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MARCH 1924
Volume 1 Number 9
Price: 2 Francs.

Writings of the American Pilots in the Lafayette Flying Corps
PAUL AYRES ROCKWELL
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THANKS largely to James Rogers McConnell's excellent book "Flying for France," and to the widespread publicity given by the American press to the exploits of the pilots of the Escadrille Lafayette, the imagination and spirit of scores of American youths were fired with a desire to fight the Germans. By the end of the summer of 1916, these boys were beginning to enlist in appreciable numbers in the French air service, and when the United States finally entered the war, on April 6, 1917, eighty-four of its citizens were already flying at the front in French uniform, or training as pilots at the French aviation schools. After April 6, 1917, some six score additional American volunteers were accepted by the French authorities, and trained as pilots.

As not all these men could be used by the Escadrille Lafayette, they were distributed among regular French escadrilles, usually flying combat aeroplanes. Their interests and welfare were looked after from Paris by Dr. Edmund L. Gros, who had been instrumental in the formation of the Escadrille Lafayette, and Mrs. Georgia Ovington, whose only son, Landram Ovington, was also a volunteer pilot, and was later killed in combat. The term "Lafayette Flying Corps" is applied to the entire group of volunteer American aviators in the French service, including both those who were pilots with the Escadrille Lafayette and those who flew with French Escadrilles. The writings of the men of the Escadrille Lafayette were dealt with in the November number of Ex Libris; this article will tell of the literary work of the other pilots of the Lafayette Flying Corps.

STUART WALCOTT

Benjamin Stuart Walcott enlisted in French Aviation on June 3, 1917, and in October following was sent to the front, being assigned to the Escadrille Spad 84, in the same groupe with the Escadrille Lafayette. At that time there was a scarcity of aeroplanes in the French army, and it was some weeks before a machine was assigned to young Walcott. His letters home were full of his impatience to get into action. Finally he secured a plane, but unfortunately his first combat was his last one: on December 12, 1917, Walcott attacked and destroyed an enemy observation machine, but in turn was attacked from a superior height by three German combat machines and was killed. He was a pilot of great promise, because of his coolness, daring, and anxiety to serve.

Walcott's letters home were published in book form: "Above the French Lines; Letters of An American Aviator"; and many were also printed in the National Geographic Magazine for January 1918 and in St. Nicholas Magazine for May 1918. They give an excellent account of the Volunteer's life at the Avord and Pau training schools and at the front; there are a few youthful criticisms of comrades that a more tactful editing would have left unpublished.
Houston Woodward

“A Year for France: War Letters of Houston Woodward” gives other attractive glimpses of the sentiments and war-time life of another brave American who died for France. Woodward came over at the beginning of 1917 to drive an ambulance, but immediately began to long for stern service; in his first letter home after joining the ambulance corps he said:

“It rather makes you want to be out there on the line instead of merely running an automobile around back out of danger.” Finally he wrote home, announcing that he had joined the aviation service:

“...And now I come to a subject, which, though not pleasant to talk about, must be met squarely in the face. I am now in aviation and all that that means. You haven’t seen for yourself, so don’t know, but I have seen and know. I don’t want to scare you, and shall be as decent as possible about it, but it is only fair to tell you of the dangers, and after speaking of them this once we won’t refer to them again. But just remember this war is the biggest thing so far in history, and no one in the world really has a right to refrain from doing his utmost, down to the giving up of his life. I may live through it all, of course, lots of aviators do, but an aviator’s life isn’t worth an awful lot the way things are done now. I prefer not to worry you more than I can help, however”.

Some months later he wrote:

“My first spell at the front has been great, and I have enjoyed it tremendously. I love flying, and enjoy it for its own sake, but when you throw in also the thrill of the hunt, the excitement of the chase, and the game of death, flying becomes the greatest sport of them all. I think I am rather justifiably proud of my first two months (seven weeks to be exact) of work. A newcomer, I was given an antiquated machine (the Nieuport) and the old type at that... It was excellent, but not so good as the Spads. I had on it, however, forty hours on the lines, four combats, several protections, none of the reconnaissances machines under my protection ever being attacked even, though made deep into the enemy’s territory sometimes, and shot down at least one Boche plane, and maybe two. I think I told you about that. How I piqued three times on the last of three Boche replage bi-planes, and fired on him each of the first two dives, but didn’t even see him the last time. I have no idea what happened to him. I don’t think I got him, as I never dared approach nearer than five hundred yards, their three bi-planes bring way beyond a match for my single monoplace. It is curious where in thunder he disappeared to so quickly, however”.

Houston Woodward was killed in aerial combat on April 1, 1918, his aeroplane falling within the German lines near Montdidier. His final citation in army orders spoke of him as a “pilote de chasse audacieux jusqu’à la témérité et recherchant opiniâtrement l’ennemi”.

Dinsmore Ely

“And I want to say in closing, if anything should happen to me, let’s have no mourning in spirit or in dress. Like a Liberty Bond, it is an investment, not a loss, when a man dies for his country. It is an honor to a family, and is that a time for weeping? I would rather leave my family rich in pleasant memories of my life than numbed in sorrow at my death.”

Thus ends the last letter written home to his parents by Dinsmore Ely, before his death on April 21, 1918, and published in a touching little volume containing letters and diary entitled: “Dinsmore Ely: One Who Served”.

Ely came to France in the early summer of 1917, and enlisted in the Lafayette Flying Corps, so as to get into action against the Germans as quickly as possible after his own country had declared war. His diary and letters are well written, and testify to a splendid character. The first entry in Ely’s diary after embarking for France and death begins:

“O great day! O wonderful world! O fortunate boy! Can it be I sail for France—France, the beautiful—the romantic—the aesthetic, and France the noble—the magnificent? Yes, it is true. It is all real. The babbling crowd and the gangplank and piled trunks and excited companions—the hissing, roaring thundering whistle, the cry of shrill voices, the moving of mass, the joyous and sad faces, waving handkerchiefs, passing boats and docks, the Battery, Liberty, the open sea—and New York fades behind with the pilot boat taking back the last letters of frantically written farewells.”

A letter written some two months later gives a good glimpse of the scenes around the aviation training school at Camp d’Avord:

“Around camp there is no uniform or discipline. We wear black and brown leather coats; red, black, brown, yellow, and blue trousers; sweaters, flannel shirts; and green vests and hats ranging from sombreros to the Turkish fez. This is a division of the Foreign Legion, you know. All manner of strange people are to be seen here. The refectoire, called the ordinaire, is the place where we eat, in the animalistic sense. A crowd gathers around the steps as meal time approaches, and clamors in a multitude of tongues. There are carefully dressed Frenchmen with sensitive features and trim little mustaches. There are heavy-featured Frenchmen, with coarse manners and rough attire. There are sallow-skinned...”
Portuguese in dandy dress who have an air of dissipated ennui, and yet have a solicitous cordiality which makes them strange and out of place. There are dark-brown Moroccans and Turkos with red fezes, Assyrian beards, and brass studded belts. The Russians, with their gray-green sweat shirts belted at the waist, their bakers' hats with highly colored diadems in front, and their loose black knee boots, stand aloof and talk little, but with vim. They somewhat resemble Irish in their features; and in the heart of the crowd, pressing close against the doors, as eager and clamorous and more rough in action than all, are the Americans, pushing, scrambling, elbowing, to be first into the ordinaire. Only their inexhaustible good humor prevents one from criticizing them. Once inside, there is a great scramble for the head of the table. Men jump up on the benches and step on and over the tables with their muddy hob-nailed shoes in a vain endeavor to arrange themselves favorably.

CHARLES CHAPMAN

An excellent little memorial volume: "Letters of Second Lieutenant Charles Westley Chapman, Jr.", was gotten out by young Chapman's parents, after his heroic death in aerial combat on May 3, 1918, and is a worthy addition to the literature of the Great War. Charles Chapman left Amherst College in his junior year there, to sail for France and join the Lafayette Flying Corps. After almost a year of training schools and dreary waiting around reserve camps for orders to go to the front, his dearest wish was granted, and on April 14, 1918, he was able to write home:

"Well, we are on the front at last. I have got a plane assigned to me and have been watching the mechanics put on my machine gun this afternoon. Tomorrow morning I will adjust my sights and then be ready for real work. I guess we will have enough of it. There are four Boche Chasse escadrilles opposite us, to say nothing of the bombers and observers that we will have to chase. The plan is to have three patrols a day (two hours each) and one patrol to stay at the hangars all day as an 'alerte' to receive reports of Boche planes from the observing posts and go up after them.

"Major Lufbery has been in the air four and five hours every day since we have been here. He had not done any work for three months and is certainly coming back strong. He wants to run up his scapals. Yesterday he found three Boche and attacked them. One fell but he couldn't follow it to the ground as he had the other two to watch. He chased them fifteen kilometres into Germany, then came back to report and see if he could get a confirmation on that Boche which fell. To have credit for a Boche it must be confirmed by an observer in two of three branches of the service—an artillery, infantry, or balloon observer. I haven't heard what luck he had had.

"Last night a message came that there was a Boche over the city at the side of which we are stationed. Major Lufbery jumped into a side car and hurried over to the hangars, got out his machine and went up. But by the time he reached any altitude the Boche was miles off—probably back in his own lines. He had just landed when some of the men pointed out some French shrapnel bursts. He swung his machine around and went up again like a shot. He disappeared in the distance and didn't come back again for an hour; he was too late again. He has been out twice today. The second time he brought down another plane and landed on another field to see if he could get it confirmed; have't heard his luck. One time in a big attack he brought down four planes and only got credit for one."

Chapman was happy to be at the front in company with such glorious veterans as Lufbery, David Peterson, James Norman Hall, and other old-timers of the Escadrille Lafayette. Fired with a desire to emulate these heroes, he attacked single handed a group of five enemy aeroplanes, on the morning of May 3, 1918, and after an ardent combat, in which he destroyed one of his adversaries, he was shot down within the German lines. After the Armistice, his grave was located, and properly cared for.

CYRUS F. CHAMBERLAIN

Cyrus Foss Chamberlain entered a pilot's school in America in the spring of 1917, and secured his flying license, then came to France and enlisted in the French Air Service the following June. Shortly after arriving in Paris, he wrote his father:

"I am more than ever glad that I am here in the air service because it is the highest and most individually valuable work possible. We have all become very impatient waiting to get to work. We first went to the office of Dr. Gros, the vice-president of the Franco-American Flying Corps, and were examined physically and had our applications made out. Then there were several days to wait until he secured for us from the war office, letters authorizing us to enlist in the Foreign Legion, but saying we could be held for no service but aviation. After that we went to the enlisting office and were examined again

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and our measurements taken, etc., told to come back Tuesday morning for the purpose of signing the enlistment papers and some other details. After that we will be sent to Avord, I hope Tuesday. We also have had to go through several cross-examinations at police and military offices to register our presence with the Paris police and secure a license to exist, or something of the kind. Everybody has been very cordial, and the mention of the fact that one is an aviator oils all the wheels."

Chamberlain found that his American training as aviator was not of great value to him for war flying, and was obliged to enter the pilots' school at Avord, along with many other American volunteers. By winter, he was flying at the front, to his great joy. He threw himself wholeheartedly into his work, attached to a French chasse escadrille, along with three other Americans, Landram Ovington and Harry Johnson, who were both later killed, and Austin Parker, who survived the War and is now engaged in literary work in America. On May 21, 1918, Chamberlain wrote home:

"I haven't done much writing lately for several reasons. I have been flying a good deal but nothing unusual has occurred to write about. The escadrille is in running order, the weather perfect, but the Boches are very scarce here. With my new machine I am flying at a much greater altitude than we did on the old ones,—usually up around 5,000 metres, and also much farther into Boche territory, and am expecting to run into attackable Boches any time now. I believe our machines are superior to anything the enemy has, and I am feeling pretty chesty. We are still in the same place, but are rather expecting to move over where the big fight is going on, soon. Some of my friends have distinguished themselves lately, especially Baylies, who, since Lufbery was brought down the other day, leads the list of American "aces", with 10 Boches officially, and five more not official, as they dropped too far in Germany to be confirmed by observers."

Cyrus Chamberlain was killed in an aerial combat against an overwhelming number of German machines, on the morning of June 13, 1918. His letters home were printed for the family and friends, in a volume called: "Letters of Cyrus Foss Chamberlain, a Member of the Lafayette Flying Corps". It is a pity that such a book could not have been offered to the general public; like most of the volumes of letters written by the American volunteers in the French ranks, it is full of human interest pictures of the War such as no mere historian can expect to offer his readers.

Four days after Chamberlain's death, on June 17, 1918, his friend Frank Baylies, often called the "Prince of Aces", fell before the German bullets. Baylies had the most phenomenal career at the front of any American aviator; in fact, I do not know of any aviator in the Allied or enemy Armies that excelled his record for rapidity of victories. In three months flying, he officially destroyed twelve enemy aeroplanes, besides scoring several other victories too far within the German lines for the results to be confirmed by observers.

Quiet, modest and reticent on the ground, dashing, fearless and indomitable in the air, Baylies should go down into history as one of the most heroic figures the aerial warfare produced. He hated letter-writing, but occasionally put
pen to paper, and some of his letters found their way into print, mostly in the Chicago Daily News. Shortly after he began flying at the front, he wrote as follows of a very narrow escape from death:

“I was shot down by Boche machine-gunners near Mesnil-St.-Georges early on the afternoon of March 28 (1918). I was machine-gunning the enemy infantry from a very low altitude, when bullets put my motor out of commission. It was impossible to plane to safety and I began to consider myself at best as breaking rocks or sweeping the streets of Berlin. My machine came to earth not more than twenty metres from the Boches, who had no trenches, but held a sort of zigzag line behind trees, walls, and other shelters.

“Seeing me come down with my propeller stopped they rushed forward to await me, but luckily the French were only about sixty metres away, and, opening fire, killed one of my would-be captors and caused the others to drop for cover. I sprang from the machine before it had stopped and ran for dear life for the Boche lines, with bullets dusting around me. I was received with cheers by the Frenchmen, who belonged to a Chasseur battalion. I remained with them until night, and took part in a great attack which drove the Huns back two kilometres.”

**Dennis Dowd**

Dennis Dowd should really have been included among the writers of the Foreign Legion; he was one of the first Americans to enlist in that corps, in August 1914. At the front as a Legionnaire from October 1914 until he was wounded during the Champagne offensive in October 1915, he wrote from the hospital where he was under treatment for his injuries several splendid feature articles and full page stories about the Legion for the Brooklyn Daily Eagle. After recovery from his wound, Dowd transferred to the aviation corps: he was the first American volunteer killed while training as a pilot, falling to his death on August 12, 1916, while making a trial flight at Buc, near Versailles. He had a magnificent record as a Legionnaire, and was considered a very promising aviator, as he took his military duties most seriously.

**Charles Biddle**

“The Way of the Eagle”, published by Scribner’s in 1919, is a well-told story of war flying with the Lafayette Corps, by Charles J. Biddle, who enlisted to fight for France on April 8, 1917, and who ended the war as a major commanding the Fourth Pursuit Group of the United States Air Forces. Biddle’s experience at the front well fitted him for the role of writer, and his record was a brilliant one. One of the most unpleasant things that happened to him was being shot down wounded, in No Man’s Land. The German machine that brought him down was flying low over the battlefield near Ypres, where the opposing lines were no more than a series of shell-holes joined together, and Biddle described it as:

“the slowest bus I ever saw, with a rounded body, a square tail, and the lower wing much shorter than the upper, like many English two-seater observation planes. Whether or not this fellow was what I think he was (an armored plane of the new Junker type), he certainly got the best of me, and I don’t feel at all vindictive about it, as it was a perfectly fair fight, but just the same it would give me more satisfaction to bring that boy down than any five others. It would also be interesting to see whether his hide is thick enough to withstand a good dose of armor-piercing bullets at close range. An incendiary bullet in his gas tank might also make his old boiler factory a warm place to fly in... The observer did the quickest and most accurate bit of shooting I have yet run up against, and his very first shot came crashing through the front of my machine above the motor and caught me just on top of the left knee. It felt more like a crack on the leg from a fast pitched ball than anything else I know of, except that there is also a sort of penetrating feeling one gets from a bullet.”

**William Wellman**

Despite its title, “Go, Get’ Em”, by William A. Wellman, was an useful book for propaganda purposes during the war, and is still quite worth reading. Wellman came to France and joined the Lafayette Flying Corps in June 1917, and, becoming a skilled and masterly pilot, was assigned to a French chasse Escadrille when he arrived at the front. After having gained several victories, he was invalided out of active service, returned to America, and there wrote his book and lectured and otherwise aided in keeping the war spirit in the United States at fever heat. He described his first victory over an enemy aviator as follows:

“Action in the air, with one’s plane going one hundred and thirty-five miles an hour, occurs much faster than it can be recounted, and, even as I was witnessing the fate of my comrade, I was diving vertically behind the Boche.”

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low him, turned my plane's nose upward, gave her the juice, and opened certainty, and I could not fire when could not having the satisfaction of being sure that were not drawn, and to attack in the manner in which I had. caught sight of the number my plane from passing the Boche pilot which to volplane down to safety behind hi? own lines, for the pilot was skillful, and he had plenty of altitude from which to volplane down to safety behind his own lines, if we could not "get" him first. He was wounded, but his fangs were not drawn, and for a few lively moments both Tom and I went through every conceivable acrobatic stunt in order to keep out of range of his two guns, and save our own hides, without quitting the combat. On my fourth attack came the long postponed victory. My gun-fire killed the pilot instantly, and the Rumpler went spinning and twisting toward the earth like a piece of paper, to crash into No Man's Land, a mass of tangled wood and wire.

EDGAR BOULIGNY

Mention was made of Edgar J. Bouligny, in the article about the "American Writers of the Foreign Legion" in the October 1923 Ex Libris: in addition to his glorious record in the Legion, where he was wounded four times, Bouligny had the distinction of being the sole American aviator to fly over the Albanian front for the French. Several of his letters from Salonika and Albania were printed in the New York Glob: and other newspapers, and showed a keen sense of observation and innate talent as a writer. One letter read in part:

"During the three months I flew in Albania I often met a group of four boche pilots, always flying together. This patrol is rather noted in the region. Once my own and another chasing machine were protecting two French photographing machines, when they were attacked by the four Boches. Three of my comrades were forced to land on the forest covered mountain side and their aeroplanes were smashed. Fortunately no one was killed, and all eventually reached the home flying field.

"Night flying is impossible in Albania, because a forced landing in the darkness would be fatal. Getting lost is an easy thing there. Some of the roads through the mountains twist and turn so much that even an aviator gets dizzy looking down upon them from an aeroplane. There is no trench fighting in Albania. The enemy holds some of the villages in the mountain and we others. Both sides make raids on horse and afoot, and the Albanians are very successful at this game because of their daring.

"Much of the fighting occurs arounds Lake Ochiria and Lake Presba and there are frequent air duels above the water. One of my best comrades was shot down into Lake Presba. We all ever found of him or his machine was the lower wing of his plane, which I found floating on the water three days after the fight."

GRANVILLE POLLOCK

Granville A. Pollock contributed a number of technical articles to the Aero Club of America publication and other aviation magazines in the United States. Pollock had a brave and varied war record. At the outbreak of hostilities, he enlisted in the British Expeditionary Forces, and served with a battery of heavy guns mounted on motor trucks. When this battery was broken up, after months of service on the British front
in France, the American was liberated, and at once came to Paris and volunteered in the Lafayette Flying Corps. After many months of "Flying for France" as pilot in a chasse Escadrille in the same groupe with the Escadrille Lafayette, he transferred to the United States Army, and served there until after the Armistice. He then organized the aerial police force of New York City, of which he was for a time commanding Major.

FREDERICK ZINN

Frederick W. Zinn was another early fighter in the World War and later member of the Lafayette Flying Corps who contributed extensively to American periodicals and newspapers, including Leslie's Weekly, the Chicago Daily News, New York Globe, and others. He enlisted in the Legion in 1914, and after receiving a wound as an infantryman, entered the air force, where he became an aerial photographer, and a good one. After the United States came into the war, he transferred to the American Aviation as Major commanding an important branch of the Air Service.

An idea of what aerial photography was like during the war may be gained from something Zinn wrote shortly after beginning his task in the air:

"This work is interesting but wearing. In the chases quarts the fellows possibly have more hours over the lines than we do, but when they come down their work is finished.

Nominally my work ends when I land and hand my photographic plates to the developer, but actually there is no end to it. Immediately the plates are developed I examine them to see whether all the important points are covered. When the draftsmen begin work I stick around to help identify the plates whose position they cannot locate on the map.

"Sometimes I cover as much as forty or fifty square miles on one reconnoitering trip and when the plate shows up only a battery or a bit of trench in the middle of a vacant field it is not always easy to locate it on the map. Some parts of the sector are so smashed up by the artillery that what was an easily recognizable position one day will be only a mass of shell holes the next, all of which makes work, sometimes lasting until the early hours of the morning.

"One day I figured out that each army reconnaissance, barring accidents, which always mean more expense, costs France about $1,500. Since then I have taken particular pains to lay out each trip in the most efficient way. On long distance work we are supposed to have the protection of at least five fighting machines but we do not have it very often. Usually only one or two show up at the rendez-vous and fly an hour behind us. They are, therefore, not much good to us. Quite often, not one protecting machine shows up, and we hike out alone. These trips are at an altitude of about 4,000 metres, We clear everything, except the Boche defense patrol, which is often very nasty. As long as one is not taken by surprise one has a good chance to get home. But for the observer who has the job of operating the camera, changing plates every twenty seconds and keeping a lookout behind as well as in front, it is real work. I have the wireless down pretty well, and can now do artillery and any other kind of observing if needed."

STUART EDGAR

Stuart Emmet Edgar was already a trained newspaper writer, having worked on the New York Evening Sun and other papers, when he came to France and, on May 9, 1917, enlisted in the French Air Service. His record at the training schools was excellent, and a brilliant future was predicted for him by his comrades as a fighting pilot. When starting for a patrol over the lines, on August 17, 1918, his motor stopped dead, and his aeroplane crashed to earth from a height of only four hundred feet, killing him instantly. A number of Edgar's letters home from the schools and front were printed in American newspapers, and will shortly be published in book form.

OTHER WRITERS

Archibald Johnston contributed to the Pittsburgh Sun and other newspapers articles descriptive of a flyer's life in France; he enlisted
in the French Aviation in July 1916, had a long and useful career there, before transferring to the American Air Service, where he held the rank of Captain. At the close of the war he was adviser on the compilation of aerial textbooks at Wilbur Wright Field, Dayton, Ohio.

Mention was made in the November Ex Libris of the work done by Charles B. Nordhoff and Edgar G. Hamilton in assisting James Norman Hall to edit the official history of the Lafayette Flying Corps; Nordhoff also wrote many magazine articles about the war in the air, notably in the Atlantic Monthly.

In conclusion, it may be said that the writings of the Americans who served in the French ranks, whether in the Foreign Legion or in the Aviation, are notable for their high quality, and for the lofty ideals revealed therein. It is also remarkable how large a percentage of the Volunteers disclosed real literary ability, although many of them were without previous training or experience as writers.

Historians may well refer more and more in the future to the works of these Volunteers, to get clearer ideas of what the War at the Front was really like, and to understand more clearly the souls of America's Fighting Men.

Under the caption “Mr. Bennett at his Best”, the Manchester Guardian says of his new novel “Riceyman Steps” (Cassell): “We would not put Henry and Violet Earforward and their maid Elsie on quite the same plane with the sisters in ‘The Old Wives’ Tale’, nor with Clayhanger and Hilda. They are not, for one thing, thrown on so vast a canvas. In outline, however, the novel has a simplicity and strength that are classic.”

In an article on Van Wyck Brooks in the Dial for January, Mary M. Colum declares that his “Letters and Leadership” and “Ordeal of Mark Twain” are of all his books the most impressive, and of the latter in particular he says, “I can think of no other biographical study of a literary man in our time which is such a masterpiece... It is not only the spiritual history of a man; it is almost the spiritual history of the American people.”

-MORE-

There are perhaps other writings of the American Volunteers, especially of the men of the Lafayette Flying Corps, that are unknown to the author of the above articles: any further information, indications or corrections would be welcomed.

It is intentional that no mention has been made of a book signed by Carroll Dana Winslow, and said to have been written by a well-known American magazine writer, nor of another volume signed by Bennett Molter: works of fiction have not been dealt with in this series of articles.

A number of articles signed by Harold E. Wright appeared in the Saturday Evening Post during the summer of 1918, under the title: “Aces High.” Wright in them pretended to tell of his personal experiences as a member of the Lafayette Flying Corps. An official account of Wright’s real record flying in France having been forwarded to the Saturday Evening Post, the editor of that publication had the moral courage to apologize to his readers for having printed the articles, in an editorial entitled: “Aces Low.”

P. A. R.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.


One booklover makes the following New Year’s resolution: to reread during the year all the books he has enjoyed most. Among them he numbers McFee’s “Casuals of the Sea”, Radot’s “The Life of Pasteur”, Conrad’s “The End of the Tether”, Cabell’s “Porcelain Cups”, one of the loveliest short stories there is, “The Legend of Ulenspiegel” in F. M. Atkinson’s translation, and Selma Lagerlöf’s “The Story of Gösta Berling”.

The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science for January devotes a supplement to the addresses delivered at the meeting commemorative of the centenary of the Monroe Doctrine, held in Philadelphia November 30 and December 1, 1923. It contains addresses by Secretary Hughes and Professor Philip Marshall Brown, as well as several by representatives of Uruguay and other South American Republics.
Pierre de Ronsard
(1524-1585)
by Julian Earle Harris.

One of the prime features of the poetry of all the Latin peoples, particularly the French, is an evidence of the poet’s consciousness of his art and of his means of expression. Moreover, the skilfully wrought verse, the studied, elegant ease and the uniformly careful grace everywhere apparent in the French poets are the natural result of a combination of native poetic ability and a definitely directed effort. Genuine poets who were not of the university class are not unknown in English literature; until recently finesse was not a characteristic of English poetry. We boasted of vigor and rugged beauty. But in France, even the vagabond poets, the François Villon, have the degree of Master of Letters. The naturally orderly genius of the French has been invariably trained along traditional lines.

These facts might lead one to look for academic verse from the French and a long line of Robert Burns in English. And in fact, the membra disiecta test may, in general, be better applied to French poetry than to that of the other modern literatures. Those poets whose verse exudes “philosophy”, or, more correctly, pessimistic reflexions on life, would suffer under Flaccus’ rule. It is, I grant, unkind to ask of a poet who has written a fine-sounding bit, What does that mean? or Is this worth saying? But every intelligent reader is automatically critical, and to be intellectually honest it is his duty to test a poem at least to that extent. Happily we have the privilege of laying aside the bitternesses of the anaemic poet to listen to the artistry of those whose digestion and disposition were better. A certain French gentleman of the sixteenth century was such an artist.

After a childhood in the seignorial manor of his father near Vendôme where he was early fed on stories of the great days of the wars in Italy, descriptions of the highly civilized Italian cities, and on excerpts from the Latin writers, Pierre de Ronsard was sent to school to Paris. As his professor did not suit him, his father took him out of school and placed him as a page in the royal family. For years he remained in this capacity, now in France, now in Scotland with James V, now in England. He travelled also in Germany and Italy.

In the meantime he was developing into a fine specimen of the Renaissance gentleman and diplomat. He had all the social graces, was accomplished in music and the sports, was well versed in languages and literatures and was physically attractive. Castiglione would have approved of him. He pleased everyone. But at the very moment when he was giving the greatest promise of a brilliant diplomatic career, he fell ill and lost his hearing. Excluded from society by this great misfortune, Ronsard went back to his studies with a certain maturity and enthusiasm of an energetic young man in his twenties. Before long he began turning out Greek verse in quantity; he was putting himself through a hard apprenticeship. But he found in his models the stimulus also to sing of his own country, his life and his loves.

The literature of the Middle Ages was indisputably dead; it had reached its epitome at the end of the twelfth century and had died during the Hundred Years War. In the fifteenth century an occasional afterglow of the magnificent twelfth put in an appearance, but the great heroes of the early epic and the handsome knights of the romance, as well as the charming
lyrics and ballads, had shrunk to little measure indeed. The most ingeniously constructed verse was then the most highly esteemed. Poems were written which could be read backwards and which rhymed and made as good sense backwards as forwards. Obviously they had very little meaning either way.

In Italy, the Renaissance came early. It was there that the literature of Greece and Rome was first re-popularized. Of course the names of many classic writers were known in France throughout the Middle Ages, but after the twelfth century, hagiographers, chroniclers, theologists, and scholastic philosophers had rung the changes on a few bits until what was known of the ancients amounted to little more than names with pithets of varying appropriateness.

The influence of the contact with the ancient lore on the soldiers of the Italian wars under Louis XII and Francis First was so great that towards the middle of the century, it is said that every gentleman of fashion went about with some classic author in hand. The newly discovered ancients and the Italian writers were far more read and cited than the French.

A group of young men decided that France, if less important than Greece and Rome, was superior to Italy, and that she ought to have a literature worthy of such a country. This group, the Pleiade, worked to the end that the French language might be enriched and made illustrious by great works of literature after the fashion of the ancients and "the good old French writers". Ronsard was particularly assiduous in the study of his models; according to his earliest biographer, Claude Binet, he usually sat up till two or three o'clock in the morning and "when he went to bed he would wake his friend Ba'if who would take his place at the table before the chair had time to cool! In 1549 Joachim Du Bellay formulated the principles of the group in his all-important Deffense et Illustration de la Langue Francoise. He condemns the ingenious virelais, chants royaux and ballades and calls for the "ode unknown in French".

Ronsard was the principal "illustrator and" later, he in turn became theorist.

The very next year after the appearance of the manifesto of Du Bellay, Ronsard published his first four books of odes. In ten years he was already known as the Prince of Poets and was engaged to write poems for all the occasions of State. Moreover, he was well taken care of by the young Kings and the Queen Mother. However, he did not fail to give them his opinion on matters of importance. Throughout the long struggles over religion he was a Romanist, but he wrote a strong poem on The Miseries of the Times to Catherine de Medicis. Even these occasional poems do not fall below a certain standard of excellence, but he reached the pinnacles of poetic beauty only in shorter lyrics. His attempt to write an epic on the model of the Aeneid was quite unsuccessful. His influence on his contemporaries was enorm-
ious but short-lived, for just as in England the 
eighteenth century writers considered it necessary to correct Shakespeare, so in France the 
sixteenth century poets were forgotten. Ron-
sard’s work went through seventeen editions 
before 1630 but he was not reprinted thereafter 
until two hundred years later when the glories 
of the Middle Ages and of the Renaissance 
were being resurrected to inspire the romanticists. 

In his early works, Pindar and Horace were 
drawn upon freely, but Ronsard sings also of 
his native forest, river and hills in finely con-
structed verse and demonstrates that the classi-
cal meters are also suited to French. His 
style is already smooth and his sincerity is 
refreshing. Even in his Ode de l’Election de Son 
Sépulcre, his youth is exuberant:

Quand le ciel et mon heure
Jugeront que je meure,
Ravi du beau séjour,
Du commun jour ;

Je défens qu’on ne rompe
Le marbre, pour la pompe
De vouloir mon tombeau
Bastir plus beau.

Mais bien je veux qu’un arbre
M’ombrage en lieu de marbre,
Arbre qui soit couvert
Toujours de verd.

De moy puisse la terre
Engendrer un lierre
M’embrassant en main tour
Tout à l’entour :

Et la vigne tortisse
Mon sépulcre embellisse,
Faisant de toutes pars
Un ombre espar !...

The Ode à son Page is even more abandoned 
than Horace’s famous drinking song; at the same 
time, Ronsard maintains a certain restraint 
which is so essential to Latin style. In the 
first eight lines he gives the salient points for a 
piquant picture and in eight more he delineates 
the attitude of the von bivant which could be 
applied to many a country gentleman of his day. 

His Ars Poétique Français smacks of Horace 
again. Ronsard was bold, however, in his 
suggestions as to how to enrich the language. 
“Do not mind”, he said, “if the new words are 
Gascon, Poitevin, Norman, Manceau, Lyonnois, 
or from another province, provided that they 
are good words and that they mean what you 
wish to express,”—a test which would keep down 
the size of our too rapidly expanding dictionary. 
From the beginning he is conscious of his art. 
He delights in his position as head of his pro-
fession though he does not hesitate to declare 
his indebtedness to the ancients. In his Ode à son Lyre, he describes his instrument, the 
French language, and proudly states what he 
has done to improve poetry in France.

Je te sonnay devant tous en la France
De peu à peu : car quand premiérement
Je te trouvay, tu sonnois durement ;
Tu n’avoy finist ny cordes qui valusset,

Ne qui respondre aux lois de mon doigts puissent.

Moisi du temps ton bois ne sonnoit point ;
Lors j’eus pitié de te voir mal en-point ;

Toy qui jadis des grands royes les viandes
Faisois trouver plus douces et friandes.

Pour te monter de cordes et d’un lust,
Eoire d’un son qui naturel te fust,

Je pillay Thébe, et saccagey la Pouille,

T’enrichissant de leur belle despouille.

Lors par la France avec toy je chantay,
Et jeune d’ans sur le Loir inventay

De marier aux cordes les victoires,

Et des grands royes les honneurs et leurs gloires.

Si je plais donc, si je scay contenter,
Si mon renom la France veut chanter,
Si de mon front les estoies je passe,

Certes, mon luth, cela vient de ta grace.

True Renaissance gentleman and poet that 
he was, he was much in love with having love 
affairs and writing about them. The first name 
he immortalized in a number of poems entitled 
Amours was that of Cassandre Salviati. She 
was of a noble family, and was married in due 
time. But Ronsard was a gentleman of the 
sixteenth century and consequently wasted 
neither time, tears nor ink in regretting her loss. 
He simply loved and wrote poems to another 
girl, an innkeeper’s daughter named Marie. 
And his verses inspired by Marie are quite as
spontaneous as his previous series. But Marie soon died.

His *Amours* were already known, and the Queen Mother, Catherine de Medicis, directed his affections this time to one of her maids of honor named Hélène. Our poet succeeded as well under the title of *Sonnets pour Hélène* as he did in his other love lyrics. But he frankly admits that he likes to sing of love (as who doesn't) and mentions all three of the ladies in the same poem! It would not be fruitful to determine whether he actually loved any one of them, but it is significant that they were the occasion for the writing of some of the finest poems in the French language. However well-known the following exquisite poems are, I cite them without hesitation.

**SONNET POUR HELENE**

Quand vous serez bien vieille, au soir, à la chandelle
Assise auprès du feu, dévêtue et filant,
Direz, chantant mes vers, en vous émerveillant:
"Ronsard me célébrait du temps que j'étais belle."

Lors, vous n'aurez servante, oyant telle nouvelle,
Déjà sous le labèr à demi sommeillant,
Qui au bruit de Ronsard ne s'aille réveillant,
Bénissant votre nom de l'ouange immortelle.

Je serai sous la terre, et fantôme sans os,
Par les ombres myrteux, je prendrai mon repos;
Vous serez au foyer une vieille accroupie,
Regrettant mon amour et votre fier dédain.

Vivez, si m'en croyez, n'attendez à demain;
Ceillez dès aujourd'hui les roses de la vie.

**ODE A CASSANDRE**

Mignonne, allons voir si la rose,
Qui ce matin avait décluse
Sa robe de pourpre au soleil,
A point perdu cette vespres,
Les plis de sa robe pourprée,
Et son teint au vêre pareil.

Las! voyez comme en peu d'espace,
Mignonne, elle a dessus la place,
Las! las! ses belles laissé cheoir!
O vraiment marrâte Nature,
Puis qu'une telle fleur ne dure
Que du matin jusques au soir!

Donc, si vous me croyez, mignonne,
Tandis que votre âge fleuronne
En sa plus verte nouveauté,

Cueillez, cueillez votre jeunesse:
Comme à cette fleur, la veillise
Fera ternir votre beauté.

Though Ronsard is not enough of an eclectic to lose his own individuality, his fine Renaissance genius and training are most happily wedded to a pleasing amount of Latin grace and Mediaeval charm. In an age which produced a Rabelais and a Montaigne, both veritable geniuses but along very different lines, it is amazing to find also a real lyric poet of the same proportions. Though French poets are legion, it would be difficult to point out one whose verse is so entirely satisfying. After four hundred years his finish is untarnished and his unquenchable enthusiasm is still irresistible. He is universally recognized, now, as an immortal.

**ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT**

In the Bibliothèque Nationale, reprinted in "Ronsard et l'Humanisme" by Paul Nolhac (Champion, Paris).
The report of the American Library for February shows gifts of books amounting to 717, including a large and valuable collection of publications of American learned institutions, transferred to the library by the Société des Antiquaires de France; a very valuable collection of books on travel, presented by Mrs. J. A. Montant; together with collections from Mrs. Le Grand Lockwood Benedict, the University of Michigan, Mrs. Flavie Camp Canfield and Mr. Sidney B. Veit. Among the books presented by Mr. Veit was a copy of that now rare book published anonymously in the year 1900, entitled “An Englishman in Paris.”

The total number of subscribers registered was 423. This included the following new members: Library Overseas Fellowship, Mr. J. H. Carroll, and Mrs. C. H. Conner.

The book circulation for the month was 9,538, or nine per cent more than one year ago.

The use which is made of the Library is well illustrated by the following letter recently received from a French teacher in the evening schools:

“Since a long while, I intended to write to you to thank you for the help I have received for many years from your American Library.

“Last year I prepared a diplome on Robert Service, the poet and the writer, and I was greatly helped by Mrs. Potter of your Library and also by another American lady whom I had met in the Reading Room. I was also able to get in your Library the books of Service which I could not afford to buy, besides reference books about Alaska and a few magazines about my author.

“Thanks to this help, I was able to write my diplome and I passed. This examination meant 900 francs more in my yearly salary and this is a great help, my budget being very small. Thus I have become a regular teacher in the evening courses of the town and I find that it is easier to study because my little difficulties are not so great.

“Whenver I needed moral help, I received it most kindly in your American Library. All the Sorbonne Students speak most highly of your Library, which remains open when all the others shut their doors. Besides a very pleasant welcome, we find there a number of interesting books about the writers of the New World about whom we knew practically nothing a few years ago, and we greatly appreciate your kindness at the present time when English books are so dear.”

This book is conceived on an entirely new plan. The main idea underlying the work is clearly expressed in the introduction by George C. Nimmons: "A study of the fine arts is one of the best means that can be employed for training the mind, developing and refining the judgment, and for obtaining a fund of information that is useful and practical throughout life." While the book is intended for all readers interested in the general history of art it is more especially designed for the use of young architects; and as a natural consequence architecture receives more attention than is usually the case in works of this kind.

It would seem essential to bring before the public the fact that while painting, which many people feel obliged to discuss, can only be understood and appreciated by the few, architecture is a subject of vital interest to the general public and in neglecting the study of it people deprive themselves of one of the rare joys of life.

Ten artists, of whom the larger number are architects, were entrusted with the development of the plans for this book, and it must be said that they have brought to their difficult task something better than mere learning and judgment—a fine enthusiasm—which should not fail to inspire the reader. A decided effort has been made to keep the book free from technical matter and to present facts in a vivid and striking manner. This has resulted in such happy descriptions as those of Memphis (Ch. 1, p. 10) and the Acropolis (Ch. 1, p. 38), both by Mr. C. Walker.

For the first time in a volume of this kind a few pages have been reserved for the study of contemporary architecture and these pages are some of the most interesting in the book. There is also a chapter on landscape design and one on town-planning.

It would be impossible for such a book to escape certain imperfections of detail. The chapters on painting and sculpture are necessarily limited in scope, and even in those chapters dealing with architecture certain periods have had to be sacrificed to others. But one cannot say too much for the book as a whole. There is no sign here of the ready-made phrases, the too definite opinions and the inflexible classifications of so many text books. The ideas put forward are clear and should serve to awaken interest in readers and to encourage them to make a further study of the subjects dealt with.

Georges Gromort


Without attempting to define the undefinable, this dainty, compact and thoroughly feminine little book somehow manages to convey it. From its illustrations alone the uninitiated can perceive some subtle difference—be it of type, or simplicity of conception—between the works of American sculptors and those of the very lands where these same sculptors gleaned their inspiration and technique. The reader is tempted to begrudge some of the space allotted to the years of preliminary groping before mastery was attained by such leaders as Saint-Gaudens, Macmonnies, Ward, Manship, Bartlett—but the list outgrows the space.

Art, it is conceded, requires long spaces of peace, leisure and security at its inception. The present should then be a fruitful period in opulent America; there the artist is confronted but by one deadly foe, commercialism. Opposite conditions have obtained in France, the great teacher, in the anguish spasm since the war.

Small wonder that, with but scant exception, her stage, bereft of the big human drama, should perform content itself with "articles de Paris"; that the walls of her vast "Salons" should be spoliated with meaningless color while her halls are bestrewn with creatures of the Stone Age or with the portrait-busts of mediocrity. "Empty are the Halls of Fame."

Georges G. Fleurot


These reminiscences are full of enjoyable anecdote and comment upon Harvard life in the early seventies, upon subsequent adventures in the far west, work as an art student in France, and later career as a painter.

Dr. Wm. Rimmer, who lectured on art anatomy at the Institute of Technology, he says, did him more good than any other man except Boulanger at Julian's. While here he became acquainted with Whistler and Verlaine, and of the latter he observes, "To him, truth was of no importance—
the question was belief." He recalls also a French artist saying at a salon in the early eighties: "There is a girl in England named Kate Greenaway who is doing some very clever work. She doesn't know anything about drawing or color, but her idea is certainly original. Some day some man will take it and get a great name by it." "I never forgot this," he adds, "for the speaker was De Monvel himself, and he certainly did scoop the idea."

He feels that his career as a painter was entirely changed by the World's Fair at Chicago. This had the first public mural decorations in America, and it was there under the direction of Frank Millet that his work in mural decoration began. Of the men he worked with in later years he remembers with greatest affection, perhaps, Stanford White. His Woolworth building he describes as the most beautiful example of the Gothic in America, and of another great American architectural monument he says, "If I had the task of taking to Europe one thing, I should take the tomb from the Rock Creek Cemetery in Washington, which was created by those artists—Saint-Gaudens, Stanford White and Henry Adams.


At the present moment we seem to be emerging from a period of aesthetic extravagance which bears much the same relation to Cézanne as the Baroque to Michelangelo; and with the returning sanity a calmer consideration of Cézanne, the artist, is opportune. Little has been published in our language wherein one may find authoritative matter concerning this most influential painter of the past century, but to this translation of Vollard one may turn with an anticipation which need not meet with disappointment. There is no effort toward formal biography or literary style; the book is composed of anecdotes, conversations, and miscellany presented with an easy familiarity which gives the reader an intimate contact with the various moods of the artist and the man. M. Vollard has an immediate knowledge of Cézanne which few of his biographers could possibly have had.

There is a quantity of material touching on various prominent figures of the time; glimpses of Pissarro, Renoir, Monet, Zola's cheap treatment of an old friend to whom success came too slowly. Zola's enthusiasm for Greuze, as Shelley's love of Reni, seems consistent with the execrable taste generally exercised by literary folk and savants, whom Cézanne so fervently detested. The incident of M. Mirabeau and M. Rujon illustrates how little institutional recognition of an artist may mean.

Intentionally or not, M. Vollard has showed us that even a painter of the calibre and sincerity of Cézanne may have moments and aspirations which the most enthusiastic disciple could not describe as "noble". His attitude toward Bouguereau, however, was not that of admiration as is generally supposed; it was rather a sense of the injustice of popular recognition.

The present edition has sixteen reproductions of paintings, most of which have never been published before. There have been added a score of pages devoted to comments on Cézanne by his contemporaries, seemingly as a warning finger to the careless or pedantic critic.

Mr. Harold Van Doren, the translator, has a thorough and sympathetic understanding of his subject, and is extremely faithful to the original text. He has added a number of explanatory notes.

John Blomshiel


A peasant's son, born in the wild Mediterranean Alps, this great man contended thru most of his ninety-two years with poverty and privation. So stout was his warm and tender heart, so deep his intelligence, so keen his enquiring mind, that he struggled ever valiantly on in his joyful quest of knowledge.

Pre-eminently an entomologist, Fabre was an astute observer of all manner of things. Speaking of dogs, he comments upon the differences observable between domestic animals and their wild kin. "It is just the reverse with wild animals: there is a close resemblance between two individuals of the same species, with symmetry of coloring on the two halves of the body. As one is, so are all, with very slight exceptions; as is the right side, so is the left. Whoever has seen one wolf has seen all wolves." This single observation leads to curious meditations.

These marked outward differentiations, primarily due, no doubt, to breeding, may they not be considered as "the evidence of things unseen"; symbols of individual characteristics so developed as to amount to the embryo of a personal ego? No two dogs are identical whether in appearance, character or disposition; while all dogs are incontestably dogs, some dogs are real persons.

It is interesting to note, in passing, that while Fabre was Darwin's friend, he was fundamentally opposed to that great scientist's conclusions at the very time when those conclusions were so generally accepted.

Truly Mr. Bicknell holds to our eyes a charmed mirror, gazing into which we wander with Fabre through nature, while he discourses with us upon...
the mysteries of the great and minute creatures that surround us. One might seek far for such pleasant and profitable hours.

Georges G. Fleurot


This modern version of Don Quixote is a genial satire on the many wild and ludicrous excitements engendered during the devastating war of 1914-18, by a “patriotic press, aided by a wide-spread untutored imagination”. The chief figure in the story, he can not be called its hero, being its laughing stock, is the product of all the tortured heriocps of the press in which he daily bathed himself, with results disastrous to his sanity. The satire is chiefly directed against Britons (and was therefore first published in America anonymously) but might be readily applied to the French, the Germans or the Americans, none of whom will be the worse for seeing themselves as they appeared to the few who truly were sufficiently detached to see.

F. H. W.


If Mr. Van Vechten had written either “Peter Whipple” or “The Blind Bow-Boy, and left the other unread, he would have achieved his effect. “The Blind Bow-Boy” following so closely on the heel of “Peter” spoils and is spoiled by the other book. Readers of mid-Victorian tastes and proclivities had best leave “The Blind Bow-Boy” alone, no amount of subsequent reading of Jane Austen or Charlotte Bronté would be an antidote. Those who pride themselves on their modern point of view will read the story without undue shocks; but even they would find themselves no match for Mr. Van Vechten when it comes to mentioning names of new artists, books and places. On reading “Peter Whipple” too, their suspicion will grow to a certainty that Mr. Van Vechten is peacocking before them, airing his familiarity with all things ultra-modern—canvases that are still wet; books that are still warm from the press; haunts that are unknown to the most seasoned wanderer.

The story of “The Blind Bow-Boy” begins well. Harold Prewett, brought up by an old maid aunt in a little Connecticut town, and fresh from a small sectarian college, is summoned before his father whom he has never seen. This eccentric man informs him that college unites a boy to meet life, and that his real education is about to begin. He is to have his own apartment, a tutor engaged because he was under thirty, knew three languages, had no moral sense, and was the central figure in a public scandal), an ample allowance (to be increased on demand), and a year in which to find out what he wants to do. Harold, shy, sensitive and unsocial is drawn immediately into the circle of his tutor's friends. They are an intelligent, gifted group bent on dispelling the ennu which continually threatens their existence, and rich enough to indulge their whims. The originality of the moving spirits makes their efforts far from common-place.

Well-bred cynicism and sophistication always appeals. With the abrupt ending of the book, one realizes suddenly how lightly Mr. Van Vechten has skimmed the surfaces, how deep is his superficiality; but, borrowing from the spirit of his characters, one forgives him everything for the hour's entertainment.

Prue Durant Smith


Mr. Lincoln's adherents will still cling to him, and his opponents will still be indifferent no matter what criticism is made of his latest book, "Dr. Nye"; and so the matter stands. In his first works “The Old Home House”, “Mr. Pratt” etc., Mr. Lincoln struck a vein shallow—but pleasing. That it scarcely reached below the surface all but his most ardent admirers soon realized. Now it appears to have run out.

"Dr. Nye" is a little less witty; a little more padded; a little more stagey than its immediate predecessors. It is the story of a promising young Cape-Cod doctor, who returns to his native town to out-face his critics, after he had been sent to state prison by them for embezzling church funds. The situations in which he proceeds to find himself are pseudo-melodramatic.

Mr. Lincoln's gift for story telling is not great. His store of pithy shrewd New England sayings is running low. For those who still find enjoyment in ice-cream parlors, "Dr. Nye" will prove entertaining. Mr. Lincoln is always the same—a vanilla ice-cream base served up with varying sauces.

Prue Durant Smith


Among the more recent of Jewish authors is Shalom Aleichem. Born in Lithuanian Russia, he became a government rabbi in a small village at an early age, and later came to America where he won recognition as journalist and critic.
It is from the early part of his life that these charming stories are drawn. They are of the children of the oppressed and burdened peasants of the little village, whose sufferings supply the somber threads from which these lives are woven. The hand that does the weaving commands likewise a lyrical prose that depicts vividly the lives of these people, their hopes and fears and especially their intense, almost erotic love for God, a love mystified and overwhelmed by an omnipotent Being.

The style is as simple and appealing as the children themselves. The terse poignant sentences paint pictures full of color and the musical repetition gives a biblical flavor and a religious exaltation.

The author, too, understands the universal heart of childhood and knows how to see Life through its eyes. Almost every page affords an example but this passage from "Three Little Heads" will suffice:

"Even a little bird is seldom seen here. Sometimes an odd sparrow strays in,—grey as the grey walls. He picks at the stones. He spreads out his wings and flies away. Fowls? The children sometimes see the quarter of one with a long pale leg. How many legs has a fowl? 'Four just like a horse,' explains Abramitzig.

What could make us realize more keenly the pathetic shut-in-ness of the children? And yet it could not possibly be told more simply.

The translator is to be congratulated on her happy choice of words. She has succeeded in putting beautiful Hebrew into beautiful English, a task made more difficult by the characteristic brevity and repetition of the Hebrew language.

M. L. L.

THE ELFIN PEDDLAR AND TALES TOLD BY PIXY POOL

It is a hazardous thing to venture an opinion on the future merits of a precocious child; more often than not they are never heard of again after they grow up. This may, of course, prove to be the case with Helen Adam; still, what she has written so far shows such an imaginative scope and such sensitiveness to impressions, coupled with an undisturbed serenity and an apt choice of words that one is tempted to make predictions. And she is now only twelve years old. In one sense the poems are all obviously, and necessarily, immature, expressing only one phase of thought, that of undiluted and radiant joy of life. This is rare; for those whom we call geniuses, even the child prodigies, incline more to the tragic viewpoint, or at least to the ironic, shorn of all illusions. One of her poems, "The Dust-Man," written before she was six years old, and of which only the first verse is quoted here, gives evidence of her sense of rhythm:

"The Dust-Man is coming a-down the street,
He is bringing his dreamy things;
I can hear the tread of his noiseless feet,
Now isn't that funny, my baby sweet?
But mothers can hear strange things."

I have read lullabies by mature writers that were inferior to this in all essentials. However,—time, as one knows, will tell.

M. R.


"Roman Pictures" is not, as the title might indicate, a handbook of dates and dimensions; and yet in a subtle way it is a guide book, not to buildings and paintings to be sure, but to the diversity of human types that one invariably meets in Rome and never, it seems, in any other society. Perhaps it is that Rome really creates some mysterious alteration in people's characters, their faces and gestures, perhaps a change of background merely makes this appear to be so. However, that may be, people in that environment do seem to look and act differently; and here in "Roman Pictures" they are caught all' improvviso as by a camera, or as by some dispassionate but keenly observant painter.

While, however, Rome is the subject, or the many nationalities in Rome, the book, partly by intention, but largely through the inevitable self-betrayal of an author, is a curiously accurate diagram of the English mentality, its conscious superiority, its stability, its insularity; an attribute however which only adds to the reader's interest.

The book opens at the Fountain of the Tortoises—the exact spot in Rome that it should—and in some two hundred pages of measured prose, suggestive here of Henry James, there of Pater, it conducts us through a circle of villas, drawing-rooms, studios of Romans from all nations, bringing us finally back to the same Fountain of the Tortoises from which we started; and leaving us in a very satisfactory ending, which is really no ending at all.

John Blomshields


The best way of reading Dr. Babenroth's book would be to begin with the last chapter on Wordsworth, and then make one's way back through the many paths that convey to it; after which, the need may be felt of reading this last chapter again by the light of the previous ones.
In this chapter the writer shows a deep insight into Wordsworth's love for childhood. Most aptly he points out how Wordsworth "saw in children the manifestations which had won him back to nature and self after the moral crisis of the nineties".

Quotations carefully selected enable the reader to understand the immense change that had come over the attitude of poets towards children since the mythological and formal days of Prior.

A previous chapter on William Blake stands out as a careful and pleasant study of one of the most lovable aspects of Blake's queer genius. Yet it is only there to link Wordsworth with the 18th century.

A book that contains so much useful information and such able criticism might well be recast for the benefit of the general reader. If Wordsworth is to be judged by the light of his predecessors, the study of his predecessors might equally well be made by the light of Wordsworth's treatment of childhood.

Edouard Fannière


Miss Tenison's Life of Miss Guiney, the New England poet, is the second to appear since her death in England in 1920 and is probably the final work for the present, as so many of the friends of her early days who might have been expected to speak are passed into silence with her.

Miss Tenison has written an admirable biography covering the different periods of the poet's life competently, and with sympathy and understanding, and quoting enough from the poet's verse to give to those to whom she is unknown, and unhappily there are many, a taste for more.

The tale of her life is a new telling of the old, old tragedy of the bread-winning martyrdom of a gifted woman who; gay and valiant of spirit, never knew the meaning of compromise, and whose span of life, was one long sacrifice to her duty and her ideals. That she turned a smiling face to disappointment, and was only spared a final one by dying ignorant of it, only made more heartbreaking the knowledge that she had already recognized her failure to find a big public for her verse, or to put herself in tune with the age in which she was born. It is not a new story. The history of literature has enshrined it in every generation which has again and again heard the cry "You denied me bread; you shall give me fame", although in our modern days, coin poets are often adaptable and compromise is the rule of a material age. Louise Guiney belonged to another age. She was essentially a scholar, not because she chose to be one: she was one; she had a deep-seated love for research; and she had an inborn sympathy for those of her craft who had been forgotten and whose names had been effaced from the roll-call of fame by time. She was of their brotherhood.

Probably if she had been free to take vows, when she felt the call, she would have brought, with her scholarship, glory to the order that sheltered her, for there she would have found the freedom from material worries which would have allowed her to devote herself calmly to her work, and the church would have been no curb to her, as she was absolutely in tune with it always.

It is to be hoped that the two lives of Miss Guiney, Alice Brown's tribute of a loving friend, and comrade and fellow country-woman and sometimes collaborator, and Miss Tenison's tribute as a critic, may make the New England born poet taking her long rest in congenial English earth, better known to a wider public than knew her when she trod so valiantly the bread-winning road where today the day labourer is sure of ample hire in the world that needs him, but where the wages of the poet are very uncertain. Luckily the poet has the hope of something better.

Mildred Aldrich.


These essays by the Editor of the London Mercury are as delightful to the reader who knows nothing about poetry as to the one who knows everything about it, if such a man exists. The style is quasi-conversational and intimate, yet it never strays from the path of clarity and conciseness. Eight of the essays deal with individual poets, among them Alice Meynell, Thomas Hardy, Yeats and A. E. Houseman; the other four are on more general themes. Of the first group the essays on Houseman and Mrs. Meynell are particularly felicitous; we are given an insight into their poetry, their minds and their emotions that is possible only through the pen of one who has a thorough knowledge of his subject, coupled with a sympathetic attitude and an impeccable discrimination.

The other essays, "Subject in Poetry", "A Note on the 18th Century", "The World in 1919" and "A Note on d'Annunzio", are treated in the same unclouded manner, with here and there a pleasant touch of delicate humor; and in the case of d'Annunzio, enthusiastic admiration for his dynamic energy and his undoubted literary genius.

Mr. Squire has a keenly critical eye that sees with the greatest lucidity not only the subject under discussion, but also its relation to the whole scale of literary history.

M. Rice
OLD DAYS AND NEW, by Lord Ernest Hamilton.

Lord Ernest Hamilton presents us with a harmonious picture, a finished and smiling landscape where abound the country-houses, the villages and castles of the mighty. Here English life pursues its sheltered course through Georgian, Mid-Victorian, and later days. There are superficial changes of customs and costumes, six bottles have shrunk to three, to one; vanished are crinoline and bustles; hitherto disdained activities and interests have been socially admitted; but in the main one hunts, shoots, fishes, and pleasures through life much as of yore.

A most interesting chapter is consecrated to the short history of the opera in England, as exemplified by Covent Garden. Lord Hamilton justly deplores the sudden eclipse of the beautifully decorative Adams period and its submergence into the dull ugliness of the Victorian era. Extolling the great Georgian masters, Turner, Lawrence, Romney, Gainsborough, Constable, Hopner, he exclaims: "and then in fifty short years, we come tumbling down from these transcendent heights to Millais, Frith and Whistler." Would that we could hear Whistler's retort!

It is curious to note that the charming English garden is a thing of modern creation. It seems that less than fifty years ago nobody cared about gardens, so, as mostly to-day in France, the gardens of England were relegated to the gardener, hence the stiff and formal effects.

There is, of course, a chapter on Norway fishing and some interesting Scottish reminiscences,—all of which make pleasant reading.

George G. Fleurot

THE REAL ROBERT BURNS, by J. L. Hughes.

The author does not believe in gossip about the weaknesses of the dead, and, as far as Burns is concerned, is convinced that they were either exaggerated by such biographers as Dr. Currie and Mr. Walker, or that the particular offences with which he was charged were not committed at all. Of all Burns' early biographers he considers Chambers and Douglas the best, and of later works that by the Rev. L. Maclean Watt, published in 1914.

The latter's book is quoted at some length in appreciation of Burns' writings of a religious character, particularly "The Holy Fair", "The Twa Herds", and "Holy Willie's Prayer"; Mr. Hughes himself goes so far as to say that as a teacher of vital religion Burns was infinitely greater than any other man of his time.

About his love songs, especially "Sweet Afton", he is even more enthusiastic; they are, he observes, the purest ever written, and the correspondence with Mrs. M'Lhose, conducted under the names of Sylvander and Clarinda, he declares, will probably always remain the finest love letters of the ages.

In a chapter on "Burns the Democrat" he calls attention also to his "Ode to Liberty" written to express his gratification at the outcome of the American Revolution, and to "The Tree of Liberty" written to celebrate the success of the French Revolution.


In this biography, published in 1923, Mr. Lyle has endeavored to give the reader a clear notion of Saint-Saens the man, as well as of his art and theories. His purpose is more expository than critical and he has pains-takingly brought the story of the life of Saint-Saens into conformity with the latest information and available data.

The book is divided into three parts. Part I is called "The Growth of a Genius", and presents a picture of Saint-Saens' childhood and youth, his talents, the influences surrounding his early years, and the development of the gifts with which nature had so richly endowed him. In Part II, "Artistic Powers and Outlook", "Social Life and Opinions", Saint-Saens the man moves before the reader. Here he is in the full possession of his strength, his artistic powers completely manifest themselves, and he is a man responsive to the joys and sorrows of life, a nature fertile in attractive nuances, a humanly sympathetic heart,—in short, the Man-Genius and the Genius-Man. Mr. Lyle's presentation of this French musical giant (and he discovers no fault with him) is among the most comprehensive of any thus far published and it may be read equally advantageously by layman and musician alike.

Section III of the book is somewhat specialised in its appeal: it contains descriptions and quotations from many of Saint-Saens' larger and better known compositions, but in spite of this fact, these chapters are not so technical and analytical that the reader untrained in music, may not find them interesting and profitable. On the contrary they are so soothingly and simply written, they should be a great appreciative stimulus.

An appendix, in which are given the immense list of Saint-Saens' compositions, including his literary works, and a bibliography, complete Mr. Lyle's essay, which is at one and the same time a distinguished bibliographical and literary exercise.

Irving Schwerke
SARAH BERNHARDT AS I KNEW HER: THE MEMOIRS
OF MME PIERRE BERTON AS TOLD TO BASIL WOON.
London. Hurst and Blackett. 319 pages.
Illustrated.

So many extravagant stories have been told
about Bernhardt, her birth, her ancestors, her life
and her loves, that her true self has become like
the algebraic X, the unknown quantity. We owe,
therefore, a debt of gratitude to Mme. Berton,
who so charmingly and simply tells the real facts
to Mr. Woon, and which he, in turn, presents
to the public. That they are, at last, the real
facts, there can be no doubt. There are photo-
graphs of her baptismal certificate, certifying
to her parentage and the
date of her birth, and the
sincerity and plausibility of the narrative admit
of no distrust. The close friendship between
Bernhardt and Mme. Berton began when the
latter was a child, and continued until Bernhardt's
death a year ago; she is, therefore, particularly
fitted for the responsible task she so well fulfills.

The story of the great Sarah's early struggles
is especially interesting. Her amazingly strong
will, her personality and her extremes of temper
manifested themselves at a very tender age indeed,
and the flame of her genius and indomitable
individuality burned clearly and brilliantly to
her last conscious moment. Dumas, Victor Hugo,
Coppee, Sardou, Clairin, Doré, Leopold of Belgium,
Edward VII of England, Rostand, Meeterlinck,
Richepin and Roosevelt, to mention only a few,
were among her close friends, among whom,
in fact, she numbered practically every contem-
porary celebrity, and the biography is therefore
of equal interest as a faithful picture of her day.

With the exception of a very few politically
prominent women, such as Jeanne d'Arc, Catherine
of Russia and Elizabeth of England, Sarah Bernhardt
is undoubtedly the most dominating and powerful
feminine personality in history.

M. R.

PIERRE CURIE, by Marie Curie. Translated by
The Macmillan Co. 242 pages.

This is more than a relation of the high scientific
achievements of a man, it is the story of two equally
great minds, of two equally self-effacing personal-
ities, to whom honor and glory were naught
compared to those secrets which they wrested
from nature for the good of their fellow men;
a story so modestly told that one peruses this
simple narrative with a reverent mind.

Early united, to be too soon separated by fate,
tenderly devoted to each other and to their children,
together they faced the hardships which condemned
them to sacrifice much of their precious time
to the earning of a scant livelihood; together they
devised substitutes which enabled them to prosecute
their researches in the pitiful little laboratory
allotted to them. Yet it was in this same shed
that Marie Curie discovered the mysterious and
powerful matter called "radium"; here that,
with makeshift appliances, new means of extra-
ordinary delicacy were devised to separate and
isolate this radium.

Presently the fame of this great discovery spread
throughout the world of science, honors poured in,
—some to be declined. Then just as the end
was in sight, on his way homewards, the dreamer
was killed by the traffic, and so was untimely
removed from the labor and favor of this life.

She struggled valiantly on with their joint work.
The War came, and characteristically regardless
of her personal safety, she carried her precious
radium to the Front, where she had the satisfaction
of witnessing its inestimable benefits to the woun-
ded.

As all the world knows, Madame Curie is still
with us and the marvelous tale of radium is but
just begun.

George G. FLEUROT

MEMORIES OF THE RUSSIAN COURT, by Anna Virou-
400 pages.

There are three kinds of Memoirs: those which
stand upon their own merit, expressing the personal
value of their author, like the ones of Benvenuto
Cellini or of Marie Bachkirtzeva; then again
there are memoirs of famous writers, the celebrity
of whose other works accounts for the drawing
power of their biography and their impressions
of surrounding life; and last but not least,—
since their number is by far the greatest, are
the memoirs, the only raison d'être of which consists
in their sensational subject matter. The memoirs
of Anna Viroubova belong to the third category.

As might be expected of the one and only friend
of the Empress, Madame Viroubova is a loyal
friend, if not a brilliant author. The facts she
tells are, most of them, pretty well known, and her
interpretation of them is precisely that which
one might expect from a lady, who lived and basked
in the rays of that sun, which for her was personi-
ified by Nicolas and Alexandra. When the sun
had set, Madame Viroubova's world was plunged
into the most hopeless gloom.

Small wonder that everything pertaining to
the sunny days seems resplendent to the author
of the Memoirs, whereas every factor which
threatened to dim the brightness of her sun appears
to her as directly linked with the Powers of Dark-
ness.

Interesting as they are, then, to those who are
familiar with Russian affairs, they can hardly
be recommended to less sophisticated seekers
for the truth concerning the history of the Russian
revolution.

Nicolas Lubimov
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LITERATURE


ART


MISCELLANEOUS


MORGAN, BAYARD QUINCY. Bibliography of German Literature in English Translation. University of Wisconsin, Madison. 1922.


FICTION


One reviewer of Roth William's "The League of Nations Today" (Allen and Unwin) says that it is vastly more important than any previous book on the same subject, and declares that if he were a millionaire he would spend all or most of his fortune in the distribution of it in the United States. He believes that there is no book which would be more effective in convincing the citizens of the United States of the necessity of helping Europe out of its present chaos, and of doing so by joining the League of Nations.

Simon Pure, the London correspondent of the Bookman says that A. A. Milne's favorite book is Kenneth Graham's masterpiece, 'The Wind in the Willows'... Wells', is Cotter Morison's 'The Service of Man', and Bennett's, 'The Brothers Karamazov' and Herbert Spencer's 'Study of Sociology'. He also says that Belloc's favorite is "The Wallet of Kai Lung"; Walpole's is Henry Richardson's "Maurice Guest"; and Shaw's, the writings of Samuel Butler.

The "Vassar Mediaeval Studies", edited by Professor Christabel F. Fiske (Yale University Press) contains contributions from representatives of ten different departments in Vassar College. They include "A Mediaeval Humanist: Michael Akominatos", by Professor Thallon; "The Burning of Books" by Professor Brown; "Arthur in Avalon and the Banshee", by Professor Loomis; "Queen of Mediaeval Virtues: Largesse", by Professor Whitney; "The Realism of Gothic Sculpture", by Professor Tonks; as well as other essays which are of equal scientific value, although not of as general interest.

In an essay on Gertrude Atherton in the Bookman for February, Isabel Patterson speaks of "The Conqueror" and "The Californians" as two of her best novels.

"One Act Plays from the Yiddish", translated by Etta Block (Stewart Kidd Co.) contains six plays, of which three are by Perez Hirschbein.
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Literary Notes

The "Mirror of the Sea" and his "Personal Record" are described by Ernest Rhys in the Christian Science Monitor as Joseph Conrad's two confession books. "When curiosity tempted me to ask which of all his books was nearest his heart, he said, pointing to a copy of 'The Mirror' which had been carried to sea many times during the War,—'That'. Of his longer sagas, if we choose three to represent him, 'The Nigger of the Narcissus', 'Lord Jim' and 'Nostromo' may serve as a typical triad. Of the shorter ones, 'Typhoon', 'Youth', and 'The Secret Sharer'. The last is added here, because he declared it most thoroughly satisfied his own canon of the short story."

Clement K. Shorter, editor of the London Sphere declares that after reading a succession of Conrad's books, and perhaps caring for "Victory" most, he finds that Conrad's latest book, "The Rover", is better still.


The seventh edition of "The New Mediterranean Traveller" by D. E. Lorenz (Revell) recently published, contains all the features which made the earlier editions so useful, and has been revised so as to include the latest developments in Mediterranean lands from Madeira to Egypt and Palestine.

In an essay on Mrs. Wharton in the Christian Science Monitor, January 19th, Ernest Rhys says, "No foreign writer—one foreign to France—has dealt with French society with the same finesse, the same intelligence, not even Henry James himself."

If novels are to be divided into three kinds, those one must, might and won't read", the Manchester Guardian says, "'Jane-Our Stranger' is recommended for an immediate place on the obligatory list." The author is the wife of a British officer formerly stationed in Paris and now a member of the House of Commons.

Ernest Poole is quoted in the New York Times Book Review as saying that the two novels of the past decade which represent America most truly are Willa Cather's "My Antonia" and Herbert Quick's "Vandermark's Folly".

"Gamaliel Bradford has fairly won his way to the head of the biographical essayists of America", William Lyon Phelps says in reviewing Mr. Bradford's "Damaged Souls" (Houghton).

Arthur Machen's two most important books, in the opinion of Vincent Starrett, are "The House of Souls" and "The Hill of Dreams".

Thomas Beer's "Stephen Crane" (Knopf) is described by Mark Van Doren as a biography of the first order, as fresh and convincing as anything that has been done in its class for years.

John Galsworthy's "Forsyte Saga" is described by Edward Shanks in an article on Galsworthy in the London Mercury as the best of all his novels, his most weighty, and a most weighty contribution to modern literature. The article is reprinted in The Living Age, December 29.

According to the late Thomas Nelson Page, Benjamin Valentine's "Ole Master and Other Verses" (The Valentine Museum, Richmond), give the sentiment and poetry of the old Virginia negro, interknit with his humor and picturesqueness, and are as true to life as Irwin Russell's or Joel Chandler Harris'.

Perhaps the most interesting part of "Woodrow Wilson's Case for the League of Nations" by Hamilton Foley (Princeton University Press) is that giving the cablegrams from Taft and Root. The book contains also the two addresses made by President Wilson as chairman of the Commission on the League of Nations before the Peace Conference.

"Michelet and His Ideas on Social Reform", by Dr. Anne R. Pryde, published as one of the Columbia University studies in Romance, Philology and Literature, is the first important American study of Michelet which has been published. It discusses the influence of his temperament upon his ideas, his anti-clericalism and his ideas about women and their education.

In his "American Artists" (Scribner) Royal Cortissoz reports George De Forest Brush as saying, "A student learns nothing until he comes under a master. In this democracy, with its ignorance of the wisdom of the ages and its craze for trying things new, painters would rather experiment than read. I would advise them to read—read Cennino Cennini. In him they will have a library that will last two or three years."

The "Memoirs" of Luke Ionides published in "the transatlantic review" for March are devoted to Richard Burton. The first part of these memoirs, published in January, was devoted to Whistler in the Quartier Latin; the second, published in February, related to William Morris and Richard Wagner.
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AMERICAN.

American Journal of International Law, January: The Second Year of the Permanent Court of International Justice. M. O. Hudson.


Journal of Political Economy, February: Socialization in Germany, Emil Frankel.

Literary Digest, February 2: To Save the Falling French To Cut Our Immigration in Half. The Spanish-Italian "Menace" to France.

— February 16: The Interpreter of the Unlucky, Steinlen.

— February 23: Why We Are 38 1/3 per cent Wet. Who Are Undesirable Aliens? Europe's Starving Students. Dr. Levermore and the Blessings of Peace.


Living Age, January 26: A Chapter in Propaganda from the Russian Secret Archives.


Nation, January 30: Two Years of Poincare. A New Franco-German War, C. B. Thomson.


— February 13: Woodrow Wilson, a Supreme Tragedy, Oswald Garrison Villard.

— February 20: How Poincare Prepared for War, Lewis S. Gannett.


BRITISH.


Near East, February 7: The Macedonian Problem, Dragutin P. Subitch.
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Current Magazines (continued)

Spectator, February 2: Mr. Baldwin’s Leadership is Socialism’s Opportunity, J. St. Loé Stratchey. Mr. McKenna on Money Management and Unemployment.
— — February 16: British Policy and the Palatinate: The Population Question, Dean Inge.
— — February 23: War-Damage Scandals in the Devastated Regions.

FRENCH.

Belles-Lettres, February: Maurice Barrès, Maxime Revon.
Conferencia, February 1: En Russie: Comment Nous Chantons nos Chants Populaires, M. Koubitzky.


Revue Hebdomadaire, February 9: Mistral, Auteur de “Caléïades”.
— — February 16: La Psychologie de L’âme, Pierre Lafue.

A Selected List of New French Books

FICTION.

Another war story from the civilian stand-point, in which the impostor, deluding others, deludes himself until he dies a hero.

A charming collection of animal legends for children in which the characters are endowed with speech and reason, keeping always their own manner of life.

In a brief poetic story is shown the contrast between love and passion.

This is the fifth of this series of adventure stories, based on fact.

This story shows how business may become the only aim of modern man and woman.

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