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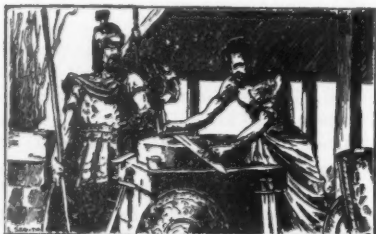
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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received.

Fiction

MR. WELD RETIRES. By ARTHUR D. WELTON. Sears. 1933. \$2.

A run-of-the-mill product that should reach the screen before the year is much older. Mr. Weld was "the old man" to his employees, but he found it difficult to think of himself as in any sense being old. His sons found it easy and boosted him into the perfunctory position of chairman of the board of the company he had spent a lifetime in building. Mr. Weld, with time hanging heavy on his hands, cultivated the acquaintance of the park habitués, and it was not long before he had more on his hands than time. There was the philosopher; there was Mazie; there was the Salvation Army man; there was a stolen necklace, a robbery, a murder, and a nice mess of complications to be resolved. These complications are in time solved; Mazie, the talented little girl, who could box like a man, sketch, play music, and be generally endearing, found a safe haven. Her father got shot, the dastardly Salvation Army man got his, the philosopher got shot, too, but recovered. Everything turned out fine.

THE FALLOW LAND. By H. E. BATES. New York: Robert O. Ballou. 1933. \$2.50.

A straightforward novel of the soil, such as Mr. H. E. Bates presents in his "The Fallow Land," confines its author within fairly definite limits as to plot, characters, and general tone. It is almost a necessity that the people in such a story should lead hard lives, should become, with the exception of the inevitable wastrels, strong and silent men and women, and in the end should be left worn and broken by their struggles against nature. Mr. Bates's new novel conforms to this pattern, and is surely among the most cheerless of its type, yet its simplicity and genuineness do much to rescue it from the rather dreary run of such things, and on the whole succeed in making the reader aware of the Mortimers as real people living in a real place.

The principal character is a woman, a stranger from the town, who nevertheless lives the life of the farm even before she has married the brutal and drunken son. Gradually, with the passing of time, she identifies herself with the place, and becomes not only head of the family after being deserted by her husband, but also makes it temporarily a success. The failure of her efforts and the tragedy of her children make up the rest of a book remarkable for its strength and a firm narrative style of rare merit. It is perhaps not of any great significance or originality since it is somewhat lacking in imaginative power but with all these limitations it makes its points admirably. Finally, Mr. Bates's creation of Deborah deserves to rank with the best things he has done, which, as readers of "Two Sisters" will remember, is no faint praise.

THE DUCHESS INTERVENES. By MARIE BELLOC LOWNDES. Putnam. 1933. \$2.

Before the war, books of the particular species represented by Mrs. Belloc Lowndes's latest novel were more common than now. In fact, in the more obscure European pensions one still finds dozens of these best-sellers of yesteryear, each one indistinguishable in looks and quality from its fellows, reposing amidst a dusty flotsam and jetsam consisting of outdated Baedekers and Anglican prayer books. The old maids of both sexes who make up the larger part of the population in these places do, however, still follow with assiduity the adventures of these Edwardian heroes and heroines of high birth and incredible attractions, and it is possible that Mrs. Belloc Lowndes has been writing with a shrewd eye on the Tauchnitz trade, which still demands such naive romances.

The Duchess who is her principal character in this series of stories has a saving grain of humor, as well as the usual rather arch tendency to be naughty and unducal. The various episodes of her career are well laid out for a star character of this sort, though they are in the main only too familiar and conventional. Her Grace intervenes with uniform success in the affairs of her family and friends, and only once seems to be faced with anything recognizably post-war. This is when her two sons fall in love with the wards of a great

sugar magnate, who has not, decidedly not, the qualifications other than monetary which are prerequisite in alliances with the noble house of Richborough. Daringly, Mrs. Belloc Lowndes makes her Duchess approve and help on the matches, merely because she likes the girls concerned.

While the author has neither the wit of "Elizabeth" nor the farcical sense of Mr. E. F. Benson, she makes her characters go through their well rehearsed paces with assurance, and her book, if unimportant, is always pleasant and readable. It might even be recommended as railway literature, particularly for use en route to an English country house party, once *Punch* and *The Tatler* have been exhausted.

SLOW JOE. By Max Brand. Dodd, Mead. \$2.

JESS ROUNDTREE, TEXAS RANGER. By Dane Coolidge. Dutton. \$2.

SOME FAKE A LOVER. By Ann Du Pre. Macaulay. \$2.

PRIVATE PRACTICE. By A. L. Furman. Macaulay. \$2.

SILVER MAGIC. By Elizabeth Carfrae. Putnam. \$2.

THE PRISON WALL. By Ethel M. Dell. Putnam. \$2.

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SUDDEN SWEETHEART. By Bertha Ruck. Dodd, Mead. \$2.

THE FATHER BROWN OMNIBUS. By G. K. Chesterton. Dodd, Mead. \$3.

FROM PILLAR TO POST. By Helen R. Martin. Dodd, Mead. \$2.

COME EASY, GO EASY. By Arthur Mason. Day. \$2.50.

THE PRINCESS OF SAMOA. By Claude B. Carter. Boston: Bruce Humphries. \$2.

Travel

SARDINIAN SIDESHOW. By AMELIE POSSE-BRAGDOVA. Dutton. 1933. \$3.

There is an old Sardinian proverb, "Dolori Springi Boxi," signifying "Suffering bursts forth into soul," which admirably defines the flavor of these memoirs. By the window at her writing table, the author frames her apology for them, as she gazes out across a plain in Bohemia towards the castle of Dux where the aged Casanova sat scribbling his memoirs for thirteen years. Amelie Posse-Bragdova's fragmentary narrative is one more angle, though an indirect one, on the war and its unbelievable workings. Of course, collectively it becomes much more than that to a then young and impressionable artist bride and her husband.

Following the Via Flaminia in 1915, close to Rome, one would have come upon the pine woods of Strohl Fern, the old Alsatian, where an artist colony formed a kind of republic, an "anachronistic idyll." To this the author was destined soon to belong. From Stockholm she had "travelled south towards Spring (1915) across the whole of warring Central Europe," to marry the Czech painter Oki Brazda. With lively conversational simplicity and a sort of careless picturesqueness of phrase and an originality and wit that gives a fine luminosity to the contents—she contrasts the peaceful Bohemian colony's existence with the growing interest and insistent clamorings of the interventionists in Rome for war.

Perhaps all too swiftly, then, come the new internment orders. The couple are forced to go to Sardinia, and treated like prisoners, being only allowed to choose their locality. Ironically they are classed with the enemy Austrians, whose subjects they unwillingly are. Amelie Bragdova adapts herself immediately and always to her new environment. Her evident estheticism and wide culture illuminate with interest all she sees and does. In Algi'hero, interned with five Polish priests for company, the "Sardinian Sideshow" is alternately grim, gay, sublime, beautiful, and disgusting.

The graphic account of the author's return to Rome and the wearisome months of struggle to secure independence for the unfortunate Czechs, are not so appealing as the chapters on Sardinian crafts and peasant art. Nevertheless, though it lacks the poetic quality of Axel Munthe's prose, and is somewhat overburdened by too much sheer description, this book, "unusual in its broad human outlook," deserves the praise it has already won overseas.



It is interesting to observe the increasing number of people who, despite the thunder of the blarbs, are not afraid to be seen reading a book at least two months old; viz. and to wit, the continuous appearance on the national best-seller lists of *Flowering Wilderness* by John Galsworthy, *Our Times: 1904-1914* by Mark Sullivan, *The March of Democracy* by James Truslow Adams, *Death in the Afternoon* by Ernest Hemingway

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"has written an urbane, amusing and terrifically intelligent novel filled with wit, satire, nose thumbing, high jinx, and the comic imbecilities of Foreign Offices." —*New York Herald Tribune*.

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