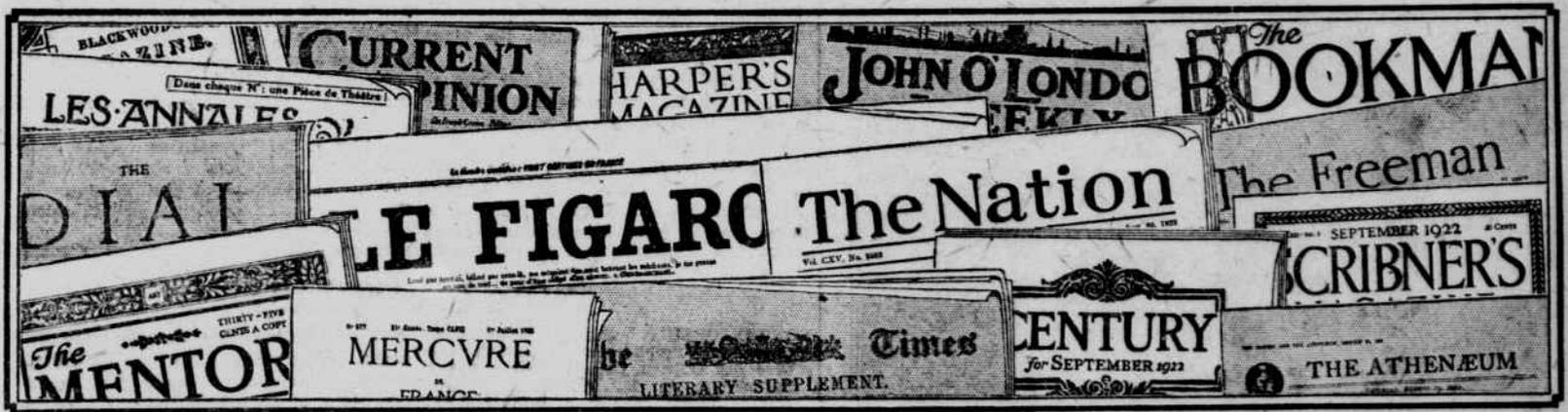


The World of Letters As Others See It



"The Pomp of Power."

IT seems to be admitted now that the author of "The Pomp of Power" is, as was suggested in these columns at the time the book was published, Mr. Laurance Lyon, the Canadian barrister, who was for three years member for Hastings and a one time proprietor of the *Outlook*, and who during recent years has resided principally in Paris. It is said that he is now at work on a companion volume.—From the *British Weekly*.

The Scepter of Artistic Dominance.

I CONSIDER that the scepter of artistic dominance began to pass as long as twenty years ago from the nations who then held it—that is, from England, France and Germany—to other nations whose energy enables them to accept the great legacy. These other nations are America, Russia and Italy, and it is from these rivalries and cooperations that the new social order and the new art and literature will emerge; with our assistance, I hope, for we are younger than they all, and essentially more energetic than the three together. Ireland may never have existed as a political entity, but as a center of essential energy Ireland deserves to be ranked as one of the wonders of the world.—From "The Outlook for Literature." By James Stephens in the *Century*.

Dickens's Characters at Table.

GARGANTUA'S birth feast is the classic example of banqueting on a really huge scale. Dickens's meals are mostly comic—David and Dora in difficulties with a barrel of unopened oysters; Mr. Pecksniff and his daughters, striving to impress the new pupil, young Martin Chuzzlewit, with slim sandwiches, Captain biscuits, a "highly geometrical cake," and currant wine. "Pickwick" is, of course, packed with good, sound patriotic English feasting, from the footmen's "swarry" (leg of mutton and trimmings) to the jovial Christmas dinner at Dingley Dell.—From "Food in Fiction" in *John O'London's Weekly*.

The Ten Essential Novels.

THE *Daily Express* in London has begun a controversy on the "ten novels every one should read," and one of the writers gives a list which is "essential to every educated person." It contains "Vanity Fair," "Esmond," "David Copperfield," "The Old Curiosity Shop," "Jane Eyre," "Wuthering Heights," "The Mill on the Floss," "The Newcomes," "Tess of the D'Urbervilles" and "Don Quixote." The mid-Victorian proclivities are obvious, though it is a little difficult to understand why all reference to George Meredith has been omitted. Perhaps, however, the compiler of this list does not regard Meredith as a novelist so much as an analytical essayist.—From the *Christian Science Monitor*.

The Gutenberg Bible.

VERY few copies of the book are known. There is one in the Huntington Library for which Mr. Huntington gave £10,000; there are not, one is sure, more than a dozen copies in the world altogether. Mr. Gabriel Wells, the New York bookseller, bought one when in Lon-

don last year, but it was an imperfect copy, and so he thought he could take it leaf by leaf and make a multitude of separate books of it. And so it comes about that I am the happy possessor of two of these wonderful pages. "It has been urged," says Mr. Edward Newton in a sensible introduction, "that printing is the only art in which no progress has been made; that the first example of printing is the best." Those who have the privilege of examining one of these pages will be inclined to agree with this.—From the *London Sphere*.

More About Maeterlinck's Translator.

IT was Oscar Wilde who, when the last dark hours came to him in Paris, said, "I am dying beyond my income." Of a malady new even to a tried experience, Teixeira de Mattos remarked, "Is death imminent? Why do I always have the rarer disorders?" He loved life to the end, and no doubt wore his white topper to the last "Academy Day" he was able to attend. "If," he would frankly communicate with Mr. McKenna, "you will wear your goodish white topper today I will wear mine." Once "when these conspicuous headpieces were in evidence," he led the way to Covent Garden Market, saying, "It is not every day that the women of the market see two men in such hats, such coats and such spats standing before a fruit stall with their canes crooked over their arms and their yellow gloves protruding from their pockets consuming the first green figs of the year in the year's first sunshine."—From the *London Graphic*.

Lloyd George and—Six Figures.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE will come forth at a single step to the head of all the authors that ever were. No sooner did the subservient editors make the announcement than they prophesied, loudly and confidently, the success of their hero. Of course they judge the masterpiece by a single standard—the immediate profit which it will make. They began by hinting that they would not be surprised if the genius of the great man were not rewarded by six figures, and after the simple passage of a week they declared, openly and with authority, that six figures had already been offered and accepted. There's a triumph for you! Mr. Lloyd George, already the Welsh Pitt, will emerge after a brief recess as the Welsh Shakespeare. But with this difference: that Shakespeare wrote and worked for many a year and never could boast of six figures in all his inglorious life.—From "Musings Without Method" in *Blackwood Magazine*.

The Author of "Ulysses."

IT has been maintained by a recent critic of Swift that the caricature of humanity in *Gulliver* was suggested by Swift's observation of the "Wild Irish." Swift, however, bore the Teagues of his time no ill will; but Mr. Joyce is so minutely personal in his mockery that the doubt arises whether his original intention—to catch in a work of art the whole phantasmagoria of a day of life in Dublin—has not been prejudiced by something short of good humor. Thus A. E. passes by, and Mr. Joyce sets us all cackling. It is extremely well done, and we cannot help joining in, but it is not—shall I say—

very high class. I except all that relates to Bloom in this epic work. In the philosophic Bloom Mr. Joyce has added a few character to that company of real imaginary personalities whom we know better than our nearest acquaintances, perhaps better than ourselves.—By John Eglington in the *Dial*.

British "Wit" and "This Freedom."

"WHY is Mr. Hutchinson's novel 'If Winter Comes' like the Royal Academy catalogue?" a Londoner asked in my hearing some weeks ago. The answer was "Because every one is struggling to borrow it," and there followed a laugh over a queer encounter in a circulating library. Though the book is in the thirty-first British edition thousands of slow readers have only begun to realize its existence. They creep up in restaurants and on railway platforms to a suspected professor and say, "I wonder if by any chance you could lend me 'If Winter Comes.'" Acquaintances become dear friends if they can spare, even from Saturday to Monday, a copy of the precious story. The borrower soon finds it necessary to buy a copy for himself.—From "The Correspondence of Claudius Clear" in the *British Weekly*.

The Men of Yesterday and To-day.

I HAVE often expressed the wish that more of our contemporary critics and men of letters would follow the excellent example of Mr. Gamaliel Bradford in going back over the field of American literature and picking out certain figures for reassessment and reevaluation. I am not a nationalist in these matters; I do not wish to see more attention given to American writers than they deserve, and I am quite free to say that a great many of the American writers now before the public seem to me to be getting much more attention than they deserve. On the other hand, I do not wish to see them neglected, as I am convinced some of them are being neglected. It is unfortunate that so many of us must accept this or that estimate of American writers without really knowing the best that those writers can do or—which is perhaps the same thing—without knowing whether they have any special significance for us, at our present stage of development, and what, if any, that significance is.—From "A Reviewer's Note Book" in the *Freeman*.

Mrs. Warre Cornish.

MRS WARRE CORNISH died on August 9 in her seventy-fifth year. She was the widow of Francis Warre Cornish, late Vice-Provost of Eton and author of "Jane Austen" in the English Men of Letters Series. Her brother, Sir Richmond Ritchie, married Thackeray's gifted daughter; and from her youth up Mrs. Cornish was acquainted with the best artists of her time. Last winter she published in our own columns her very interesting reminiscences of Tennyson, and in early womanhood she wrote two novels which are still readable. But she never attempted to make a career of authorship, and it was only in her large private circle that the full extent of her gifts and the force of her character were known. Wit and deep feeling were united in her; her interest in literature never flagged, and her judgment was independent and good

until the end, and the vigor and directness of her conversation made a deep impression on all who met her. Her talents were inherited by her children, of whom Gerald, killed in the war, died just as a rare gift for writing was reaching its maturity.—From the *London Mercury*.

Browning in French.

"ROBERT BROWNING IN FRENCH" does not sound an altogether promising proposition. Indeed, of all the modern poets of England one would imagine that he would be the most difficult to interpret to a foreigner. In spite of all drawbacks, however, an interesting selection of Browning's poems has been made by two translators, Paul Alfassa and Gilbert de Voisins, who have grappled by no means unsuccessfully with the acknowledged difficulties of the "enigmatic" poet. Mary Duclaux writes a foreword which is to all intents and purposes a careful study carried out in a fashion which must be undoubtedly agreeable to French readers. Mme. Duclaux is not afraid of grappling with problems either of interpretation or translation, and the little book published by the Librairie Grasset is an admirable example of that difficult art of translation of which the late Mr. Teixeira de Mattos was an acknowledged master.—From the *London Daily Telegraph*.

An English View of Chesterton in America.

WHAT a pity it is, Mr. Chesterton very sensibly remarks in the course of these American notes, that Dickens wrote "Martin Chuzzlewit" in such a sulky temper! If his mood had been only a little less glum he might have kept all the humors of his picture of the United States and yet sweetened them with a touch of kindness. We might then have had an Elijah Pogram and a Jefferson Brick for whom we should have felt the kind of affection that we do for Mr. Pickwick or Captain Cuttle. As it is, even Mark Tapley's jollity is too much of a spell of the dry grins. Failing this aid from Dickens, Mr. Chesterton has had to do the best he can for himself. He is not at all a bad substitute, if not for "the new Martin Chuzzlewit" at any rate for the new Mark Tapley, and he certainly got a great deal of fun out of his lecture tour.—From the *London Times*.

Writing for the Screen.

SEVERAL years ago, when I was working for a moving picture company, an organization of writers asked me to talk to them about writing for the screen. The only thing I said was that the best way to write for the screen was to forget the screen and write as well as they knew how. Anything less than that, I pointed out, would be unfair to both the writer and the screen. Unless the screen could make use of the writer's finest work he would be doing himself a grave injustice to take it into consideration. Moreover, the screen, though it had not then discovered the fact, was in dire need of real literature, literature embodying American ideas and ideals, and writing done to measure would prevent the screen from developing to a point where it would be the author's servant and not his master.—By R. B. in the *Christian Science Monitor*.