eye already—a stuffed fox, over whose back was stiffly draped a doormat.

"Will you believe me, now," continued our friend, "but the little girl was for skelping that mat in here. Brought it in here, she did, and cocked it up on the fox. 'Glory be to God,' girl," says I, 'yer're not going to beat that in here?' 'The mistress is after tellin' me to beat it,' says she. 'But she didn't tell ye to beat it in here,' says I, 'get away out o' this now, or

it's yourself will be beaten,' says I, 'and not the mat.' So she gives me a grin and off with her, and glad enough to spare the work."

The gentleman paused, and spat out of the window. "Ah, sure," he said, replacing his pipe. "They know no better. They've no idee."

He was a stoutish little man, bald on the top of his head, with a red face, a straggly moustache the worse for nicotine, and goggle eyes. All the same, there was something attractive about him, and we found ourselves liking him as the meal went on.

"Ah, yes," said he, his mouth full, "it's not a bad life, ye know. Of course, there's draabacks. Hotels is bad sometimes—this is one of the good ones, for they try to make ye comfortable, even if ye have to tell them the way—and railway stations in winter is the divil. And of course, ye can't always choose yer company. Sometimes the company in the commercial room is mixed—very mixed. There's a lot of fellas got into the profession nowadays that has no respect for its traditions—no respect at all. We wouldn't have tolerated the like in the old days. But generally speaking, there's pleasant company, and plenty of it."

"But don't you find it a trial to be so often away from home?" asked my cousin.

"Well now"—he wiped his moustache with the back of his hand—"you're right. Yet, in a manner of speaking, it's not such a draaback as it looks. D'ye know Rathmines? Ye do. Well, I've a nice little spot there, with a grand view of the mountains—I'm at home, I was saying, about one night in the week, maybe two; my wife's always eager and glad to see me, and so are the children, and that's a good thing, anyway."

He told us more about his children and his home, and then stopped. My cousin no less confidentially told him our story. He proved to be as good a listener as talker; asking a shrewd question from time to time, with many an interjected "Well now," and "Do ye tell me that," and, above all, with an interest so unfeigned as to charm any narrator. When we came to the subject of my illness, he turned to me with such ready concern that my heart was finally won.

"But sure, you're over yer weakness now?" he asked me, picking his teeth.

I hastened to answer that I was, whereon he gave me an approving nod, and leant back in his chair.

"Are ye going to the Op'ra?" he enquired presently.

"We are," replied my cousin. "But tell me now—you're sure to know—this man McCaragh—is he all they say he is?"

"Oh, indeed he is, and damn the lie. Many's the time I've heard him."

"Well, why is he here?"

Our friend in expressive pantomime lifted his little finger and tilted back his head.

"That same," he replied. "They could never be sure would he be able to go on or not, and he had such a grand voice they gave him all the chances they could. But sure, it was the same in every troupe he joined; and after he'd let them down two or three times, they'd fire him off, and so down he'd go, and down, till he comes to sing Faust in Inchileenagh."

"But isn't his voice all to bits?"

"It is not, and isn't that the queer thing? Mind ye, he's on in years, and it's not the voice it was; but it's a damn fine voice all the same. And you're pretty safe of him now, what's more, for he hasn't enough to make himself drunk. It takes a hell of a draught to put him under."

"Do ye know how they found him? Faith, it beats the finding of McCormack altogether. Did ye ever hear tell of the gallery o' the Gaiety Theatre, in Dublin?"

My cousin smiled.

"Ye know the way they had of singing in the waits of an opera. One fella would sing this bit, and another fella that bit, as well as the fellas on the stage sometimes, begob. Well, it was in Rig'letta: and young Murtagh was up in the gallery."

"After one of the scenes, when the curtain was down, someone turns to Murtagh and says, 'That's a grand singer!' says he. 'Do ye think so?' answers Murtagh back to him (he had drink taken, even then). 'Do ye think so?' says he. 'Bedam, but I could do it better than that myself.' 'Ah, how are ye?' says the fella to him, daring him. 'I'll show ye can I,' says Murtagh, and he stands up and starts off—he had a grand strong voice."

"Well, sure, in a minute every head was turned round, stalls and boxes and all, looking up to the gallery, for they never heard the like."

"When he done there was great hand-clapping, and presently one of the attendants comes up and wants to know who it was done the singing. Murtagh was for showing fight, because he thought they were coming to fire him out, but the attendant swore there was no harm intended to him. So down he goes to the fella that owned the troupe."

"'It was you was singing, was it?' says he to Murtagh."

"'It was,' says Murtagh, a bit daunted by the white shirt of the fella, 'but sure, I meant no harm.'"

"'H'm,' says the manager man. 'An' what trade might ye follow?'"

"'I'm a porter, Sir,' says Murtagh."

"'Well,' says the manager, 'ye'll be a porter no longer,' says he, 'for ye'll come along with me, and I'll make a singer of ye. What's more, if ye'll do what I tell ye, I'll make a damn fine singer of ye.'"

"So Murtagh went off, and in less than three years he came back and gave a concert at the Rotunda; and everyone said no better voice came out of Ireland, not even Foli himself. I tell ye, that man's sung half over the world; if he could only have stuck it, he'd be in the top flight."

"And here he is now," said my cousin, making patterns with the breadcrumbs on the cloth.

"And here he is now, as ye say," replied our companion, "singin' Faust to gomachs in Inchileenagh. Ah well," he stretched himself, and yawned enormously, "sure it's an event for the place."

"Very little happens here, I suppose?"

"Little enough. And what does happen has no sense."

"What do ye mean, exactly?"

"Well, it's this way." He turned himself sideways in his chair, and frowned up at the sluggish flies around the gas-jet on the ceiling. "What goes on here goes on sleeping, underground; ye see nothin' of it. Then, one day, all of a sudden, something'll happen, and no reason to show—no reason at all."

"Like the gamekeeper and the poacher who shot each other?" I interjected shyly. He gave me a quick look.

"Aye, like that," he said. "Bang-bang. That's all. No why nor wherefore, not a word ye might hear till the two dead corpses are starin' ye in the face. Oh, it's queer, the

way things go on in these parts." He rose and walked over to the window.

"For that matter," he said, over his shoulder, "if ye'd been here a bit sooner before your dinner, ye'd have seen something happen, here under this window."

"Yes?"

"I heard a noise, but I didn't heed it much, till the little girl ran up full of it. An old woman in a fit, and I was just in time to see them cartin' her into the chemist opposite."

My cousin and I looked at each other.

"What was she like?"

"Faith, a little old woman in black, with a bonnet on her. I didn't see but the white of her face as they carried her in. Why," he said, screwing up his eyes at us, "do ye know her?"

"No," said my cousin, "but we saw an old woman on the road as we were coming along."

"Well, the poor soul," said he, turning to the window again, "I'm thinking it's her last jaunt, for they were saying below she'd never over it. H'm." He hummed a few bars. "Are ye goin'?" Well, I'll see ye at the opera."

In a few minutes we were outside strolling towards the Town Hall. I was strangely moved, and felt within me an exaltation, a sudden perception of the wonder of life, which brought a lump into my throat. The bridge was almost deserted. The sun was sinking, and the town, the trees, the distant hills swam before my eyes in kindly gold. I trod upon air: and with every step my soul went out towards the uncouth stranger who had shared our meal. Here, I thought, are three human beings, dissimilar as may be, whom chance has brought together; fellow travellers, fellow adventurers, bound alike to life, telling each other in perfect trust their fortunes and their hopes. It was my first actual realization of the brotherhood of man. One cannot at this distance convey the full sense of that discovery; at fifteen these movements have a convincing beauty that later years cannot describe.

We were soon inside the hall, seated upon chairs reserved for "the quality," covered, two whole rows of them, with crimson baize. As it happened, we were isolated, for "the quality" was apparently the one section of Inchileenagh which did not patronize the opera, and our only companions we suspected of being the editor of the local paper, and his wife, with free passes.

The performance was to consist of the solos and concerted numbers of the opera, for the company did not run to a chorus: and, not more than ten minutes after the advertised time, lights were lowered, and the overture struck up on the piano.

The company—I remember their names still, as well as if I had the programme in my hand. Mr. Leo Peabody, the Faust, thin and reedy, but true and never unpleasant: Mr. Carlos Gooding, the Mephisto, with an exaggerated *vibrato* and mannerisms: Miss Susanne Perle, the Marguerita, surprisingly good, but no longer young: Miss Sybil Child, who by quick changes of wigs and garments, doubled the parts of Siebel and Martha, singing both in a fresh, unspoiled contralto: and, last and greatest—Murtagh McCaragh.

The scene where the Mephisto turns the water of the fountain into wine was cut, so we had to wait till Valentine's *cavatina* to gain sight of the great man. The preliminary bars clanked from the piano, and from the wings appeared—the big man we had seen on the road. It was a shock, yet hardly unexpected; however, I had no time to think about it then. The audience greeted him with enthusiasm; he smiled easily, fumbled in his ample breast for Marguerita's token, and began to sing.

My first feeling was one of disappointment. Never having heard a great singer, I suppose that in my ignorance I had expected something volcanic: and the voice in the short recitative, though easy and full, seemed to me in no way remarkable. The singer, too, seemed indifferent to his work.

Then—suddenly—a change came over him. As the piano sounded the introduction to the *aria*, he shut his eyes. It might have been fancy, but I could swear a tremor ran through him; he smiled to himself, and when he opened his eyes again, their light was different. The look of bored good-humour had given place to a strange gleam, almost of defiance. We were sitting right under him, and could see his smallest movement.

Then, once more, he closed his eyes and sang. The great notes rolled out pure and full, with an exaltation, an almost savage power, that seemed to thrill through the very chairs we sat on. When he came to the martial movement, he opened his eyes and declaimed it with a volume and a fire which was literally frightening. Then his voice sank magnificently back upon the slow swell of the air. Inevitable as a great wave sweeping to the

shore, it rose towards the climax of the music, gleamed there a moment in majesty, and rolled out the final notes in rings and rings of sound.

There was a silence, then applause. It was frantic. We clapped and stamped and shouted; I only stopped when my hands hurt too much to go on. McCaragh himself seemed almost dazed; then his face lit up with an expression hard to analyse. Many times he had to come on, and bow again, and yet again, with a certain ironic dignity; yet it was obvious that he had been deeply moved. When at last he disappeared, I sat back exhausted, let my aching hands lie limp, and murmured to myself over and over again—I don't know why—

"I am the Duchess of Malfi still."

There is little else that I remember till the scene of Valentine's death. In the dual trio McCaragh carefully "sang down" to the others, and they, to do them justice, had been roused rather than discouraged, doing their best not to disgrace their great colleague. Indeed, with all its inadequacies, I have never seen a more spirited performance of Faust than that handful of singers gave with their clanking piano in the town hall of Inchileenagh. There was magic abroad; they were possessed with it.

The duel was over: Mephisto's treacherous blade had done its work (amid loud booing from the back seats) and Valentine lay writhing on the ground.

The music does not seem sublime to me now, and I have heard many Valentines curse many Margueritas, but I have never known the scene played as those two played it. The man was inspired. Between him and the audience flowed that magic current of emotion that made the moment apt for a revelation. The facile phrases were transfigured, the whole place filled with the agony and pity of noble strength treacherously brought low: and there was fear also, as if a lion that could no longer strike still cowed the hunters by the sheer terror of his wrath. The whole barbaric power of that great voice attacked each note of denunciation with stunning force, and the soprano herself recoiled, in a wild excitement that left her pale and breathless, from the rage and spate of sound.

I have often wondered if we were all hypnotized into believing it better than it was, for of course any artist's success must always depend partly upon his audience's will to believe. There can be

no doubt, however, that we heard a great singer on one of those nights when his fire burnt at its highest and nothing stood between him and fulfilment. We were uplifted, shaken, dazed, beside ourselves. I sat trembling from head to foot, till the last trio swung us out into the street and the cool air.

The long summer night still held the sky, and a gentle breeze refreshed our foreheads. We crossed the bridge, and walked until we reached the gloom of a little wood, a chill cavern of darkness, astir with scents and the scurrying of little beasts. We stood drinking in the sweet air; and then turned slowly back. Over a blunt low hill on our right a faint radiance hovered. It grew steadily, and the line of the hill showed more and more distinctly. Then a gleam winked and trembled on the dark line, and the enormous moon, wavering and unstable, shouldered her bulk into the heaven. We watched till she rose clear of the hills, gaining dignity and radiance at every minute, and then walked homeward, with our shadows gradually deepening before us.

At the foot of the stairway we met our friend, who had seen us through the glass door of the bar, and stepped out to meet us. He said nothing, but raised his eyebrows in enquiry. We nodded. He nodded back; and there we stood, our hearts overflowing with delight, nodding at each other in absurd enthusiasm. Yet he knew nothing of the mystery we shared. "What goes on here, goes on sleeping, underground; ye see nothin' of it, then, one day, something happens. . . ." This time we had seen a little more. Not much more, but enough to give to what had happened a double significance.

"Are ye goin' to bed? Yez are? Well, I'd better say good-bye to ye so, for I've an early start before me. What—you have an early start, too? Faith, that's grand. We'll meet at breakfast then. Good-night to ye both."

And with a wave of his hand he went back to the bar.

A minute later I was in my room. I did not want to talk, nor, I think, did my cousin. The moon was flooding in at the window: I crossed to the broad ledge, and sat there with my knees drawn up, looking down on the empty street. Now and then a man would go by, and voices would sound for a moment: otherwise the night was still and peaceful.

How long I had been there I do not know, when suddenly my attention was caught by the two figures in the street. They came

along, clear in the moonlight, and passed close to where I sat: McCaragh and the soprano. He was talking to her, earnestly, in low tones, gesticulating with one hand: she walked silently, with little steps, her shoulders hunched up and her eyes on the ground. Close to me they passed, down the street, and round the corner out of sight.

I did not try to piece out their story, and have never really tried since; but I sat on there till I was stiff, and the moon had wheeled a great course in the sky, pondering with secret fear and joy upon the heritage of life which was mine. The driver, the little old woman, our friend the traveller; Faust, the pine-wood, and the moon rising—what a day I had been through. And now this last incident in the drama—enacted for me alone.

The moon rose higher, and the shadows in the little street changed their shape. Distant, faint in the moonlight, stood the hill where the gamekeeper and the poacher had fought their strange duel. Soon all movement ceased, and, except maybe for a big man and a woman talking somewhere down by the river, there was stillness in the town where things happened that had no sense to them.

Recent Literature in France.

To the avalanche of novels, which seems to grow larger year after year since the war, the French publishers are now adding popular "series" of all kinds. These take the shape generally of loosely written and dramatized—often melodramatized—biographies. Every few months a publisher launches a new series, so there is no doubt a public for these books which are easy reading and often well done. The little books on Chopin and Liszt by Guy de Pourtalès, for instance, could not be better. André Maurois gets the credit of inventing the formula with his "Ariel, or the Life of Shelley," which has had a large sale in its French original and in translations; but the kind of thing was known in England long before the war. M. Maurois had found an untilled field in English literature: he has already given us, besides Shelley, Disraeli, Oscar Wilde, Bulwer-Lytton, and is preparing a book on Byron. Another man has done Coleridge, another De Foe; a lady has done Lady Hester Stanhope and Lady Mary Wortley-Montagu; and only the other day we have had Keats. If the public will stand for it, there is no reason why this sort of thing should not continue over a number of years; for, heaven knows, English literature abounds in curious and eccentric and dramatic and even tragic figures whose lives can easily be turned into picturesque stories. There is success waiting for the Frenchman who will re-write or simply translate—for it cannot be made more enthralling than it is—Johnson's "Life of Richard Savage," or give a dramatized version of Haydon's autobiography. Even the life of Christ, which has been so terribly exploited with an eye on big sales in many lands of late years—the "Man Nobody Knows" alas! is the Man too many tell us they know all about—has had its exploiter in France too—an author named Seché. I forget now the title of his book—something melodramatic. I read in an English paper the other day that "vulgar" is a word rather out of date. It may be. The thing clearly is not.

One effect of this addition of cheap biography to cheap fiction—cheap in a figurative sense, for the French book is not cheap in a financial sense—is that the life of a new book is shorter than ever, and harder than ever is it for a book, even a good book, to stay long in the public eye. They have their day and cease to be is literally the truth. Nobody can keep abreast of the mass of new writings. In France, if a book interests you, it is better to buy it when you see it. In a month, perhaps less, it will be in limbo; and with the stupidity and disobliging ways of the French bookseller, whose first impulse is always to say that he has not a book unless it is just under his nose, and who is usually both unwilling and unable to trace a book which is not a best-seller, you will have all the difficulty in the world to get your hand on it again. Then, as if the native supply of fiction were not in itself too abundant, a vast quantity of translations of foreign novels have recently been thrown on the market. Some of the German and Russian novels are good enough to justify this treatment, but the American and English novels translated are, in by far the largest number, the veriest trash; so much so that one wonders what sort of combine goes on in the publishers' offices to bring those astute individuals round to wasting paper and print on books which must have a very small sale, which are in nowise important or called for, and which block the stream of native production.

Of the biographical series just mentioned, one of the latest is a series devoted to writers and painters called "bohemian" because of the events of their lives. The choice is rather arbitrary: some of them have been lugged in by the ears. Such is the case surely with the subject of the new volume, which is called *L'Aventure de Paul-Jean Toulet, Gentilhomme de Lettres*. Toulet was a poet and novelist of great merit, who died at a comparatively early age, just after the war. He was born of French parents settled in Mauritius, and inherited a considerable sum of money. He lost a good deal of this by gambling. He liked to tarry late in bars and cafés; drank whisky, which was then unusual among the French, though they are now coming round to it, at least in Paris; and at times put walls of opium between himself and a too harsh world. But a bohemian he was not. He always lived well and in good circumstances, and he was never on his beam ends, never without a shelter and without a penny. The reason for bohemianism and its excuse is poverty. Toulet was never abjectly poor. Moreover, he did an immense amount of work. Although he had been expelled from his two schools, he knew French, English, Spanish, Italian, as well as Latin and Greek, and he had such a store of other knowledge that he might fairly be called learned. He was a grammarian and grammatical to a meticulous point; his prose is a model of easy clear writing, correct to a painful degree. Besides a lot of hack-work, he wrote three novels which had no success in his lifetime, but which, now that they have been republished, are highly esteemed by many readers. The last, *La Jeune Fille Verte*, is perfectly beautiful in its clear Greek outline. I say "Greek" because I know no other word to express the spare movement, the reticent art which seems almost cold, almost heartless, till it is well looked at. He also left a book of apothegms, *Les Trois Impostures*, some Chinese tales inspired by a journey in China, and his volume of verse, *Contrerimes*, little poems of sentiment and unshed tears, shot with irony—the poems of a life reserved and hidden.

By everybody who knew him Toulet is said to have been a man hard to keep well with. He took pleasure in insulting people. His biographer, Jacques Dyssord, who was a friend of his, does not hide this, but he claims that Toulet's insults were extremely witty. The examples he gives seem merely rude. To a certain nobleman who was bragging of his well-known ancestors, Toulet remarked: "Yes, that is all correct, except that you have forgotten your granduncle who was condemned for forgery at Bordeaux, if I remember right." A certain lady, a friend of Toulet's, busied herself to get his work accepted, and spoke to the owner of one of the Paris daily papers with a huge circulation. This man said to Toulet one evening after a dinner party: "What you sent is rather steep for us. You know the moral tone of our paper." "I do not," replied the poet. "I've never read your dirty lying rag, and I never intend to."

M. Dyssord says that Toulet resembled Oscar Wilde in many respects. It is hard to see what they are. Wilde could never have said things like that. He recoiled mentally and physically from hurting the feelings of others, and he had to be very much annoyed before he did. And it is impossible to compare them in other ways. Wilde was on an altogether different plane from Toulet. His life worked itself out amid scenery more striking. Their writings have not one single point in common.

Another new series launched by an enterprising publisher is called *Les Grandes Amoureuses*. There has lately been a revival of interest in George Sand, who was spat on by the Naturalists and Symbolists and has remained well nigh dead for half a century. So one of the first volumes of the series, *Les Grandes Amoureuses*, is devoted to a woman who, in all likelihood, never really loved anybody, if love be taken as an emotion proceeding from the heart rather than the senses. She had an incalculable number of lovers, but she shewed very little interest in them after they ceased to interest her physically. It must be said that this new biography, coming on top of so many other books about a woman who during her life had such great fame and influence, is an utterly worthless contribution to the subject. The author, Maurice Roy, gives us nothing new or striking, either in fact or commentary. He adopts not only George Sand's statements in her autobiography, but the attitude she gave herself in later years, and her warped presentation of facts known not only to herself. Even during her lifetime Barbey d'Aurevilly told her in print that her account of some of her actions and her attitude of the matron draped in the robes of virtue were not acceptable. The end of her connection with Chopin, upon whom she shut the door in the roughest way to please her lot of a son and also because she was thoroughly sick of him, was judged even at the time by those who knew the facts one of the black spots of her career. It is easy to see and understand Sand's motives, but that the attractive and dignified part in the business was Chopin's is indisputable and, I think, indisputed by everybody but M. Roy. For him Delacroix, the painter, a friend of both, is a false friend of Sand's; the daughter, Solange, an unnatural daughter; Sainte-Beuve a double-face. Chopin is presented as a chronic invalid, a man who did not contribute to the expenses of the household, a mere "pianist." He evidently considers George Sand a far more important genius than Chopin, which is inadmissible whatever way you take it. During their lives it was thought so, but that is long since over.

Remy de Gourmont, who did not like Sand, said that without her lovers she would have caused but very moderate astonishment. But such of her lovers as had influence on her writing, Sandeau, Planche, Michel de Bourges, Pierre Leroux, harmed her as an artist, some by destroying her spontaneity, others by persuading her that she was a great social teacher. It is owing to them that the mass of her literature is now dead matter. From the only one of them, Musset, of whom she might have got something valuable, she took nothing at all. She was not a great literary genius any more than Mrs. Humphrey Ward, and not so much as Ouida. She was a far greater personality, of course. What she had chiefly was an extraordinary facility in writing akin to Anthony Trollope's. Like him she could write at all hours and in the most discouraging conditions. As a woman she had admirable qualities seldom found in women, and perhaps seldomer in men. She was generous; she was undoubtedly sincere in the little importance she gave to herself or her writings; she had no shade of jealousy, literary or other; she was helpful, appreciative, and kind. She was only too ready, as Sainte-Beuve told her, to be influenced by men who were not her equals. There are enough virtues to ornament a life! Charles Maurras has remarked that there was something not French in her character which she owed to her descent from the Maréchal de Saxe. Certainly her disposition to confess, or partly confess, her private affairs is not in keeping with French reticence, but is

found in Slavs who feel, as Sand did, that confession is absolution. Altogether she is much more interesting as she was than touched up by such as M. Roy, who want to stand her in a better light.

II.

The quantity of novels produced year in year out in England and America and several European countries leaves one amazed that anybody has the courage to sit down and add yet one more to the heap. It is the mirage, of course. From the stream constantly flowing in France I pick out a few likely to appeal, from one reason or another, to foreign readers. They are quite new. As to their powers of endurance I express no opinion.

Mme. Lucie Delarue-Mardrus is a poet and novelist with a high pile of books already behind her. Her latest, *Redalga*, is concerned with an Englishwoman, a poet of genius, adrift in Paris, a victim of her craving for drink. A French sculptor falls in love with her and tries to combat her malady, although he knows only a few words of English and she as little of French. She yields for a while, but one night she leaves him, preferring her liberty, her liberty to drink among other things, which, says Mme. Mardrus, is necessary to her genius. The story is interesting: Mme. Mardrus knows English well, and rather more superficially the English. What we should like to have are the intimate feelings of the woman, her ideas, her struggles; and that is what we do not get. She is observed through the eyes of the sculptor, who is much of an ass. The woman is there like a performing dog. The sculptor and his friends discuss her in her presence. "She is really rather clever," etc. We do not know how the dog feels. We are told *Redalga* is a poet of the value of Villon and Verlaine. Of what poetess can that be said and sound true? The specimen of her verse which is given is like a poor example of the Irish "keen" school. But the great merit of Mme. Mardrus' book is that it emphasizes the fact, still very imperfectly understood, that many cases of drink should be judged not from the point of view of the policeman and the prison, but from that of the hospital and the lunatic asylum. Of course it is the rarest thing in the world to find a Frenchwoman of *Redalga's* class enslaved by drink, and to make that plausible to her readers Mme. Mardrus had to choose an Englishwoman, or an American, or a Russian. The art with which she has carried out her purpose deserves praise, and her book stays in the memory.

An interesting effort to reveal another variety of the feminine artistic temperament is *L'Enfant Prodige*, by Adrienne Lautère, a native of Amsterdam, who lives in Paris and writes in French. The child-wonder is a little girl, a violinist. What would be interesting to know is what such children have besides mechanism. I myself have never seen a child-musician who struck me as having anything else. But some few have certainly existed who were able to grasp the meaning of great music and to render it passionately, as that little boy Filtsch, who died before he was thirteen, who played a concerto by Chopin before Chopin himself in such a way as to delight the composer—not easy to please. Like Mme. Mardrus' heroine, the child-wonder too is observed altogether from the outside. The book relates the *events* in the life of a child-musician;

no attempt is made to reveal the musical soul, the source of the music she expresses. But the real heroine is the child's mother, a young woman with one fixed idea: the success of her child. To this end she slaves, denies herself, accepts affronts and humiliations, even yields to the desire of men who are useful to her. With great skill the author lets us perceive that the natural promptings of maternal love count for very little in all that. Her child is an instrument, the only instrument she has, to satisfy her own ambition, to save her from the sordid grind of a woman condemned to poverty. A character very well done, felt and observed to the very bones. One feels that the author had the power, if something—perhaps the thought of an English translation—had not withheld her, to open still more secret folds of this cold-blooded selfish creature who never had a generous impulse.

The Russian emigration has had a marked effect on French literature. In a quantity of novels of late years we have the Russian woman as the French man sees her. To those like myself who knew Russia before the Revolution and knew what to expect of Russian men and women there was something comic in the sight of the French carried off their feet, bringing all their art to explain what was often not worth explaining, or what did not bear explaining. The latest contribution to the matter is a book with the sensational title, *A bas l'Europe*, by Ivan Goll, a Swiss who has lived long in Paris. Besides the stereotyped Russian woman and her conventional vices, there is here a serious attempt to present certain types of young Frenchmen of to-day whose leader is Cocteau and whose apostle André Gide. Somehow the thing lacks bite. The book is like a cup of lukewarm tea. A far better notion of the artistic young Frenchman may be derived from *Le Paysan de Paris*, an admirable study by Louis Aragon, one of the Surrealists. The opinions expressed by the youths in M. Goll's book are already out of fashion. The nihilism of Gide has gone up in smoke. France is at present in one of its periodical spells of severity. It is well to bear in mind that Jansenism originated in France. Like the two novelists just discussed, M. Goll too shows only the outside of his Russian as she appears to a Franco-Swiss who is in love with her. As a consequence she seems incoherent. Russia cannot much longer continue to supply mysterious and fatal heroines for French novels. The Parisians are now living very unwillingly cheek by jowl with thousands of Russians and other foreigners, a condition of things which tends to destroy illusions and glamour.

The Princess Bibesco is a Rumanian who passes most of her time in Paris. She has published several books written directly in French. She is no doubt the best woman-writer in France, not because of her style, which is so chastened that it seems stiff at times, but because she has a wider range than the others and deals competently with more interesting and important subjects. When she discusses Europe and its social and political phases she knows what she is talking about. Her observation is first-hand. By reason of her position she has a front seat to watch the drama playing on the stage of Europe. Hence she can move her readers with ease and thorough knowledge from country to country, while other novelists who try to do the same thing give them a Cook's tour, guide-book under arm. Although she has written novels, their interest is not due so much to gifts of imagination and invention as to intelligent observation

and criticism. She is rather an historian of contemporary events than a novelist. Her novel, *Catherine-Paris*, which has been translated into English, is really indispensable for those who would understand the state of mind which prevailed among the governing classes, especially in *Mittel-Europa*, on the eve of the war. Mme. Bibesco has now published a book of essays called *Noblesse de Mode*. It is her "Sartor Resartus," her philosophy of clothes. Her starting point is the great dressmaking industry of Paris, with the extraordinary people who keep the huge business going and design year after year with unfailing fecundity wondrously beautiful works of art in the way of apparel. From the makers of clothes she passes to those they are made for, and describes certain of her contemporaries in some tight little essays, written in a very classical style formed on those of La Bruyère and Mme. de La Fayette, spare, without surplusage, often barren even through too much filing, a style which actually hinders her from getting the full value out of her subject. If I were Mme. Bibesco, I would say goodbye to the French seventeenth century and try Gérard de Nerval and Apollinaire, or, if she likes, "Sartor Resartus."

To satisfy my own taste I must at least mention one of the most original men now living, Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes. He has published three novels—if novels they may be called. And they may be called that if we allow that the novel as it usually comes to us, a progression of scenes and episodes beginning arbitrarily and so ending, with incidents arranged artificially to make a continuous flow of narrative, has about said its last word as a form of art. Ribemont-Dessaignes breaks new ground. You lose the characters, for one thing, between the chapters. Whether you will pick them up again is doubtful. If you do, it will be on another plane. That woman lying on a bed stabbed will be explained, you think? She is not explained, but the light is switched on to a man who puts a hand on the body, is shocked by the coldness of it, and pulls away his hand as if it had been stung. In his new book, *Le Bar du Lendemain*, things happen and figures come and go as in dreams. Dreamlike too is the scenery. What Mexico is that in *L'Autruche aux Yeux Clos*? What China, in the fragile little play, *L'Empereur de Chine*? The Mexico, the China of one who has never seen those lands but has dreamed of them, and painted them after his dreams. Thus he attains the final reality.

Ribemont-Dessaignes, who is also a painter, was one of the "Dada" group, but he did not pass like the best of the Dadists to Surrealism. He belongs to no group and no one makes less effort to keep in the public eye. "Dada" by hypothesis was sterile; it had no future. The very brilliant youths who directed the movement saw that to get anywhere they must go out from "Dada." Three of them, Aragon, André Breton, Robert Desnos, since they started Surrealism, a movement much more interesting, less childish, have developed into three of the best writers of the day. I would indicate Breton's latest book, *Nadja*, as another example of an attempt to do something new with the novel, if it did not seem to excel by philosophic rather than by poetic and inventive qualities. But imagination it shows in plenty. The Surrealists are an enlivening lot. In an age of flaccid acquiescence they alone have the courage to break up the furniture and kick a hole in the family portraits and "established reputations." And it is worth noting in a country which absorbs foreigners so quickly and successfully

that the two groups which have lately had any vitality, Dada and Surrealism have been formed by young men who are thoroughly French.

The most widely read novelist in France at this time is said to be Maurice Dekobra. Jack London, I think, maintains his lead as the foreign author whose novels have the best sale. But in France there are a certain number of novelists whose work is disdained by the critics, whose names by the newspapers or in artistic society are never mentioned, and whose books, nevertheless, viley printed on sordid paper, are read far more than those of most of the eminent gentlemen and ladies who are said to be the novelists of the hour and the glory of France. Such was the novelist with the Irish name, Michael Morphy, who died a few months ago. If you mention Morphy to a high-paced critic, he will shudder as who should say: "How long, O Lord, shall thy servant suffer?" I myself find more talent in the works of Morphy than in those of most of the expensive novelists, male or female. Poor Morphy! When he died the papers disdained to mention such a poor fact as his passing. If his death cannot be said to have eclipsed the gaiety of nations, it certainly impoverished the public stock of harmless pleasure. Only yesterday in the omnibus a girl sitting near me was reading intensely in her book. Her eyes filled with tears so that she could not go on. I ventured to ask what was the book which moved her so. It was *La Fille de Mignon*, by Michael Morphy. "Dieu, que c'est beau!" said the girl.

Greater tribute what novelist could desire? How many novelists get?

VINCENT O'SULLIVAN.

Book Reviews

NATURAL MAN (A Record from Borneo) by Charles Hose, Hon. Sc.D. (Cantab).
Preface by G. Elliott Smith, F.R.S.. MacMillan & Co.; Price 30s.

In this latest work by Dr. Hose, "Natural Man," we have a simple and delightfully told tale of the lives, the beliefs, the hopes and the fears of the present-day native inhabitants of Borneo. Told without colouring by theory of any kind, in a warm, lucid style, and free from technical ethnological terms, it enables even the uninitiated in studies of this kind to follow Dr. Hose's observations with the utmost pleasure; and more unusual still, the reader is left perfectly free to draw his own conclusions. In this sense it may be considered a model.

The book is divided into six parts and is beautifully illustrated throughout. Part I gives a summary of the racial history of Borneo and of the physical characteristics of its native inhabitants as they are to-day. In chapter III, "Early Days in Borneo," Dr. Hose tells the romantic story of James Brooke who invested his fortune in a yacht of 140 tons with which he set sail in 1838 for the Eastern Archipelago, "and within three years was proclaimed Rajah and Governor of Sarawak amid the rejoicings of the populace." Part II and III deal with tribal and village life and contain many extremely interesting chapters. Parts IV and V deal with "Arts and Crafts" and "Creeds and Superstitions." Part VI deals with "Morals and Mentality."

In dealing with all these different aspects of Bornean life Dr. Hose makes manifest his own kindly heart and deep sympathy with humanity. These simple Punans—dwellers in the forest depths, the semi-agricultural Kayans who contest incessantly with the primeval forests, the head-taking Ibans,—all are to him brothers, members of the same human family. This is what he says of them: "Savages, perhaps, they may be called, pirates, organised murderers, and yet, at bottom, very little different from those who are to be found, any day in the week, in St. John's Wood or the Boulevard Vaugirard." He observes their habits and customs with the critical eye of the scientist trained to observe every detail in its relation to the whole, but he is never "superior."

Dr. Hose's observations on the relative culture of these Bornean tribes have already been adduced in evidence in favour of the spread or "movement of culture," as opposed to the spontaneous generation of culture. Thus Berry in treating of Dr. Hose's description of the spread of Kayan culture to the Punans states: "This is certainly one of the most valuable known facts concerning the development of culture." Professor Elliott Smith in a short preface (to the work under review) also pays tribute to Dr. Hose's standing as *the* ethnologist of Borneo. Professor Elliott Smith, referring to the Punans, expresses the opinion that if Dr. Hose's "book achieves no other purpose than to establish the fact of fundamental importance that man is by nature peaceful and good-natured, he will have achieved a revolution in anthropological doctrine." That the book does *not* do this is clear. The most that can be said, in that respect, is that the Punans appear to be by nature peaceful and good-natured. And here it should be noted that, in the words of the author, "they (the Punans) are found throughout the interior of Borneo, but are difficult to meet with and remain hidden in the depths of the forest." Again he remarks: "The Punans are incredibly shy and even among friends they rarely appear to be at their ease. . . . They seem always

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to be prepared for an unpleasant emergency." It is improbable, to say the least, that the fundamental nature of a people so shy and so on the defensive would be easily fathomed or elicited.

Of the other tribes, the Klemantans and Kenyahs, "which everywhere shade off into one another and into Punans,"—to quote from a previous work by the author, the Ibans and the Muruts, all are placed on a definitely lower level as regards culture than the Kayans, and to the latter he attributes also "an innate superiority of character." Yet, in discussing the maintenance of order among the Kayan communities Dr. Hose states: "The small size of each polity, its clear demarcation by its residence under a single roof, its subordination to a single chief, and its hitherto perpetual conflict and rivalry with other neighbouring communities of similar constitution, are other circumstances which also make strongly for the development in each of its members of a strong collective consciousness, that is to say, of a clear recognition of the community and his place within it. . . . "It is hardly possible for him to leave it, even if he would. He cannot hope to maintain himself alone, or as the head of an isolated family, against the hostile forces, natural and human that threaten him. . . . "It is only when we consider the facts that we can understand how smoothly the internal life of the community generally runs." All these facts go to prove that these people are not *necessarily* endowed with a nature that is unsullied by evil, but that they find it expedient to observe the Natural Law, and the community enforces this law on the individual.

In vigorously opposing the theory that the mental life of savages is profoundly different from our own, Dr. Hose writes: "Their primary impulses and emotions seem to be in all respects like ours. It is true that they are unlike the typical Civilised Man of some of the older philosophers, whose every action proceeded from an algebraic calculation of the pains and pleasures to be derived from the alternative lines of contact; but we ourselves are equally unlike that mythical personage."

In many ways, the most interesting feature of the book is the account given of the methods by which these "fierce and barbaric tribes were brought into the category of civilization and good government, in which they themselves play an active part." In this respect the Borneans of Sarawak are a lucky people. Never enslaved, never "mandated," but ruled by a Rajah who protected them from commercial exploitation, they appear to be undergoing a rapid, though normal cultural development.

It would appear, that the chief cause of the degeneration which appeared always to come upon primitive peoples brought into contact with a more complex civilization, is not due to any inherent incapacity on the part of these peoples, to adopt a new civilization or to adapt it to their needs, but to the unscrupulous behaviour of the bearers of the new civilization. S. S.

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L. E. L. A Mystery of the Thirties. By D. E. Enfield. The Hogarth Press. 10s. 6d. net.

Few people who have idly turned the pages of old plush-bound magazines such as "The Keepsake" or "Forget-me-Nots" can have failed to notice the multitude of sugary faded verses signed L. E. L. In this book Mr. Enfield

relates the tragic story that lies behind these enigmatic initials, a tale as full of romantic vicissitudes as one of the novelettes of the period, and incidentally draws a vivid picture of the coterie his heroine adorned in the Literary London of the Thirties, which included the painter Maclise, Lady Caroline Lamb Foster, the biographer of Dickens and most interesting to Irish readers, Dr. William Maginn.

The quite undeserved popularity of her work was the undoing of poor Miss Landon. At the tender age of sixteen Mr. Jerdan, the J. C. Squire of his day, and a power in letters, acclaimed her in fulsome terms a second Sappho, and London took her latest darling to a fickle bosom. Maclise painted two very charming portraits of her, both reproduced here, and the great minds of the day acclaimed such verse as this, as poetry:

"I hear them speak of love, the deep
The true, and mock the name;
Mock at all high and earthly truth,
And I too do the same.

"I hear them tell some touching tale
And swallow down the tear;
I hear them name some generous deed,
And I have learnt to sneer."

Always muddle-headed and quite incapable of regulating such imagination as she possessed, Letitia saw no reason to doubt the adulation showered upon her, and exploited her fatal facility to the utmost. In a wicked world such meteoric fame was bound to engender enemies, and some quite trifling indiscretions of behaviour provided excellent material for slanderous tongues. At the age of thirty-five she found that her reputation, and more important to an essentially feminine character, her chances of marriage, had quite faded away. Worn out by hack work, literature held no further charms for one who had never been in any sense an artist, and when introduced by friends to the redoubtable Captain Maclean, a strong silent Scotchman and heavyweight Empire Builder on the Gold Coast, she lost no time in throwing herself at his head, partly it is true because she had always admired men of action, but in the main because she pined for the safe and respected status of a married woman. After a few months of married life at the gloomy Cape Coast Castle, Letitia was found dead with an empty phial of prussic acid in her hand. Whether worn out by her dour and drunken husband, or by her own ghastly disillusionment, we shall never know. This is the tragic history which Mr. Enfield relates with fine dramatic vigour. The "Mystery" is of course the quite incredible vogue among intelligent people, of verses that seem to us Byron and water and a dash of individual bathos carelessly mingled. "She lived at the period which marked . . . the beginning of the long eclipse of English taste." This was her tragedy. Had she lived in the unsentimental Eighteenth century or at the present day when there exist some intelligible critical criterions she might never have been faced with the dreadful dilemma of choosing the joys of the imagination or those of life, a choice which to a real artist would seem non-existent. Hers was "the common fate of those who use the imagination to escape from life, instead of as a means of understanding and interpreting it," declares her biographer. Had she not

lived in the Byronic aftermath this little round-faced pink-satin clad wisp of femininity might have lacked encouragement in such a fatal mistake, and in giving her undoubted social and domestic potentialities greater scope would have avoided that unhappy dénouement which was the direct result of the muddled romantic mentality of her age.

M. S. P.

* * * * *
SWAN SONG. By John Galsworthy. Heinemann. 7s. 6d. net.

Those who have followed the Forsyte fortunes will remember that when Fleur, daughter of Soames Forsyte and Jon, son of the fateful Irene, fell idyllically in love, their respective parents did everything in their power to separate them, and succeeded. Fleur married Michael Mont as a second best, and Jon having emigrated to the States, saved his wounded heart with a lovely water-nymph with a South Carolinian accent. The subject of the present volume is the reunion, some years later of Fleur and Jon in Sussex, where Jon has very indiscreetly decided to settle down, and the latter's inevitable seduction despite his unruffled domestic content, by the quite selfishly single-minded Fleur, who to do her justice has never for one instant forgotten her first and only love. Mr. Galsworthy must congratulate himself on such a neat dénouement. The possessive, tenacious egotism of Soames in relation to beautiful but fickle Irene is here repeated in his daughter's unscrupulous treatment of Irene's son.

It is disappointing to one who enjoyed the "Saga" with its faithful and meticulous portrayal of an anti-macassar and saddle-of-mutton civilisation that these younger Forsytes possess none of the solid and often fascinating reality of their forbears. They seem to lead an unpleasant and totally unreal existence. Mr. Galsworthy dislikes the younger generation as a whole so much that he refuses to take any trouble over Fleur or Jon. The book is full of puerile hits at "modernity" as typified by the popular press, as if the author had entirely failed to grasp the real spirit of the age, obviously more through boredom with its manifestations than through lack of intelligence to comprehend it. For in spite of the fact that the "Forsyte Saga" is a satirical novel, it is plain throughout that Mr. Galsworthy's sympathy is with the vagaries, loveable and otherwise, the dogmas and narrowness, and the sterling if somewhat barbaric virtues of the Victorian generation of Forsytes. Soames, who was the most unpleasant member of that family to start with, has in the later volumes acquired a mellow charm and intelligent dilettantism, and dies a martyr to unselfish paternity. He, and that figure of real comedy, Mrs. Winifred Dartie, the last of the Old Brigade, are vivid in comparison with the shadowy hero and heroine. The chapter in which Soames buys a Morland from the Marquis of Shropshire is as good as anything the author has done, and full of the old skill and humanistic grasp.

It is indeed a tragedy for Mr. Galsworthy's more discriminating readers, that as he says himself "Nothing can ever be cosy again" and that he takes no interest whatever in our thoroughly un-cosy generation.

M. S. P.

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EDMUND BURKE. By Bertram Newman. London: Bell. 8s. 6d.

A dignified compression of the available Burke material. A modern judgment of a personality mighty enough to make it most desirable for the critic to be able to stand away a century or so from his subject.

Mr. Newman has the biographical gift of interweaving the century, the personality and the work, of his subject into one close-knit fabric. Our realisation of the three things progresses evenly, at a sober pace.

Mr. Newman does not run imaginatively riot after the dramatic modern fashion in biography, but the limitations of his scholar's conscience allows plenty of scope for serious and convincing portrayal. The tone is one of judicial admiration; of an almost ardent impartiality—the summing-up of a judge whose sympathies are entirely with the prisoner. There is a solidity and compactness about the book that make it a minor monument of undoubted congruity to have arisen in the country to which this great mind "born for the universe" narrowed itself. The influence of Burke's nationality appears only in terms of superficial preconceptions, but strangely enough the intense cosmopolitanism of his nature as here shown, seems to mitigate for us the importance of this inadequacy in the study. The perusal of the book, indeed, accepting at face value what is conveyed of Burke's passionate feeling for distant peoples and his infinitely less comprehensive sympathy for his own, leaves us with a sense of tragic mundane probability about the rush of a humanitarianism at once so torrentially universal and so poignantly practical, to find outlet in the great utilitarian aqueducts of the nearest Imperialism.

C. M.

THE PERSIANS OF AESCHYLUS. Translated into English verse by C. B. Armstrong, M.A., B.D. The Talbot Press, Ltd. Dublin and Cork, 1927. Price, 3s. 6d.

Having regard to the best passages in this translation it is difficult to understand how the translator passed a line like

"My friends whoe'er doth ways of sorrow tread"

which stagger of a broken-backed head-to-tail Pegasus puts in motion an otherwise perfect company of six lines, before we have again—

"So now to me are all things full of fear."

—less contorted, but also spoiling an otherwise good six line stanza.

I am of opinion, too, that when Atossa, first realising Persia's defeat, says—

"Long am I silent,—"

the inversion is not only syntactically undesirable, but psychologically falsifies her naked wordless grief.

These lapses are the more reprehensible as Mr. Armstrong proves again and again that he can not only avoid them but can write very fine rhymed decasyllabics:—

"And Xerxes where he sat to see the fray
Conspicuous on a hill beside the bay,
Cried out in agony at the awful sight
And rent his robes, and gave the word for flight
To all the mainland army; and they fled."

He is least poetical when he uses stanzas of short lines with varied rhyme systems. Yet disregarding the occasional lapses to which perhaps I have given undue prominence, it is only fair to say that the chief merit of this translation lies in the ease of the versification and the simplicity and directness of the diction. These qualities are well exemplified in lines 1 to 65 of the opening chorus, which

bristles with the names of the Persian army and must have presented quite a difficult task to the versifier. Indeed, so long as Mr. Armstrong is working in longer measures we forget the translator in the poet. Generally in these passages the verse moves at once freshly and freely, yet with that natural restraint which we expect from scholarship and fine poetic judgment. Sometimes as in the following stanzas, where, the transfusion from the Greek is as pure as it is complete, we feel that we cannot ask more of translation:—

"See hands of delicate whiteness their veils and garlands rend;
Their bosoms are wet with weeping, their sorrow hath no end;
Sweet Persian ladies mourning in ecstasy of grief
So newly wed and widowed—O pain beyond relief.

No more for love's sweet dalliance your brodered beds are dight,
Your comrade now is sorrow, O ladies of delight!
And we lift up our voices in measured sad refrain
A long lament for those who went in royal Xerxes train."

In a short and very lucid preface, Mr. Armstrong writes: "For sheer rhythm of phrase it would be hard to match the withering scorn of Darius in the lines beginning (line 745) *δοτις Ἑλλήσποντον ἱρόν* of which a translator may only hope to catch a faint echo, so nobly do they ring." Yet I do not know any other translation where these lines are so fitly rendered as I find them here:

"Fool! who chained the flood and fury of the HELLESPONTINE wave;
BOSPHORUS, divine of rivers, bound in fetters like a slave;
Changed the rhythm of its flowing, flung his cables anvil wrought,
Binding pathways on the boundless for the army that he brought.
Mortal dreaming over immortals in his frenzy to prevail—
Xerxes conqueror of Poseidon!—'tis in truth a pretty tale."

Here, moreover, the translator has more than justified his claim to have preserved the general characteristics of the Greek verse.

But the triumph of the work, which wipes out every little fault is in the concluding passages between Xerxes and the Chorus, from line 1,038 "Weep for the sorrow and leave me" to the end of the play. It is impossible to quote those pages here, but for mastery of the verse form, directness and beauty of phrasing, tragic intensity and withal, faithfulness to the original, they are beyond praise as a rendering of one of the greatest passages in Greek drama.

It is very much to be hoped that this translation by the Warden of St. Columba's College, will be followed by others even better.

D.

THE FACETIAE OF POGGIO AND OTHER MEDIEVAL STORY TELLERS. Translated by Edward Storer. Routledge, Ltd. 7s. 6d. nett.

Wit and humour belong to their own day and generation. That is why so many of these ancient stories, when they do not attract attention by their open indelicacy, appear pointless and naive to us. True, some of them have the very tang of wit, and were one to hear Poggio Bracciolini declaim in his "Bugiale" or lie-factory, he would doubtless be able to throw the glamour of a rich personality over a blunted jest. Poggio, who became dust nearly 500 years ago, belonged to the Roman Curia, and was sometime Secretary to the Florentine

Republic. About 1450, when seventy years of age, he made his famous collection of jests in Latin, from which a selection is given in Mr. Storer's translation.

The works of Poggio, Domenichini and others who scattered the light foam that flew in the wake of the Renaissance belong to the curiosities of literature; they are to be discovered, sumptuously bound, in the libraries of the wealthy, and the ordinary reader is under a debt to Messrs. Routledge for having placed this selection within his reach.

The Book is in the same attractive format as the other Broadway translations. R. O. M.

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WHILE RIVERS RUN. Maurice Walsh. W. R. Chambers, Ltd. 7s. 6d. nett.

Some time ago, on the search for a detective story to beguile a long railway journey, the writer picked up a book entitled "The Key above the Door." Instead of intricate plot and intriguing mystery, however, there was gradually unfolded before him one of the most pleasant romances it has been his lot to discover. The book was laid down with regret, tempered by the hope that there might be more to come from the same hand.

That hope has now been realised; "While Rivers Run" is a tale of the same type as "The Key above the Door." It is a tale of open-air life in Scotland: fishing, shooting; love and jealousy; full of keen characterisation and lifted far above the common level by a delightful style and a power of description that brings the story very near to the best of its kind. Mr. Walsh has one Irishman in his book, which leads us to believe that he may one day write a romance in an Irish setting. Such a novel would be a refreshing draught after the heavy dose of realism with which we have been surfeited for so long. R. O. M.

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THE PORPOISE PRESS, 27 RUTLAND ST., EDINBURGH.

There are good things coming out of Scotland; many of them through the Porpoise Press which has provided a medium of expression for the younger Scottish writers, who seem to be in the throes of a literary revival similar to that which occurred in Ireland about twenty years ago.

We have received some fourteen broadsheets and small books of verse as evidence of this revival, and most of these are of such good quality that it is difficult to make a selection, while space does not permit of a detailed notice of all of them. Mr. Hugh McDiarmid, who is represented by "The Lucky Bag," is the best known and at the same time the most original and intellectual of these poets. An intimate acquaintance with the Scottish dialect is necessary to the understanding of his work, which, in addition, has a definite metaphysical tendency. "Dandelion" is an example:—

"I saw my brain as the sun nicht see
A dandelion ba'
And think it was its ain
Pale image that it saw.

I saw my brain as the sun nicht see
A dandelion ba'
— And noo like a starry sky
My thochts owre a' thing blaw."

"Sun and Candlelight" by Miss Marion Angus is so good that in quoting "The Wild Lass" which is in the dialect, we would wish it to be understood that her English verse is marked by the same accomplished craftsmanship.

"Hameward ye're travellin'
In the saft hill rain,
The day lang by
That ye wearied o' the glen;
Nae ring upon yer han'
Nae kiss upon yer mou'
Quaiet noo."

"There's fiddlers an' dancin'
An' steps gaun by the doors,
Bit nane o' them s'all fret ye
In the lang nicht 'oors.
O Peace cum on the Wind,
Peace fa' in the dew,
Quaiet noo."

"Cauld was the lift abune ye,
The road baith rough and steep,
Nae farrer s'all ye wander
Nor greet yersel tae sleep,
Ma ain wild lass,
Ma bonnie hurtit do'o—
Quaiet, quaiet noo."

Miss Angus is a true poet.

"Gossip" by Alexander Gray is a collection of verses written in a philosophical vein with much grace of diction. We think, however, he is at his best in his translations of Heine a selection of which is given in a broadsheet "Songs from Heine" issued by the Porpoise Press.

The difficulties of translating Heine are well known, but Professor Gray seems to have surmounted them with the assistance of the language of Burns.

This song is familiar:—

AM LEUCHTENDEN SOMMERMORGEN.

"In the yaird, on a braw summer mornin'
I dander about oot-by,
The flowers speak and whisper thegither,
But fient a word say I."

"The flowers speak and whisper thegither,
And look at me wesome and wan';
'Be angered nae mair wi' oor sister,
Ye sorrowfu' seickly man.'"

Mr. William Jeffrey is a young poet with a gift for scenic description. He is a little inclined to be profuse, but he has some fine moments and his "Mountain Songs" of Crofters Highlanders, and the Scottish hills have a refreshing quality that makes them pleasant to read. We are afraid that in his longer poem "The

Nymph," published separately as a broadsheet, he is prone to emulate the grand manner too much, so that, although the verse is melodious and well sustained, the whole somehow does not rouse our enthusiasm.

"Shy Traffickers" by J. L. Foxworthy. This broadsheet contains some good verse, notably two poems: "A Cameo" and "The Diver." Mr. Foxworthy worships at the shrines of Strength and Speed, and has something of Henley's gift for bringing us into communion with his gods.

"A Lan'wart Loon," by J. G. Horne, is a long narrative poem in the Scottish dialect, describing the adventures of a Scots laddie who gets lost after having "mitched" from school. The adventures in themselves are not very exciting, nor are they as serious as those which befell "Tam o' Shanter," but they enable Mr. Horne to give an effective presentation of the character of his "Loon." His verse is free and vigorous "Scots," and he has been thoughtful enough to provide a glossary for the uninitiated.

Mr. Lewis Spence in a broadsheet entitled "Weirds and Vanities," has written some well-knit Scottish verse. He has more power of expression than most of his contemporaries. There is a stern Caledonian quality in his patriotic poem "The Burn o' Braid":—

"The dour breist o' the ringin' soil
Clanged like the iron to the heel."

"Cortege," by A. M. Davidson, is a collection of epigrammatic lyrics, mainly in two stanzas. They are of evenly good quality, the most remarkable being the first, from which the title of the book is taken and which we quote:

CORTEGE.

"Poor Jeanie left her house at morn,
And Rob stood silent by the door.
As she came out, all decked with flowers
To hide the ancient dress she wore."

"With her six sons she slowly took
Across the hill side, through the peat—
Oh, wheresoe'er they went, went she;
But Jeanie never wet her feet."

Mr. John MacNair Reid is an excellent writer of descriptive verse. His broadsheet "The Gleam on the Road" is of high quality; witness the following from the title-poem:—

"The firs that stand within the mist of bare
Birch trees, like peaks in mountain cloud a gleam,
Will lose their isolation and the rare
Green loveliness as in the wind a stream.
Their cloudy neighbours' vapour melts into
A flood of shimmering gold, a dancing air;
The perishable snow beneath the blue
Seems slower in its going than the hue
Of Winter's desolation round the firs,
When on a day like this, the South Wind stirs."

Other Broadsheets are:—"Hebridean Sea Pieces," by Alasdair Alpin MacGregor, who has a fine sense of atmosphere and seems to have caught some of the glamour of the Isles; and "Romantic Ballads," by Margaret Sackville. Lady Margaret Sackville is well known as a poet, and these ballads, which are in the traditional vein, should add to her reputation. They have a rare lilt and swing about them, particularly one in dialogue—"The Confession."

Congratulations are due to the Proprietors of the Porpoise Press on their enterprise, and if we have not yet been able to discover the promise of a Burns, a Shelley, or a Yeats among these writers, it will be strange if in time some of them do not produce poetry of the highest order. R. O. M.

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"THE SONG OF BRIDE." "THE NORTHERN GATE." By Isobel Wylie Hutchison. The De La More Press, 10 Clifford St., London, W. 1.

"The Song of Bride" is a metrical version of the old Gaelic legend, according to which St. Bride was summoned from the Hebrides to Bethlehem to be the foster-mother of Christ, leaving behind her servant, the gillebridean or oyster-catcher, whose strange cry is supposed to be a continual lament for her departure. Miss Hutchison relates the incident in graceful and flexible verse, full of light and colour.

In "The Northern Gate" the same writer has made a collection of songs of the Highlands, and the Hebrides, while she has even gone as far as Iceland. Her songs are spontaneous and delicate creations; there is genuine feeling in all of them. We should like to quote "The Wells of Dee," but must confine ourselves to the charming little epigram:—

IN THE LANE.

"I met two lovers in the lane
Sheepish and shy,
I met two lovers in the lane
And passed them by."

"Oh, it's a lovely thing to be
A lover or his lass,
And it is lovely to be free
And look and pass."

R. O. M.

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ENGLISH PROSE STYLE. By Herbert Reed. (G. Bell, Ltd. 9s. net.)

There are, Mr. Reed holds, two points of view from which the art of writing prose may be studied. A negative style is attained through *composition* and the sustained avoidance of the pitfalls of common speech. Words then, their use and abuse, epithets, metaphor, organisation of sentences and paragraph, are the matter of the first part of Mr. Reed's book. A positive style is reached through what he calls *rhetoric*. To rhetoric belong the personal elements with which composition is fused. It is more than persuasive speech, since each mode of it contrasts according as it is animated by thought or by sensibility. Under rhetoric the second part of Mr. Reed's book treats of exposition or ratiocination, narration, fantasy, eloquence (thought united to force of character), intelligence (emotion plus thought), and personality.

True genius is simple and sane, free of affectation. This is a conviction of the plain man which needs, however, to be given a philosophical basis. Mr. Reed's enquiry leads into remote and obscure regions, away from the fact towards the metaphysical truth. The early part of his book, where he discusses the quality of words, the appropriate epithet, the organisation of the period and paragraph, is the easier reading. Definition must be largely negative. Words will not be used for their own sake by a good writer, or he will fall into affectation or sentimentality. Take metaphor, for example; by defining it as the swift illumination of equivalence, Mr. Reed excludes the merely decorative. There is another instance which throws even clearer light on Mr. Reed's underlying principles: the so-called romance of words. To that he opposes the logic of poetic thought. He would ascribe the survival of words to their expressiveness, their "vocal appropriateness" rather than their expressiveness to their antiquity.

Mr. Reed belongs to a young English school which seeks scientific criteria, and is not satisfied with the subjectivist standpoint of impressionism. Finally, he allows that the sense of words and taste in organisation which is good composition, and the gifts of personality and of sensibility, or powers of logic which make the "rhetorician" (or the genius of popular parlance) can produce in themselves but a dry perfection. Is he then admitting the vanity of his enquiry and falling back on a mysticism in which all distinctions are lost? The style then is the man—are we left with that cliché as the conclusions of the whole matter? No; rather the style is the thought; better still, the style is *reason*. But reason in this context is not rationality or ratiocination, but the "widest evidence of the senses, and of all processes and instincts developed in the history of man. It is the sum total of awareness, retained and ordered to some specific end or object of attention."

The life of reason implies more than character, more than intelligence, more than personality; it "necessarily implies a world of absolute ideals." "The greatest English prose writers, Swift, Milton, Taylor, Hooker, Berkeley and Shelley, are great not only by virtue of their prose style, but by virtue of the profundity of their outlook on the world."

The variety of the examples and illustrations add interest to an important book. Mr. Reed draws on a learning which comprehends modern and ancient, the immortal and the ephemeral, science and works of pure exposition, oratory and history, as well as literature proper.

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COUNTRY COMETS. By Cecil Day Lewis. (Martin, Hopkinson and Co., Ltd.)

Some of these verses have truly "no estimable riches" to give, being, in fact, little more than readable. Yet Mr. Lewis is undoubtedly a poet. Such verses as:—

"No branch has motion or quietude
To match your finger's wizardry
That do but touch and Reason
Is futile as a creaking skeleton.
I hear your voice make of each trivial thought
Aria so lovely that all philosophies seem
An ocean of grey beard waves
Chattering the same old outworn theme."

or:—

"as I spoke,
Quietly like a clump of daffodils
Out of the night grew dawn, and sparrows awoke."

mark him clearly as one with access to the sacred springs.

The short lyrics, "Autumn of the Mood," "Between Hush and Hush," "Wreck near Ballinacraig" and "Apologue," have an individual quality which recommends them to me; but there is too much verse like "Prelude," "Naked Woman with Kotyle," "Under the Willows" and "Arcadian," which, in spite of a certain mild grace and integrity of diction, never really comes to anything.

Then, again, in phrases like "hope-blood," or where he speaks of a thrush's notes as "pin-pricks through a pall of silence," Mr. Lewis is in danger of erring on the other side and overstraining.

Mr. Lewis has not escaped the prevalent analytic and introspective mood. Indeed some of his most striking lines, as

"The seer finds no bulwark
From his own vision."

belong to this kind; while "It is the True Star" and "At Greenlanes (An Epistle)," which are also philosophical, are undoubtedly interesting and are expressed with considerable force.

On the whole, I look upon this book as a sincere and approximately true expression of a personality, still immature, but of which I hope for a fuller and more intense expression in his next work.

J. L. D.

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DEMOCRACY AND LEADERSHIP. POLITICS AND EDUCATION. By Leonard Nelson.
Allen & Unwin, 7s. 6d.

ARCHON OF THE FUTURE OF GOVERNMENT. By Hamilton Fyfe. Kegan Paul,
2s. 6d.

These two books are complementary to each other, the smaller posing a problem and the larger showing the way to its solution. *Politics and Education* is a translation of a series of lectures, delivered at different dates and to different types of audience, by a German Professor of Philosophy, and *Archon*, written by a well-known English journalist-politician, is one of the volumes in the now famous *To-day and To-morrow* series of pamphlets.

The late Professor Leonard Nelson, who died in October last while the proofs of this translation of his work were passing through the press, was for ten years connected with the philosophical school of the University of Gottingen, and he was well-known in Germany as one of the most trenchant critics of the idea that Democracy consists in the application of the principle of government by the majority. He delighted to point out the inconsistencies in the application of this principle, and to show its failures where attempts were made to apply it logically. Professor Nelson based all his teaching upon the assumption that Politics was the expression of Ethics in social life, and consequently he examined all political problems on the principle of Right. According to this teaching Politics had to be subject to Reason, and social life must be organised upon the principle of Leadership. There must, then, be an Education for Leadership, and there must be an educated following. "The marks of a Politics of Unreason

are—thoughtlessness, and, in its train, aimlessness, indifference, fatalism and, finally, faith in salvation by miracle. The marks of a Politics of Reason, therefore, are forethought, clearness of aim, constructive purpose, sense of responsibility and valiant trust in one's strength." The Politics of Reason need not exclude the probability that majorities may possess all the signs and qualities named. Anyhow there is nothing very novel in Professor Nelson's teaching, it seems to be based upon Nietzsche and Samuel Butler, and it has long been common ground to all who thought upon the problem of Democracy. What is novel in the Professor's work is the attempt he made to train his pupils for Leadership. In that he undertook a task which must be undertaken in all communities which desire to retain the democratic system. The problem of Leadership is becoming daily more pressing and if democracies cannot discover and train their own leaders the control will inevitably pass to men like Mussolini, Lenin, and de Rivera.

The little book which Mr. Hamilton Fyfe has contributed to a brilliant series is less concerned with democracy than with government, but nevertheless he remains certain that the democratic form contains the greatest hope for the future. The humbug inherent in all government, and the obvious humbug of party government, he is willing to tolerate, but he thinks that as time passes the tendency will be to place the affairs of communities under the control of people who have been specially trained for the work. The English Party System lends itself especially to ridicule; it is probably the most absurd system of government in the world to the superficial observer. But what must be borne in mind, and what Mr. Hamilton Fyfe sometimes seems to overlook, is that in reality Britain is governed not so much by its parties in Parliament as by its excellent permanent Civil Service. In the Civil Service, selected with care and trained to its highest pitch, would seem to lie the solution to that problem of democratic government which has troubled mankind for so many centuries.

These two books may be commended to all politicians.

L. P. B.

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ISLANDERS. By Peadar O'Donnell. (Jonathan Cape. 6s.)

In *Islanders* we have a true story about real people, told with sincerity and candour, and absolutely free from any sentimentality. Mr. O'Donnell's style is intense, dramatic, and yet restrained, full of vitality, of sympathy and understanding. The characters are mostly lovable, especially Mary Doogan with her twelve fatherless children, ranging from the married daughter down to Sheila, aged three. Faced with starvation she is yet too proud to let the inquisitive neighbour, Biddy Melly, know that the family have only potatoes for breakfast as well as for dinner and tea. The tragedy of the starvation diet comes out when the mother faints on her way to the mainland town to spend the money she has earned by knitting socks, a pair a day at 2s. 6d. a dozen. "Tell me this, Hughie," Charlie, the eldest son said, "When did ye see me mother eatin' last?" Hughie turned grave questioning eyes up at Charlie. "She can never eat praties," he said. No wonder Charlie becomes restless, and longs to leave the island, which is only "a nursery for foreign parts." Sally and Nelly, fifteen and twelve, are sent to the Lagan Hiring Fair. In a few weeks the Doogan's hear of Nelly's death of neglected appendicitis. Then comes the Herring Season—a week's frenzied

reaping of a great harvest—too late to save the mother, "who takes weak" whilst in pursuit of a hen that is "laying out," and dies, surrounded by her family, saying, "Well, welcome be the Will of God."

Mr. O'Donnell keeps us breathless during his vivid description of Charlie's dash to the mainland to fetch the doctor to his married sister, alone in a curragh, with a terrible storm raging, two boats having been broken in the effort to launch them. This young Viking, plying his paddle with grand stroke and god-like confidence, is typical of the island men whose physique is the result of good air rather than good feeding. Charlie also accepts the challenge of the Coastguard on the mainland, and beats him in a rowing contest. The book is refreshing in every way, and we read it with a sense of relief, after the feeling of nausea produced by most of the modern "Cinema Novels."

M. L. S.

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MY TOWER IN DESMOND. By S. R. Lysaght. (Macmillan).

The book, confessed in the conclusion as thinly-veiled autobiography, gives us a pleasant sense of unhurried conversation with someone who has gone through life in a mood of alert optimism. Objectivity being firmly excluded from the first, the author settles down comfortably in the circle of his readers with a genial wish for their acquaintanceship. The readers feel throughout that they are treated with politeness and respect, that the author desires their sympathy and attention. A tone of reticent intimacy pervades the book. The style has a certain simplicity which gives it a touch of distinction and a gentle cordiality. It has that out-of-date sense of leisure that lingers in country places where people have been content to fall, unperturbed, behind the speed and noise of this century. The book rambles, saunters, loiters on its way with the antic serenity of a grass-grown path twisting through glens, up and down hillsides. We never know where any dissertation will lead us out. Under these circumstances we feel it would be a mistake to attach any undue importance to the main road of the plot. Our way leads through the bridle paths of the writer's actual or mental exploration. The prevalence of this dissertative charm gives us the flavour of an essay rather than of a novel.

Perhaps because the essay-writing attitude of mind conduces to a steadier balance than the fiction-writing attitude, Mr. Lysaght walks with a cool head through all conflicting sects and parties without losing his admirable conscious impartiality. Like a just headmaster, he never sends for one of the culprits in a fight without sending for the other also. He administers to each an exactly equal number of cuts, too good-humoured to break even the touchiest of skins, and then endeavours to give to each all that he can of his store of commonsense, sympathy, and the light of reason.

Only in the passages dealing with country life do we, at last, find his emotional bias. Here, at any rate, one feels that should any controversy arise, he would be fiercely partizan. The animation and tenderness of his feelings for the country and his vivacious scorn for the town put him in one's mind as an opponent of exactly appropriate calibre to answer the "Italian person of quality" of Browning, who in just such tones as these proclaims the superiority of life "down in the city" to life "up at the villa."

N. C.

THE SILVER TASSIE. By Sean O'Casey. (Macmillan. 7s. 6d. net).

Anyone who has ever attempted to write seriously must inevitably sympathise with growth and the honest abandonment of a manner or style, however successful, that appears to its creator outworn. In this play it seems as if the butterfly of a new manner has but partially emerged from the chrysalis of an old, and there is a consequent lack of unity. Perhaps Mr. O'Casey's talent, as is often the case, is passing through a difficult adolescence after its dazzlingly successful childhood.

In Act 1 we have the now familiar tenement scene, perfect in its technical competence, with Sylvester Heegan and his crony Simon Norton as comic relief. Act 2, pitched in a quite different key, takes place at the Front with the Tommies chanting a sort of doggerel Greek chorus throughout, which automatically removes these scenes from every day realism to a night-marish symbolism. In Act 3 we return to a naturalistic Hospital Ward with some really funny passages about a telephone and a bath.

"Sylvester: Can't they be content with an honest-to-God cleanliness, an' not be tryin' to gild a man with soap and water." What a gift of phrase!

Act 4 is a mixture. We have the Macabre situation of the paralysed Harry Heegan, the handsome successful athlete-hero who won the Football Cup three times, now paralysed from the waist down through war-injuries, wheeling himself through the Football Club dance hall in an invalid chair in a state of half-mad gloating jealousy at seeing the girl who jilted him because of his physical deformity dancing with his former friend. One ought at this point to feel the Aristotelian pity and terror. But alas! there is none of the inevitability of Juno's tragedy about Harry, whose half-crazed chanting speeches have no power to move, coming from that very ordinary, rather ignoble character, though they are obviously meant to echo the night-marish motif of Act 2. Far more affecting and effective is the scene in the first act when "The Silver Tassie" is sung by the young men about to leave for the Front.

I think that Mr. O'Casey intends by this duality to emphasize the unreality of the Great War in comparison with every-day life, but the play as it stands, though good in parts, is as a whole inchoate and unsatisfactory and wants some pulling together. Mr. Cochran has recently announced his intention of producing it in London, and, perhaps, author and producer working together may create a dramatic success. The second Act needs a large, elaborate setting to be effective, and this would have been impossible at the Abbey Theatre, though otherwise it seems a pity that Dublin people have been denied the opportunity of seeing it. After all, it was written to be acted, and it will certainly be an interesting experience, for those who, like myself, have criticised it from a mere reading, to re-judge its dramatic and literary merits on the stage. M. S. P.

CENTURIES OF MEDITATIONS BY THOMAS TRAHERNE (1636(?)–1674). Now first printed from the author's manuscript. Edited by Bertram Dobell. P. J. and A. E. Dobell. 7s. 6d. nett.

The late Mr. Bertram Dobell, in his preface to the original edition of this book, tells us that the Manuscripts of Traherne fell into his hands "by a remarkable series of accidents," but I am convinced that there is something more than

"accident" in the fortune which set the works of Traherne in the path of Mr. Dobell. For, as Gosse tells us in his essay on the poems of William Cory, "Good poetry seems to be almost as indestructible as diamonds" and it was such an "accident" as excited the curiosity of Gosse (in 1884) to send for a folio of manuscript poetry which he saw advertised "in an obscure book-list" and, incidentally, to secure for himself and for the world, the long-lost works of the Countess of Winchelsea, that enabled Mr. Dobell, by the publication of these priceless things to crown a long record of fine work. His researches on Lamb, his rescuing from obscurity of "B. V.," his "Collection of Privately Printed Books," a work still treasured by wise collectors, his amazing discovery of the original draft of Goldsmith's Traveller, to mention only a fragment of his multitudinous labours would have been more than sufficient to give him an honoured place amongst the bookmen of his day. To add a new poet to that group which includes Vaughan and Herbert and which, small as it is, is one of the glories of 17th century poetry is an achievement of which no other worker in our time can boast.

The handsome 4to in which the "Meditations" were first reprinted has been out of print for many years and this charmingly printed re-issue will be most welcome to those who were not wise enough, or fortunate enough, to secure a copy while it was still possible.

In this reprint Mr. P. J. Dobell informs us that he has retained his father's notes and introduction unaltered, but he has read afresh the text with the original manuscript with the result that he has been able to insert a few short sentences accidentally omitted and correct a few misreadings. So that those unfortunate ones who missed the first edition will have, after all, some compensation for their loss. To those who have not yet sampled the "qualities" of Traherne I would most earnestly recommend a volume which contains some of the greatest prose ever written in English.

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MRS. BEETON'S HINTS TO HOUSEWIVES. Ward, Lock and Co. 3s. 6d.

It would be difficult, not to say irreverent, to associate the venerable and time-honoured authoress of the immortal "Housekeeping" with the "Eton Crop" and abbreviated skirts of the present day, but—if a mere male may venture an opinion on such a subject—the dear lady looks extremely well in the coloured dust-jacket (an admirable array for housework, by the way), in which she makes her bow to a new generation.

In his brief preface to the present edition the editor has, like old Colton, put "Many things in few words." "Housekeeping," he tells us, "has been aptly described as the 'oldest industry.'" It is certainly the most important, the very lynch-pin of life's daily round The war, and still more the problems arising from the war, gave it new prominence. Woman has extended her influence in every sphere; and in that which has always been peculiarly her own her position is more unassailable than ever. "Good servants" he goes on to tell us, "are hard to get, harder still to keep and even the wealthiest people prefer houses of manageable dimensions, with labour-saving fittings and appli-

ances." And that last phrase offers, perhaps the most fitting description of this book: for labour-saving it is in the truest sense of the word. It is the next best thing to that "good servant" who is so "hard to get or keep." The best possible weapon with which to combat those emergencies which beset the path of every householder, young or old. From the preparation of banquets such as we may only dream of, or read about in the pages of Petronius, to the method of dealing with the sting of the wasp or horse-fly, from the method of dealing with burglars to the "nice conduct" of an evening party, no subject is left untouched upon. The book is profusely illustrated from photographs admirably reproduced. We congratulate Messrs. Ward, Lock and Co. on the production of the best and cheapest volume we have ever seen on a subject of universal importance.

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ALL ABOUT GARDENING: GARDEN MAKING AND MAINTENANCE. Ward, Lock and Co. 6s.

With its 384 pages of closely-packed information, eight plates in colour, thirty-two full page illustrations from photographs and many diagrams, this volume provides a thoroughly reliable guide to all matters pertaining to the culture of flowers, fruit and vegetables in a very handy form, and the amazingly modest price (6s.) at which it is offered should bring it within the means of even the market gardener whose crops have utterly failed. Accuracy and up-to-dateness have, we are told, been the aims of its editors and in order to ensure success in these aims they have called in the assistance of experts from such places as the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, and the East Malling Research Station. The photographic illustrations are first-class and the arrangement of the many sections and chapters make the book easy to consult. The gardener who cannot find a solution of his difficulty in its pages must have met with a problem of a most unusual kind.

* * * *

A SIMPLE GUIDE TO ROCK GARDENING. By Sir James L. Cotter. The Sheldon Press. 2s. 6d.

In this little volume we have in a most readable form the "A-Z" of the subject from the pen of an eminent botanist. The Rock Garden is one of the most fascinating branches of flower and shrub culture and it has in its favour two points of the first importance. First, I quote from Sir James Cotter's preface: "Once the initial expenditure has been undertaken, the cost of upkeep is nominal." Second: "The labour of maintaining a rock garden is very small." Some of our readers who, like the present writer, have spent back-breaking hours amongst our Alpine guests may be inclined to doubt the truth of this latter statement, but I am convinced that with the assistance of such a text book as the present, a vast amount of that labour would have been considerably lightened for them and me.

In addition to much useful information as to the care of those plants usually found in Rock Gardens the author has some interesting suggestions to offer as

to others, such as hardy Orchids which are generally neglected, for insufficient reasons, as he conclusively proves. The lists of Alpine and other plants and shrubs supplied in chapters 19 and 20 are not the least valuable portion of the little book.

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LETTERS FROM CONRAD. (Nonesuch Press).

LAST TWELVE YEARS OF JOSEPH CONRAD. By Richard Curle. (Sampson Low, 10s. 6d.).

A TALK WITH JOSEPH CONRAD. By R. L. Megroz. (Elkin Mathews).

Three Conrad books. The letters are addressed to Mr. Edward Garnett, a noble friend of literature, and cover the greater period of Conrad's career in England. Some of the correspondence has already appeared in Conrad's biography by M. G. Jean Aubry. Admirers of the author of *Almayer's Folly* cannot complain that he suffers from posthumous neglect. Mr. Garnett was Fisher Unwin's reader when he first made Conrad's acquaintance, and he provides the *Letters* with an Introduction which is both generous and discreet. The *Letters* from certain points of view are somewhat disappointing, though no doubt they recall (Mr. Garnett says "reveal") to intimate friends Conrad's "buoyant temperament and resilient moods, his sceptical faith and philosophic irony." There was a critical period early in Conrad's career when he might have given up literature altogether and returned to seamanship. Though he speaks of himself as occupying an isolated position, Mr. Garnett could, one fancies, throw a good deal of light on the ways of publishers, "the making and unmaking of reputations" and generally on the "politics" of literary London in the last thirty years. In the passages where he describes Conrad's struggle there are sentences that hint at much, and will appear pregnant with meaning to the initiated.

Mr. Curle was an intimate friend of Conrad during the last twelve years of his life. He knew him in his prosperity and was present with him at the end. He, too, found Conrad enigmatic, but is assured that "beyond all the high genius of his creation," he had the "effortless greatness of a unique personality." The language is a little vague and forced. Mr. Megroz likewise insists on Conrad's impressiveness as a man. Conrad was artist rather than thinker; but it is interesting to know both from Mr. Curle and Mr. Megroz of his great erudition. This was largely, Mr. Megroz tells us, in the byeways of biography and history. Conrad was an artist of "monachal austerity," but he liked the "shop-talk" of writers, and this was because, in his own phrase, he thought of himself as one of those men "earning their bread in a very specialised occupation." Mr. Megroz has written a thoughtful and stimulating essay on literary character which will be appreciated even by those to whom Conrad's work seems hardly to deserve quite the high rank in which it is at present placed.

One of Conrad's letters to Mr. Garnett gives a short account of his Polish ancestry and family. The Korzeniowskis were a distinguished race, which produced many writers, soldiers and patriots. One of Conrad's grandfathers was a cavalry officer, the other a landowner. His father was a poet.

IRISH PLAYS.

PLAYS. By Lennox Robinson. (Macmillan. 10s. 6d. net.)

THE SILVER TASSIE. By Sean O'Casey. (Macmillan. 7s. 6d. net.)

THREE LAST PLAYS. By Lady Gregory. (Putnam. 7s. 6d. net.)

THE PIPE IN THE FIELDS. By T. C. Murray. (Allen and Unwin. 3s. 6d. net.)

LOOK AT THE HEFFERNANS. By Brinsley Macnamara. (Talbot Press. 2s. 6d. net.)

SEVEN PLAYS. By J. Bernard MacCarthy. (Gill and Son. 1s. 6d. each.)

An unusually large number of plays by Irish authors have come from London and Dublin publishers this year, and by some coincidence nearly all the leading playwrights of the Abbey Theatre figure in the lists. One would be delighted to welcome in this a sign that the Irish drama is in an unusually vigorous condition, but a short time spent in consideration will suggest an entirely opposite state of affairs.

In Mr. Lennox Robinson's volume there are six plays, of which only two are here published for the first time and only one has not yet been seen in the Abbey Theatre. Everyone will be glad to have *The Big House* in a printed version because it is one of the most impressive plays staged in Dublin for many years. It is not one of Mr. Robinson's most successful efforts, but that is only because he essayed a subject which tore all his sensibilities to shreds in the process of creation. Without doubt it is a fine play, thought-provoking and dramatically effective. *Give a Dog . . .* described as "a play in three acts," is in Mr. Robinson's lighter manner, the manner of *Crabbed Youth and Age*. The play might have been described as a comedy, because a comedy it is despite the death of one of the characters. It is a satire upon that delightful trait in human nature which does all it can to make the worst of every possibility for scandal. The play reads excellently; the dialogue is sprightly and somewhat in the newest mode, and if the characterisation is not very robust the persons are certainly interesting enough to suggest an excellent entertainment. The plays in the volume are so varied in manner and matter that they suggest the existence of several Lennox Robinsons; but it is a delightful collection which is certain to enhance its author's reputation wherever these plays are yet unknown, and the variety suggests that the author is probably the only one of the senior Abbey Theatre dramatists who may be depended upon for excellent work in the immediate future.

It is somewhat sad to see the title *Three Last Plays* on a volume by Lady Gregory. Of course, that prolific pen had to ease off sooner or later, but every member of the Abbey Theatre audience hoped that it would be very much later, and that Lady Gregory would continue to provide laughter for many years to come. But here, alas, is the end, and a very distinguished end it is, too. For thirty years Lady Gregory has been writing plays, and if she has occasionally lapsed into something unworthy of her high position and reputation, so also have Shakespeare and Ibsen. It would be very difficult to measure Lady Gregory's contribution to the Irish drama; she has given so much that she might almost be said to have created the entire movement herself. She has given, and done,

so much that criticism seems mere ingratitude, and if occasionally it has been necessary to say harsh things of her plays, it has been necessary also on many occasions to give praise that is earned only by the best that the modern theatre has seen. In this volume there is *The Would-be Gentleman*, adapted from Molière, a perfect comedy which will delight audiences for years to come. The other two plays, *Sancho's Master* and *Dave*, were criticised here on their first production in the Abbey Theatre. Lady Gregory says in a note "My decision that these three plays . . . must be my last has been made without advice save from the almanac, and rather from pride than modesty." She need have had no fear that she has outstayed her welcome as a dramatist; her place in the Abbey Theatre is one that no other can fill with the grace and distinction which she brought there. We can only hope that this volume is *au revoir* rather than that final Good-bye.

The two plays in Mr. Murray's volume, *The Pipe in the Fields* and *Birth-right*, are now so well known that nothing is left to be said. *The Pipe in the Fields*, which was first published in THE DUBLIN MAGAZINE, is a delicate fantasy which has charmed audiences throughout Britain and America since it was first staged at the Abbey Theatre. It shows Mr. Murray in a somewhat new light perhaps, but a light which those who are familiar with his plays always knew was there. Almost for the first time the poet in Mr. Murray has a chance against the grim realist, in which guise he usually presents himself.

The large audiences which have enjoyed Mr. Brinsley Macnamara's *Look at the Heffernans!* will probably be glad to have the play in print so that they may renew their laughs at the Brothers Heffernan and the Widow Molloy. The play is an excellent laughter-maker, sure of popularity.

From Messrs. M. H. Gill comes a group of seven plays of Mr. J. Bernard MacCarthy, none of which has any particular distinction, but all of which will commend themselves to the attention of the many amateur dramatic societies now in being throughout the country. One of the plays has been staged at the Abbey Theatre, another by Mr. Arthur Sinclair, and most of the others have been staged by amateur companies with satisfaction. A. E. M.

IRELAND: PRESENT AND FUTURE.

THE IRISH FREE STATE, 1922-1927. By Denis Gwynn. (Macmillan. 12s. 6d.)
HIBERNIA OR THE FUTURE OF IRELAND. By Bolton C. Waller. (Kegan Paul. 2s. 6d.)

The political, social, and economic aspects of Ireland are again of some interest to readers. That interest is manifested by the growing number of books about Ireland which figure in the publishers' lists of Europe and America. For a few years after the foundation of the Irish Free State all outside interest in Irish affairs seemed to have died, and no one desired to have any information about the country. That, evidently, is all changed now, and a growing number of books suggests an almost insatiable appetite for information.

The book which Mr. Denis Gwynn has written will stand as an authoritative work on the formative years of the new State. Mainly it is based upon the utterances of Ministers and other important politicians, and upon official publications and statistics. It is therefore authoritative almost in the blue book sense, and

it must take its place upon the shelf where politicians keep the books in most constant use. To those outside Ireland who desire complete and accurate information upon the first five years of the life of the Irish Free State, the book may be recommended with confidence. The detached coolness of the author is very welcome at a time when feelings and convictions in Ireland ran high and deep. It is plain that he was above the battle, and his skill in avoiding the most highly controversial questions of current Irish politics is admirable. To write a book about Irish affairs from 1922 to 1927 and to leave out almost all reference to the "Civil War" of 1922-23 excites admiration, but at the same time it gives an air of unreality to the book. The force behind the Government in all its doings was undoubtedly the Republican Deputies who had failed to take their seats in the Dáil; and at the same time it must be suspected that many things would have been done very differently had these Deputies been in attendance. On the whole it is a book which will give outsiders all the information they seek on the Constitution, the politics, and the economic conditions of the Irish Free State for the first five years of its existence, and if it does not completely satisfy the needs of those who have lived in Ireland during the period it will, at least, make them reconsider many things which are certain to need reconsideration in the immediate future. The author is to be congratulated upon a sound piece of work for which a wide appreciation is assured. Perhaps he will now give us a volume for the period between Paul Dubois' *L'Irlande Contemporaine* and the foundation of the Irish Free State?

Hibernia is one of the little books in *To-day and To-morrow* Series in which many excellent books have appeared, but it must be said that Mr. Waller's book hardly keeps up the standard. "It is time that a cheerful book on Ireland were written," says Mr. Waller in his opening sentence, but "cheerful" is hardly the word with which to describe the resultant ninety-six pages. The book is optimistic enough, but the style is somewhat lugubrious and long passages read as if they were the election speeches of Ministers. The future of Ireland is certain to be very much more exciting than Mr. Waller seems to think; there will be much more than balanced budgets, electricity, and the increased export of eggs. To a number of Irish people these will be cheerful enough, but Ireland's future might have induced imaginative speculation in politics.

We have received from The Talbot Press an interesting list of Autumn publications which includes a reprint of that inimitable little volume *The Glamour of Dublin*. The new edition will contain revisions and additions, and it will be illustrated by reproductions of etchings by E. F. Solomons, A.R.H.A. In its new format it should certainly prove to be one of the "best sellers" of the season. We are also promised a new volume by the same author *The Glamour of the West* dealing with Galway and the Western seaboard. Mr. W. J. O'Halloran is to do a similar service for the south-west in his *Glamour of Limerick*. The indefatigable author of *The Green Jackdaw*, encouraged doubtless by the great success of his book *So this is Dublin* comes forward with another volume of a like nature—*Dublin Diversions* with cartoons by Victor Brown. *Tristram Lloyd*, an unfinished MS. which was found amongst the papers of the late Canon Sheehan, and *A History of Western Europe* by Prof. R. A. S. Macalister are amongst many items of interest announced by this enterprising firm of publishers.

Messrs. Constable, London, have in active preparation a book by Mr. Andrew E. Malone, who is well known as a contributor to THE DUBLIN MAGAZINE, on *The Irish Drama*, 1896-1928. The book deals very fully with all the phases of the Irish drama from the foundation of the Irish Literary Theatre to the end of the 1927-28 Abbey Theatre Season. The delay in the emergence of a distinctively Irish drama in Irish or in English is fully discussed, and all the possible reasons for the delay are canvassed. There is a full discussion on the founders of the Irish Literary Theatre, W. B. Yeats, George Moore, Edward Martyn and Lady Gregory, and the divergence of ideals which smashed the partnership is surveyed in detail. The plays and playwrights of the Abbey Theatre are criticised very fully in a series of chapters in which the work of every dramatist whose work, in quantity or quality, justifies it, is carefully examined. There is a long chapter on Acting, past and present, and another dealing with management and production. The book ends with a chapter on *The Future of the Irish Drama* in which the author ventures into prophesy. An important feature of the book is the Appendix giving the date of every first production since the foundation of the Literary Theatre, and a complete alphabetical list of authors with the names of their plays and dates of first production. A full index completes what promises to be an exceptionally interesting book. The price will be about 15s., and orders may now be placed with the publishers.

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BOOK CATALOGUES.

The Evolution of the Book Catalogue could, I fancy, be made the subject matter of a very interesting essay. I have before me as I write, a Catalogue of books issued by one Elizabeth Lynch

"Elizabeth Lynch's Sale Catalogue of Books for the Year 1769. Dublin,
Printed for Elizabeth Lynch, in Skinner-Row,
MDCCLXIX.

"Consisting of several Thousand Volumes in most branches of Literature."

Elizabeth gives us in her pages the size of the volumes and the prices at which they are offered—and that is all. There is not a note of any kind from beginning to end. It is indeed a "short title" catalogue. I have also before me a catalogue entitled "Books of the Romantic Era. To be sold by Birrell and Garnett, Ltd., 30 Gerrard Street, London, W. 1," and between these two catalogues there is something more than the "years between," for Messrs. Birrell and Garnett's brochure is not only a book catalogue but an admirable, if brief guide to the English Literature of the earlier nineteenth century. There is hardly a page of its 104 pages which does not contain a note of bibliographical or biographical value and in many cases these notes contain information, the result of much scholarly research, which it would be difficult, if not impossible, to obtain elsewhere. This catalogue, as we are told in a prefatory note, brings to a conclusion a series of "Period Catalogues," which we have had the pleasure of noticing throughout the past year. A few copies of the complete series bound together in grey boards may still be obtained from the publishers at 15s. each.

We have received from Messrs. Maggs Bros., a copy of their superb "Book

Bindings, Historical and Decorative," a massive 4to of 208 pages, containing 311 fully annotated entries and illustrated by no less than 116 exquisitely reproduced photographs of bindings. It is divided into four parts, and these are again divided into sections. Part I.—Books from the Libraries of Kings, Queens and famous Men and Women. Part II.—Chained Books and Stamped Bindings of the sixteenth century. Part III.—Decorative Bindings (English, seventeenth, eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth century), Scotch Bindings, Embroidered Bindings (seventeenth century), French, Italian and Spanish Bindings, Tortoiseshell Bindings. Part IV.—Books about Bindings. From which very brief summary some idea may be gathered of the vast field covered. The book is worthy in every way of the great house from which it emanates and fit to be enclosed in one of those modern masterpieces whose beauty it has so faithfully reproduced.

When in the year of grace 1587 one, Thomas Greepe, wrote a metrical account of "The true and perfecte Newes of the woorthy and valiaunt exploytes of Syr Frauncis Drake" he thought so little of it that he described it as "a booke for the vulgar sorte of people in the Realme." Yet to-day his little quarto (one of four copies which have survived) is priced at the amazing sum of £1,500 in Messrs. Quaritch's new Catalogue, No. 415. Truly, it is not again likely to fall into the hands of "the vulgar sorte." This is but one example of the astonishing rise in value during recent years of early-printed books dealing with America. Other instances from the same list are Esquemeling's *Bucaniers of America*, 1684, the first edition (£80); William Hubbard's *The Present State of New England*, 1677, the first London edition (£42); Thomas James's *Strange and Dangerous Voyage*, 1633 (£90); John Lederer's *Discoveries in America*, 1672, an uncut copy (£400). In the English Literature section of the same list we notice amongst the many rare and desirable items a fine copy of the Baskerville *Congreve* (in contemporary Morocco) for which £70 is asked; the 1866 edition of *Alice in Wonderland* (£80); an entirely uncut copy of Pope's *Essay on Man* (£45); and Thackeray's *The Virginians*, in the original parts, a fine copy offered at £52. Amongst living authors, the most remarkable price is that of £65 asked for the first edition—an immaculate copy—of Masefield's *Salt-Water Ballads*. This, of course, is a really rare book, and seems to have escaped the depreciation which has overtaken practically all this author's other works. Another outstanding item is a remarkable collection of books by or connected with Horace Walpole, including a large number of the productions of the Strawberry Hill Press. This collection is offered—as it should be—in one lot and is priced at £400.

From the same firm we have received another handsome quarto Catalogue, their four hundred and eighteenth. America is again strongly represented with Daniel Denton's *Brief Description of New York*, 1670, a book so rare that although it has the imprint in facsimile it is judged to be worth £280; Hakluyt's *Voyages*, 1599-1600, 3 folio volumes, £70; Nicholas Monardes' *Joyfull Newes out of the New-found World*, 1580, a copy which bears the signature of Edward King (Milton's "Lycidas"), £300; and many other highly-priced items. There are also 16 pages devoted to French bookbindings and photographic illustrations are given of the many choice examples offered. Chief amongst those, both in point of beauty and association, is the Strada's *Epitome du Thresor des Antiquitez*, 1553, bound for Mary Queen of Scots, with her arms and initial. This, one of only nine books definitely known to have belonged to her, is offered for £650.



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J. S. WILSON, Joint General Manager.
D. R. MACK, Chief Accountant.
F. D. ANDERSON, Principal, Securities Dept.

W. G. E. LONGWORTH, Superintendent of Branches.
G. H. STUDDERT,
R. H. LILBURN, } Inspectors of Branches.

Dr. **BALANCE SHEET—31st August, 1928.** Cr.

LIABILITIES.			£	s.	d.		ASSETS.			£	s.	d.
To Proprietors' Capital,	£1,500,000,						By Investments—					
divided into 30,000 Shares of £50,	on each of which £10 has been						British Government Securities	(Including War issues) ...	1,925,417	11	2	
paid up	300,000	0	0		" Colonial Government Stocks, Railway	Debenture Stocks, etc. ...	246,642	1	5	
" Reserve Fund	230,000	0	0		" British Treasury Bills	...	49,713	3	8	
" Current, Deposit and other Accounts,	including Officers' Superannuation	Fund	...	6,758,578	15	8		" Bankers' Balances and Cash at Head	Office and Branches ...	521,873	19	5
" Profit and Loss, balance	after paying Interim	Dividend at the rate					" Bills Discounted	...	125,770	3	5	
of 8 per cent. per	annum (less Tax) as	per account below ...	68,844	15	9		" Advances on Current, and other	Accounts ...	4,221,006	12	4	
Less appropriated to	Reserve Fund, Bank	Premises, Officers'					" Bank Premises (Head Office and 42	Branches) ...	225,000	0	0	
Superannuation, and	other contingencies	<u>42,000</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>								
			26,844	15	9							
			<u>£7,315,423</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>5</u>				<u>£7,315,423</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>5</u>	

Dr.	PROFIT AND LOSS—31st August, 1928.	Cr.
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	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
To Interim Dividend at the rate of 8 per cent. per annum (less Income Tax) for the half-year to the 29th February, 1928	10,200	0	0	By Balance brought forward from last year	10,387	8	6
Balance, carried to Balance Sheet	68,844	15	9	„ Net Profits for the year after providing for all expenses, Bad and Doubtful Debts, etc.	68,657	7	3
	<u>£79,044</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>9</u>		<u>£79,044</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>9</u>

H. CUSACK, Chairman,
E. CLIVE BROOKS,
JOHN McCANN, } Directors.

G. A. STANLEY, Secretary and Joint General Manager.

AUDITORS' REPORT.

We have examined the above Balance Sheet in detail with the books in Head Office and Certified Returns from the Branches, and have verified the Cash Balances at Head Office and with Agents. We have also verified the Securities representing the Investments of the Bank and the Bills Discounted held at Head Office. We have obtained all the information and explanations we have required, and we are of opinion that the Balance Sheet is properly drawn up so as to exhibit a true and correct view of the state of the Bank's affairs, according to the best of our information and the explanations given to us, and as shown by the books of the Bank.

10th September, 1928.

KEVANS & SON, CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS, } Auditors.
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