The Sunday Tribune's News and Reviews of Books and Authors

A Bookman's Day Book

By Burton Rascoe

"Day by day in every way I am getting better and better."

THURSDAY, SEPT. 21.

LUNCHED to-day with **Dr. Gregory Stragnell**, editor of "The New York Medical Journal," and **Seward Collins**, of "Vanity Fair." I had been reading Jean Carrère's "Degeneration in the Great French Masters," and I wanted to know what **Dr. Stragnell**, as a psycho-analyst, thought of the book. It is a French counterpart of **Irving Babbitt's** "Rousseau and Romanticism," which seeks to identify "Le Contrat Social" with Original Sin.

Rousseau, who inspired the French Revolution, the American Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States, is to Mr. Babbitt and M. Carrère, paradoxically enough, the prophet of individualism and hence, as they see it, the champion of the romantic spirit, which they hold criminally responsible for Byron, Shelley, Nietzsche, Ibsen, Stendhal, Balzac, Baudelaire, Zola, Flaubert, Verlaine, **Shaw, Hauptmann, D'Annunzio** and—well, all the great writers since Chateaubriand.

M. Carrère confines himself to French authors and leans heavily upon **Max Nordau's** "Degeneration," but he loves that which he condemns; he is less prejudiced than either Mr. Babbitt or M. Nordau; and he admits frankly that the writers he discusses are the greatest figures in modern French literature. But he has made up his mind that, precisely because they are great artists they are the more corrupting. In other words, that's his story and he is going to stick to it. From what we know of modern psychological and behavioristic research, it is probably nearer the truth to say that they are great artists because of corrupting influences. Dr. Stragnell put it this way:

"Let us concede at first: no art without a neurosis. Every individual, in a way, suffers from the group neurosis, particularly the artist. France is a sick nation. Its power has been dwindling. It tries to compensate for its fear of impotence by false stimulants and exaggerated displays of power. This is reflected not only in its politics and economics, but in its morals and its art. France is more and more letting down the bars of reticence and is frankly encouraging indulgence. It emphasizes the pleasure principle rather than the generative principle. And since the artist reflects the psychic state of his time, place and group, if one reads the great literary artists of France during the last century he could get a better idea of its racial development than out of the history books. Psycho-analysis is just being introduced in France. It may never make any headway there. France has no great psychiatrist to take it up. And the French have been remarkably free from inhibitions and suppressions; they have had a much freer and franker attitude toward sex than England, America and Germany. . . . Most of the small towns of America are sick and the people in them are sick. An organism is sick when it has ceased to grow. Puritan suppressions, a declining vigor in the old stock, adverse economic conditions all result in a loss of the creative impulse in the inhabitants of the small town and in the small town as a unity."

This seems to me further support of my contention that men like Carrère, Babbitt, **Paul Elmer More** and **Stuart P. Sherman** (in his less perspicacious moments) are barking up the wrong tree. If they do not like the sort of literature they are getting they would employ their talents to more purpose by attacking the conditions that produce that literature. It would be a very large order, I admit, and none of these men has shown vision or intelligence enough to tackle it. If one of them had that vision, intelligence and audacity and succeeded in revolutionizing conditions, he would thereby automatically disprove his original, basic contention, which is that the individualist is a menace to the decent and stable organization of society. As it is, Mr. Babbitt's "Rousseau and Romanticism" and M. Nordau's "Degeneration" have not altered, nor I dare say M. Carrère's book will alter the aspect either of art or morals one jot or tittle.

In a vague sort of way I, too, feel that something ought to be done about the present situation; but I don't know exactly what. In this I am in the same predicament as **H. G. Wells** was when he resigned from the Fabian Society. **Frank Pease** relates the story in his delectable "History of the Fabian Society." It seems that Wells was always coming to the meetings much aflutter with some big, new, bright idea which he promptly forgot as soon as he had got it off his chest. One day he read an impassioned paper declaring that it was up to the Fabians to do something about motherhood in England. They all agreed with Mr. Wells, including Bernard Shaw, who asked Mr. Wells, "Just what?" Wells got sore at the question and resigned.

* * *

John Macy dropped in this afternoon to tell me he had been appointed literary editor of "The Nation" to succeed **Carl Van Doren**, who goes to "The Century." . . . Macy's new book, "The Critical Game," is just out. It contains some excellent, informal, did-you-ever-notice-that—essays on Dante, Tolstoi, **Conrad**, Nietzsche, **Gourmont** and others. . . . Read James Elroy Flecker's posthumous extravanganza, "Hassan," this afternoon, and, for some reason or other, a string of asinine, assonantal and alliterative tee-ess-eliot sort of lines kept crowding into my head on the subway, like: "Caustic Codicils to Covenants" and "Hermes Hacks the Hippogriff" and "Hardened Harpies Hem and Haw." . . . **Kenneth Andrews** took me to "The Passing Show" to-night. Year by year the Shubert shows are getting nakeder and nakeder in every way. . . . Before going to bed I read **Charles W. Gould's** "America: A Family Affair," which summarizes the rise and fall of Babylon, Nineveh, Athens and Rome for no particular reason that I could discover, and concludes with the exclamation: "Repeal our naturalization laws!"

FRIDAY, SEPT. 22

Llewellyn Jones, literary editor of "The Chicago Evening Post," came to lunch to-day and we were joined later by **Carl Van Vechten**. Jones is the foremost American authority on metrics and **Lascelles Abercrombie**. Van Vechten wanted to know if I had read "The Undertaker's Garland," by **John Peale Bishop** and **Edmund Wilson jr.** "It was a grave tactical error for young Mr. Wilson to publish that book," he said. "As a critic he disapproves of everything that doesn't measure up to Racine or Flaubert. And I don't when I have read a book as badly written as his part of 'The Undertaker's Garland.' The piece called 'Emily in Hades' had a good idea, but it is ruined in the telling. If I were he I would buy up all the copies of the book and destroy them so I could keep on telling writers how bad they are. He can't keep on doing that now, you know. . . . Why are all the young intellectuals so utterly serious all the time? 'The Dial' has never published but one funny line—'the Académie Rascoe'; it's always so sad and gloomy it makes me weep. Even the pictures were never meant to be funny, so you daren't laugh at them even if you are inclined to. It's all very sad."

* * *

With reference particularly to the preface to "The Undertaker's Garland," Van Vechte's comment on Wilson's contribution to the book is, I think, just. It was written some time ago and is a very sophomoric affair. Moreover, it is not only badly conceived and phrased, with several weak anticlimaxes; it contains numerous errors of syntax and grammar. He frequently misuses the correlatives, writes "stars stab him like knives," and employs such clumsy constructions as "His purpose . . . was simply to make something cheap and to sell it to somebody dear," and "We were neither of us ever in much danger of getting killed ourselves."

These points would not loom up so disproportionately if Wilson were not often capable of writing, as he does in the current "Vanity Fair": ". . . the people should come to life for us, but Miss Cather's never do. Flaubert, by a single phrase, a description of some external object, could convey all the pathos and beauty of human desire and defeat . . . in a decent novel every word should be in its place and every character in its right perspective and every incident should be presented with its appropriate economy of detail."

Saw **Ring Lardner** to-day for the first time in many months. Month by month Ring is getting more owl-eyed in every way. He was being led by **John Peter Toohey** into **Frank Case's** salon, but Toohey dashed on ahead and Ring's way was blocked by a group of actresses who were trying to crowd past the rope. "Come on!" yelled Toohey. "I forgot to bring my vaulting pole," answered Ring; but Toohey settled the difficulty in a jiffy: he brushed the ladies aside with a sheaf of play manuscripts. . . . Ring once told me his favorite author is Ibsen and his favorite novel, **W. B. Maxwell's** "The Devil's Garden."

Went to **Alta May Coleman's** this afternoon to meet **Roscoe W. Brink**, the author of "Down the River," an extraordinary novel in free verse, which relates the story of a woman who is sensitive to beauty and who is baffled and beaten by disillusionment in love, by poverty, by domestic cares and yet who wins out by nobility of character. It is an experiment in concision and rapidity of narration, and it is something more than that; it is a novel of considerable power, with the faults one would expect in a first venture in so unusual a narrative form. And, whereas we have had innumerable recent novels depicting highly sensitized men in reaction to the frustrations of contemporary American life, this is one of the few which deals with a woman's struggle with the adverse circumstances of life. It is a novel which, I should think, would appeal very strongly to women, for it is an honest attempt to present a woman's point of view sympathetically and intelligently. . . . Mr. Brink is a slight, reticent but alert and amiable fellow, with a high forehead, a wisp of a mustache and black eyes.

* * *

Went with my wife to the opening of "The Exciters" to-night, which I enjoyed much more than I should have if I weren't very fond of **Tallulah Bankhead**, both as an actress and as a person. Ran into **Sherwood Anderson**, resplendent in his black stock tie and his bushy aureole of sandy hair, during the intermission, and he told me he was working very hard on some short stories. . . . **John V. A. Weaver** told me that when he was in France he looked too often on the vin when it was rouge and as a result the doctor had put him on an egg and spinach diet. . . . **George Jean Nathan** told me he was expecting **Mencken** back from Europe very soon. . . . Anderson, Weaver, Seward Collins and I joined the throng back stage to congratulate Tallulah, who was very pretty and excited in the night dress she wears in the last act. . . . To Reuben's for a sandwich and found there **Charley MacArthur**, who has just finished a play in collaboration with **Edward Sheldon** and **Jimmy Whittaker**, the former dramatic critic, who said: "There is something about being a critic that makes a terrible hick out of a man. I was an awful hick when I was a dramatic critic."

SATURDAY, SEPT. 23

Elinor Wylie, author of "Nets to Catch the Wind", my wife, **Seward Collins** and I motored out to New Canaan and had dinner with Seward's mother. Elinor is, I think, one of the three or four leading women poets in English. She told me that the poems in her first volume were written over a space of only a few months, two years ago; that she wrote seldom, but very easily and with few revisions, having written recently six poems in a single night. . . . Read as much of **J. Middleton Murry's** "Still Life" as I could stand to-night; it is another novel about the amorous difficulties of a young intellectual.

SUNDAY, SEPT. 24

Read all day and went over to **T. R. Smith's** to-night and found there **Ernest and Madelaine Boyd, Fania Marinoff** and **Carl Van Vechten**. Boyd and Van Vechten both said they were inspired by my "Dead Give-Away" in to-day's paper, to tabulate their own list of preferences and prejudices; but Van Vechten said that every time he made out a list it was entirely different from the one before it. The first two volumes of Boyd's translation of the complete and unexpurgated edition of Guy de Maupassant have just been issued by Knopf. This is the first attempt to publish Maupassant in a wholly satisfactory translation, with the volumes arranged in their chronological order. The edition of "Germinie Lacerteux," by the Goncourts, translated with a preface by Boyd, is also just off the press, in a beautiful format. . . . Smith proved too generous a host, and my wife helped me to get home and in bed by 9. At 12:30 **F. Scott Fitzgerald** called up. He and Zelda, **Mary Blair**, and **Edmund Wilson jr.** wanted to come out, or have us join them, I forget which, but I was too sleepy either to encourage the one or consent to the other.

MONDAY, SEPT. 25

Lunched to-day with **Djuna Barnes** and we ran into **Joseph Hergesheimer**, up from West Chester for the filming of "Java Head," and looking very rosy and happy. His new novel, "The Bright Shawl," a Cuban tale of the last century, is to be published on October 15. I told him that I had heard from various sources that it contained writing equal to "San Cristobal" and a story as good as "Java Head," and he said he personally was very fond of it. Djuna introduced me to **Konrad Bercovici**, the short story writer, who looks a little like Nietzsche, but with a bushier mustache and with a head as shaggy as a New Foundland's. Djuna said Bercovici is "a scream; he knows more tragic and funny stories of the Ghetto than any man in the world. You ought to hear him tell the story about the man who for ten years had had a 'two-movement' job pasting labels on tin cans—you know, one movement to the tongue to moisten the label and the other to the can to paste it on. And then he was promoted. He got a three-movement job, I forgot what it was, but he was so tickled over it he nearly died of gratitude and joy. That's not funny; that's pathetic!" . . . She also introduced me to **Mary Heaton Vorse**, the novelist whose book, "The Prestons," contains a small boy quite as funny as Tarkington's "Penrod," and rather more true to life, being less a burlesque.

"Torchy"

By A. Donald Douglas

TRILBY MAY CRASHES IN. By Sewell Ford. Harper's.

IN THE good days before the coming of those deluges known as the war, the income taxes and the novels of Mr. Hutchinson I would think of Sunday less as devoted to a horrid ritual of blue laws than as set apart for the consumption of multifarious newspaper supplements. First, I would discover that the Browns still lingered in the second division, either in the cellar or sliding down the cellar steps of the American League. That was before the blazing portent of George Sisler. Then I would survey the regrettable escapades of the Katzenjammer Kids, the real, right Katzenjammers and not their vigorous but dull descendants. Those, too, were the days before the brick hurtled at Krazy Kat swam like a new planet into the ken of serious literary critics.

* * *

My most cherished Sunday pleasure I reserved for the last half hour before the formidable orgy of the Sunday midday dinner. For it seemed numberless months of Sundays I followed the ingenious exploits of Sewell Ford's "Torchy," an adept contriver of plot, situation and the vernacular long before Mr. Mencken invented the American language. In those far times very few literary persons rivaled Mr. Ford's extensive manipulation of our native rhythms and vocables, as well as his devising of plots less polished than an engagement ring, but brilliant as a diamond in the rough. Then somehow Torchy was put out in favor of Shorty McCabe, a person I abandoned for excellent reasons I cannot now recall. And just when I had supposed Torchy gone into the days that are no more, of two-hit baseball games and five-cent ice-cream sodas and nickelodeons, lo! the comedies featuring Mr. Johnny Hines are even now carrying Torchy down the ages in the swift and robustious action of the motion picture. But the style is the man; and not even the facial play of Mr. Johnny Hines can compensate for the absence of the vernacular. The wheel has come full circle in the best literary tradition of wheels; and now some hundreds of writers drape the American language like a vivid garment over their later and less engaging Torchies.

* * *

Even Torchy's progenitor, Mr. Sewell Ford, has abandoned his first love in favor of two changelings known as Inez, a Swedish-American girl whose silence is as golden as her hair, and Trilby May, an energetic and resourceful person with green eyes and carroty hair, another one of those interminable flappers who now exclusively populate the world this side of paradise. Any indulgence in the pathos of distance or sentimental sighing for the clouds of glory that no longer trail are sure signs, so we are told by those who know, of senescence and decay, the first pattering of the sere and yellow leaf. It may be so; and yet in remembrance of the ineffable Torchy I may be permitted to shed a regretful and strictly literary tear. Inez and Trilby May cannot oust Torchy from his sure niche in my fond affections. It isn't that Torchy would ever have felt at home in the company of literary angels, or that his pretensions beat on the gates of heaven where dwell the Idiot and Tess and Lord Jim and Pelle and Huckleberry Finn. Torchy was simply Torchy, a coming prophecy of our language that cast his carroty shadow before Mr. Mencken. Trilby May is just another flapper; and even if Torchy's figure does loom down to me through the deluding mists of time I find it more impressive in its native humor than the vernacular rigidities of Trilby May and Inez's strong silence of stupidity.

* * *

Trilby May crashes into a theatrical manager's office and by the spell of her sea-green eyes and her invincible presence (which may be freely translated impudence) she forces him to accept a play of the cub reporter who is her discreet admirer. After her appearance in a Greenwich Village production of "The Prince and the Flapper" she becomes the center and whirlwind of numerous adventures, with a hard-working manicurist who has married and supports a wounded aviator, with Uncle Nels's strictly nefarious financial operations rather too much in the outworn tradition of Wallingford, with a cautious oaf from her home town, with life on the East Side, and with a climax that leaves the doors wide open for later adventures which we may confidently expect in the fruitful course of time.

* * *

At best and worst Trilby May's carroty hair shines with a reflected glory from the resplendent sun of Torchy. After "This Side of Paradise" and "Dancers in the Dark"—the flapper. In general Trilby May's flapperism possesses all the attributes necessary for that high estate of modern culture; and yet in one respect she hardly approximates the austere ideal set for later flappers by earlier flappers. Her wit flows, but not like wine, for she limits her indulgence to "trotters on the grill" and permits no undue familiarities, that is to say, petting parties. Her "line of chatter" is hung with the accustomed epigrams and the mechanical aptitude of the dealer in argot. Waiters suffer a small change and become "tip hounds," and Trilby May stares "as lifelike as two poached eggs on a platter."

* * *

Perhaps the vernacular strains itself in the exercise of too much verbal trapeze work. Suffice it to say that to any question addressed her in the English language Trilby May replies concisely in the very latest model of our native rhythms.

Letter Box

From Julian Street

Dear Miss Isabel Paterson:

In my whole life I have not had more than three or four reviews that warmed me as did yours of my novel, "Rita Coventry," in The Tribune, and I do not think I have ever before had quite so full a sense of having made my intentions absolutely clear to a stranger as I got when reading what you had written of my book. And that is a sensation that is peculiarly delightful.

It is not so much your praise that pleases me, as the quality of your praise. You understood as fully as I did the underlying qualities of the story I had tried to tell, and you explained my motives quite as well as I could have explained them. And you never called Richard Parrish my "hero," or suggested that perhaps I admired Parrish. Oh, thanks!

I've waited for my early forties to write this first novel in the hope that it wouldn't be bad. I have worked a year on these 35,000 words and have written easily 300,000 words to get the 85,000. Naturally, I am enormously pleased to know that they carried to you exactly the things I tried to make them carry. JULIAN STREET.

Norfolk, Conn.

John Cournos, author of "Babel." Caricature by Djuna Barnes.

The Charm of W. J. Locke

By Isabel Paterson

THE TALE OF TRIONA. By W. J. Locke. Dodd, Mead & Co.

RASH as the statement may appear at first sight, there is no living writer who more completely proves the magic inherent in style, or if you will, the plain everyday uses of that debated quality, than William J. Locke. Not that style is his sole merit; he has a number, but all the others are pretty evenly balanced by their defects. For instance, he is never at a loss for a well-turned plot, but it turns upon accident or fancy, not upon the main issues of real life. He has a marvelous knack of graphic presentation of the exterior of his creatures, so that one never forgets nor mixes up his people; they are always easily identified by more than their mere names—and that is not so common an accomplishment as may be supposed offhand. Yet he has no deep grasp of character; never does he indecently bare a soul, nor give an exposition of a human being growing as it were a tree, inevitably, from a certain seed in a certain soil.

His people are orchids, hothouse plants, even when he is pleased to call them vagabonds or robustious swashbucklers; a cold blast of reality would wither them in an instant. And while he never fails to provide them with entertaining talk, has ever a grain of wit and gentle humor to save them from banality, yet he does not deal in ideas in the weightier sense of the term. His pages are always embroidered with quaint touches of erudition, tastefully apt quotations from half-forgotten poets and scholars; yet they have no intellectual content. The catchwords of the day are to him the eternal verities; there is no philosophy implicit in his books, nothing below the glittering surface—except one jewel of great price. That is a deep and genuine feeling for romance, for those rose-colored illusions which are as true as they are insubstantial and fleeting.

* * *

That and his polished style are what save him from being just a first-class second-rate spinner of yarns. But they do save him, beyond question; not hereafter, but here and now. His work fully deserves its immediate popularity; and some of those authors who are already being earnestly recommended to posterity—perhaps as a desperate last resort—might learn a lot from him if they would or could.

Nor need one go to his best novels for the lesson. He never falls below his own standard. If "The Tale of Triona" is not quite so good as certain of its predecessors, that is merely because there is less of it; a difference in degree, not in kind. It is a smaller canvas, and the story is in some measure worked over from an earlier one, done in reverse. "Jaffery," I think it was, had as part of its machinery a poor wretch who stole and published as his own a dead man's book. Later, remorse and sheer inability to write anything of his own drove him to suicide. But he was a minor personage. Alexis Triona is the hero in this case.

Triona did much the same thing. But he had it in him to do good work on his own account. Triona was a born romancer, and only cribbed his raw material. It was rather as if Dumas had chosen to pass himself off as D'Artagnan, and circumstances had enabled him to do so; for there really was a D'Artagnan, captain of the King's Guards, and his memoirs furnished the basis of Dumas' immortal "Three Musketeers."

Triona's real name was John Briggs; one can scarcely blame him for changing it. He is an engaging hero, in spite of his imposture. He had an itching foot, a taste for adventure, which led him, by no easy stages, from the dreary workman's cottage at Tyneside, where he was bred, to the post of courier-chauffeur and confidential servant extraordinary in the household of a Russian prince. There was no fakery in his rise; he had brains and application. He was a practical sort of adventurer, too; he made and saved money.

He was even a practical humbug, not a gratuitous one. It wasn't only for swank that after the war and the revolution had stripped him of his earnings and he found himself back in England penniless that he passed himself off as a Russian secret service agent barely escaped with his life from the Bolsheviki. His motive was that he had already, without criminal intent, worked up the contents of a dead man's notebook into a thrilling narrative, and he saw no way of getting it published except by professing it to be genuine, with himself the living proof of it. That story was all he brought out of Russia, after his years of hard work, and he had a heroic war record of his own, which he reasonably felt he might trade in for the one he was stealing. So he did it.

It made him famous. It won him the girl he loved. But he was a lost man for all that. He had, as it were, killed himself to make way for his counterfeit, Triona, and his own ghost haunted him and finally betrayed him.

* * *

Now there is an artificial situation if you like, just as "Frankenstein" is in every sense an artificial tale, but it is full of dramatic possibilities. Call it melodramatic if you prefer, the possibilities remain. And Locke always makes the most of his possibilities. He gets the reader's sympathy; he makes you want to see the thing come out right, and then he makes it come out right.

The first of these is the hardest; therein is the triumph of style. It is Locke's easy, lucid, felicitous phrasing, his sparkling manner, that enlists the reader's interest on the first page and keeps it riveted till the last. He does not need to be probable. He is plausible. If he were both, of course he would be an author of genius instead of talent. The first rule of fiction is not that a thing shall have happened, but that it shall seem to have happened; and as long as you listen to Locke you believe him. You can analyze his books all to pieces afterward, but not till afterward, because you will not stop for analysis until you have read through.

His sheer charm will even compel you to swallow unprotestingly his thoroughly English snobbery—which is never so apparent as when he is denying it—his shallow propaganda, his absurd moral attitudes. Nobody ever notices or cares that he has fought the war over several times and each time to a different conclusion. Nobody is even annoyed, for that matter, that he seems to feel he fought it all alone. But above all, how restful to see something done by a man who knows how.

Shop Talk

The **Countess de Chambrun**, whose first novel "Playing With Souls," has just been published, was Miss Clara Longworth, of Cincinnati, a sister of Congressman Nicholas Longworth, and hence also sister-in-law of Alice Roosevelt. Mme. de Chambrun is known in France as a scholar, and has received a doctor's degree from the Faculté des Lettres. Among her works are "The Sonnets of Shakespeare" and "Giovanni Florio, an Apostle of the Renaissance in England in the Time of Shakespeare." Florio, by the way, was Milton's brother-in-law and the first translator of Montaigne. The Count de Chambrun is a great grandson of the Marquis de Lafayette, and was Chief Liaison Officer between the French and American armies during the war. He is also the author of "The American Army in the European Conflict," which his wife has translated.

* * *

The old home of James Russell Lowell, at Cambridge, Mass., still has a literary tenant. It is now occupied by **A. Kingsley Porter**, who is busy with a stupendous work on "Romanesque Sculpture of the Pilgrimage Routes," which will be illustrated with 1,300 illustrations in eleven separate portfolios.

* * *

The Allied Arts gold medal of the American Institute of Architects has been awarded to **Frederic W. Goudy** for "meritorious work in the art of typography." Mr. Goudy has designed no fewer than fifty different types, and has just published a volume on "The Elements of Lettering."

* * *

A travel book will be the next effort of **Webb Waldron**, who wrote "The Road to the World." Mr. Waldron has been "doing" the region of the Great Lakes this summer, and reports it full of interest, notable scenery and picturesque people, especially strange religious sects. One such considers itself the Lost Tribe of Benjamin, and is expecting the millennium soon.

* * *

Thirty thousand dollars was offered to **Kathleen Norris**, and declined by her, for the serial rights to "Certain People of Importance" before it was published in book form. The reason for her refusal was that she did not want the book cut, as would have been necessary. Mrs. Norris worked on this book for nearly four years, but during the same period of time she also produced several shorter novels for serialization, and about forty short stories. She declares this type of plotless novel is much harder to handle than the kind with a set plot. The book was begun in Brazil, and continued all over Europe and America.

* * *

In addition to being one of the most popular writers of detective stories **J. S. Fletcher**, the author of "Ravensdene Court," is a fellow of the Royal Historical Society and an authority on Yorkshire. He has written many monographs on Yorkshire in its various historical aspects. He will have another detective story out in October.

* * *

"The London Daily Telegraph" finds the manners of American society "peculiar" as revealed in **Margaret Deland's** "The Vehement Flame," especially the "torrential slang of Mrs. Deland's young women and the horse play of their taffy-pulling parties." There is no slang in English novels, or, any how, no taffy pulling.

* * *

An extraordinary personality passed with the death of **Wilfrid Scawen Blunt**, whose "Diaries," published this year, form a running commentary on European affairs for more than thirty years. Blunt was an aristocrat, an old-fashioned liberal, a champion of lost causes; he spent a year in jail in the 80's for taking the side of the Irish; he traveled much in Asia and Africa, especially among the Arabs; he spent a fortune breeding and buying Arab horses and introducing them to England, for he was very rich, and he was fond of Arab dress. His wife, Lady Anne Blunt, was a granddaughter of Byron. Their early married life was romantically happy, but they quarreled and separated later, and Blunt also had painful disagreements and lawsuits with his only daughter. Blunt's birth, wealth and talents enabled him to meet almost every important or interesting personage of his time, and he has something to say of all of them in his "Diaries."

* * *

Richard Blaker, author of "The Voice in the Wilderness," lives now in the New Forest, not far from Southampton, England, but he has traveled much. He has seen something of India, Egypt, Palestine, Germany, Austria and southern Russia, and has also visited the Ford factory at Detroit, which he considers the greatest wonder he ever saw.

* * *

The younger poets of America have founded a new organ for their productions, "Caprice," a magazine to be published in Los Angeles. The editor is **David N. Grokowsky** and the first issue will contain poems by **Lew Sarett, Mark Turbyfill, Oscar Williams, Oliver Jenkins, Louis Grudin, Rex Hunter, John Drury, Hi Simons, Pearl Andelson, Juan Fujita, Virgil Geddes, Hardin Masters** (the son of Edgar Lee Masters), and others. Rex Hunter, of New York, and John Drury, of Chicago, are associated with the venture.

Paris News Letter

By Lewis Galantière

IF YOU wandered, one day or another, in the basilica of Sacré-Cœur, that white, un-Christian church whose faery dome, like that of a mosque in which good Mussulmans should rock in prayer, dominates Paris from the height of Montmartre, you might encounter a man in a workman's blouse who is one of its most fervent habitués. His friends, dining in the open on the Place du Tertre, call him to share their wine, and the name they cry is Max Jacob. When, with Pablo Picasso for sponsor, he was converted to the true faith, this Jew born in Brittany (a Jew born in Brittany is rarer than a day in June), was named for Saint Cyprien. When I last saw him, he was boarding with a woman who owned a little grocery on the hill and he spent most of his evenings listening to the old wives' tales of his neighbors as they sat over their "pinard" in the back of the shop. He told fortunes and drew horoscopes; his one luxury was a collection of ties of varying color, selected for daily wear appropriate to the corresponding planet. His personality gave off a mingling of sweetness, carelessness and restlessness combined with satanic malice; he appeared and disappeared irregularly, and his appearance was always marked by repentance, his disappearance always the result of a season of folly. From time to time, he let himself be dragged off to the great houses of the cosmopolitan elite, then for a while he would live like a hermit. He has published his own books, and sold them himself, he has painted, exhibited in the chic establishment of Bernheim, and had high prices for his canvases. He resembles in many ways his late friend, Guillaume Appolinaire, and like the latter he is the apostle of "futurist" and "nutty" literature. The two books which he published in the last year, "Le Roi de Beotie" and "Le Cabinet Noir," class him as a humorist of quality who, beneath a mask of ferocious and sarcastic gayety, writes feelingly of the misery of existence.

There is little in these books of Jacob's theories of "poetic transposition" and "situation." Here his realism is not transposed but direct; it is the photographic imitation, the copy, of life. We lean wih him over the shoulder of a woman to look at this letter which she writes to the lover who has abandoned her:

"Charles! After what has passed I must write to you. Alas! the time is past when we were rolling happily on the sand; the dial of our hearts marks a graver hour. You understood this, Charles. An author whose name I don't remember said, 'On ne badine pas avec l'amour.' You played with mine. I haven't a piano any more; why, or, rather, for whom? There are three kinds of apartments—stylish, serious and artistic. You don't like white lacquer! You are responsible for the changes. My apartment was stylish. We began by playing under the big umbrella on the beach, and now you tell me that I have weighed on your life and that you have to go back to your job with the United Shippers. Do you think it is nothing to have changed my furniture because you don't like white lacquer?" . .

There are six—no, there are three hundred pages like this, exposing the poor, sordid lives in all their detail of the French lower middle-class. Since Courteline has stopped writing, Andre Billy remarks, there is only Jacob to replace him.

Henry Becque is known to all who are interested in French drama as the author of "Les Corbeaux." In "Comœdia" of August 20 I happened upon the first publication of a sonnet which he wrote long years ago and which, for its verisimilitude, its tragic honesty and the force of its spare economy seems to me to deserve reprinting here.

Je n'ai rien qui me la rappelle,
Pas de portrait, pas de cheveux,
Je n'ai pas une lettre d'elle;
Nous nous détestions tous les deux.

J'etais brutal et langoureux;
Elle était ardente et cruelle;
Amour d'un homme malheureux
Pour une maîtresse infidèle.

Un jour nous nous sommes quittés,
Après tant de félicités,
Tant de baisers et tant de larmes;

Comme deux ennemis rompus,
Que leur haine ne soutient plus,
Et qui laissent tomber leurs armes.

The last three lines of this sonnet carry it into the domain of poetry.

Mr. Maurice Barrès is eminently embarrassed. He wrote a beautiful novel, "Un jardin sur l'Oronte" which I noticed here some weeks ago. Mr. José Vincent, literary editor of "La Croix", a prominent Catholic daily, finds this novel to be shocking pabulum for Catholic readers and excommunicates it categorically in a recent issue of his paper. Mr. Barrès is perturbed and replies feebly through the medium of another Catholic newspaper, "L'Echo de Paris" that his "conception of life is the traditional and Catholic French idea" and that, while he understands and welcomes the strictures of the "anti-French" press, he believes Mr. José Vincent to be unjust. "Must we," he cries, "condemn art?"

I fear very much that Mr. José Vincent has the right on his side. The heroine of Mr. Barrès is an unredeemed pagan and the delight he took in portraying her is only too patent. Tolstoi, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Mr. Vincent have, as good Christians, no authority to exalt art. You may read the four gospels from one end to the other and you will find that there is one point upon which they are all in agreement—they contain no word in honor of art, letters or science. Their teaching is purely moral and religious; intellectual culture is not mentioned for an instant. And the "Imitation" of Thomas Aquinas warns us against being touched by "the subtle and beautiful words of men" and tells us that "it is more profitable to renounce all than to study subtle things." Bossuet blames those who "in the time for prayer and the practice of virtue give themselves to the study of history and philosophy, or to the reading of new books, romances, comedies, poetry." . . .

Mr. Barrès wrote a delightful tale, sensuous and not very edifying. The righteous thunder of Mr. Vincent follows him. He reaps the whirlwind—and his book sells in the fifty thousands.

I cannot remember when Mr. Han Ryner was elected "prince des conteurs." In any event, he has since become the saint of another of the literary chapels of Paris and I believe that there now exists a kind of Ryner club, worshipers of a Ryner cult and probably attired in Ryner garb, like the Raymond-Duncanites. Mr. Ryner's last book is called "Les Véritables Entretiens de Socrate." His thesis is an attractive one, holding that Socrates deserved his death "because it is true that Socrates, obeying the laws of nature, or, as he preferred to say, the unwritten laws nobly violated the written laws and the orders of the city. The laws of the city revenged themselves shamefully, as is their custom." Socrates, in other words, was an anarchist of the type of Mr. Ryner, and neither Plato (for whom Mr. Ryner has found an infamous surname) nor Xenophon understood his preceptor. Any attack on Plato is bound to be welcomed by æsthetics, and by the young generally, but one would wish it a little less lumbering, less dull and lighter of hand than the touch of Mr. Ryner.

Just Published

Broken Barriers

A NOVEL OF AMERICAN LIFE OF TO-DAY, BY

Meredith Nicholson

At all bookstores. $2.00

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS, Fifth Ave., NEW YORK

WE RECOMMEND **BLACK PAWL**

A bold and straightforward drama of real, red-blooded life is the story of Black Pawl, Captain of a whaler in the South Seas; Red Pawl, his son, grown morose and surly from the father's resentment toward the wife who had deserted them both; Ruth, the daughter and the storm-center; Dan, the mate, and the deck-hand who precipitates the final tragedy. The interaction of motive, and the strong, distinctive character-drawing in which this author excels, set the story apart from the year's novels and will stimulate the reader tired of embroidered trivialty. By the author of "Evered."

BEN AMES WILLIAMS

Price, $2.00 Postage extra — E. P. Dutton & Company — 681 Fifth Ave., NEW YORK

A Novel By

Charles Hanson Towne

The CHAIN

"It is a book to linger over. An entertaining and an interesting novel, vividly picturing idealistic youth meeting reality and remaining undismayed."
—Louise Maunsell Field, in the New York *Times*.

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS, Publishers, New York

TALES OF CHINATOWN

At all Bookstores $1.75

DOUBLEDAY, PAGE & CO.

SAX ROHMER

BOOKS BOUGHT

Entire Libraries or Single Volumes. Highest prices paid. Representative will call. Cash paid and books removed promptly.

WOMRATH & PECK, INC.

Formerly Henry Malkan, Inc. 42 Broadway. Phone Broad 3900

A Marvellous, Astounding and Absorbing Book

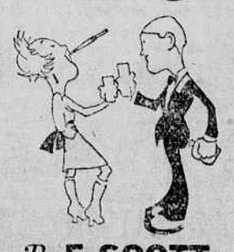
Beasts, Men and Gods

By Ferdinand Ossendowski

The New York Tribune: "In many ways 'Beasts, Men and Gods' is quite unique, . . . It is a remarkable human document, too. . . . A Polish scientist is cast by the maelstrom of the Russian revolution into the heart of wildest Mongolia. The result is this book . . . and it is a veritable Odyssey. . . . In addition to all this, the book is full of sidelights on current political and religious conditions in Eastern Asia."

Price $3.00 Postage Extra. E. P. DUTTON & CO. 681 FIFTH AVE. NEW YORK

Tales of the Jazz Age

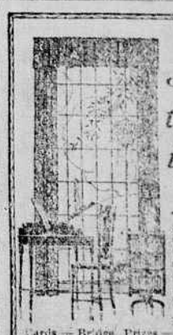


By F. SCOTT FITZGERALD

Author of THE BEAUTIFUL AND DAMNED *and* THIS SIDE OF PARADISE

At all bookstores $1.75

Charles Scribner's Sons



Setting the House in Order

Suggestions

STATIONERY for personal and family use — Correspondence Cards — Engraved Invitations — Writing Papers — Domestic and Imported Papers — Cards — Bridge Prizes — Desk Sets — Book Ends — Leather Novelties — Games.

New Publications

Fiction, History, Travel, Memoirs — in English, French, Italian, Spanish and other languages.

Magazines

Single copies and Subscriptions for all Magazines and Periodicals published in this country and abroad. Fashion Journals.

BRENTANO'S

Booksellers to the World.

Fifth Avenue, New York