

Love During Depression

Readers who have come to look upon Emily Hahn as an interpreter of Africa, by reason of her gay book of African exploration, *Congo Solo*, and her novel of native African life, *With Naked Foot*, may be surprised to discover that she is just as deft in reporting metropolitan life. She does it in *Affair*, a novel of life and love in New York during the depression.

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BOOKS • REVIEWS • AUTHORS

U. S. Writer Takes
Foreign Scene for
Series of New Novels

It is unusual for an American writer to take a foreign scene for his novels and make it peculiarly his own. That is just what Jay William Hudson has done, however. Professor of Philosophy in the University of Missouri, author of well-known scholarly books, Jay William Hudson in his novels of Gascony has written fiction that is distinguished by beauty of style and a keen insight into the characters and ways of life of the Gascon folk. On March 29, D. Appleton-Century Company published a new Gascon novel by Mr. Hudson, entitled *Morning in Gascony*.

Morning in Gascony is the third of Mr. Hudson's novels whose scene is laid in picturesque Gascony, in Southern France, following his *Abbé Pierre* and *Abbé Pierre's People*. The three, while entirely independent stories, form a trilogy, interpreting a fascinating and little-known people and country to the English-speaking world.

Gascony was an almost unexploited country in English fiction until Mr. Hudson's well-known *Abbé Pierre* was published. Up to then, most persons were familiar with the Gascon chiefly through Dumas and Rostand. But while these authors depict Gascon characters, the scene is not Gascony.

The author has had an exceptional opportunity to come into intimate contact with the peasants of this ancient province. He has studied at first hand their customs, their superstitions, their outlook upon life. His wife was born in Gascony.

These three novels, culminating in *Morning in Gascony* depict successively: the old Gascony (*Abbé Pierre*); the transition Gascony (*Abbé Pierre's People*); the new Gascony (*Morning in Gascony*), as follows:

Abbé Pierre is laid in a Gascony which is still delightfully medieval, especially as represented in the little village, the scene of its idyllic story, a village off the main highways of travel, sequestered from the modern world. The people, picturesque in their red sashes, blue berets and wooden shoes, still cling to their ancient customs and superstitions, living in houses whose plastered fronts and red-tiled roofs are mellowed by centuries.

Abbé Pierre's People depicts the Gascony of about five years later. Gradually, surely, the outside world is beginning to touch it. The younger people of its villages are hearing the call of progress and are leaving these immemorial scenes for the cities. The population of the village in which the story is placed is dwindling. The houses are falling more and more into disrepair. A few modern improvements creep into their life: threshing machines and an automobile or two. Still, one cannot say that Gascony is modernized yet. It is still fascinatingly different from the rest of the world. But the beginning of change has come. *Abbé Pierre's People* unfolds a slow, an almost imperceptible transition from the old to the new.

Morning in Gascony is laid in the Gascony of today. The old Gascony is now fast disappearing, even in the remote little town of Sardac, where the action of the novel takes place, and where the progressive citizens welcome modern innovations with the boast that Sardac is at last taking its rightful place in the march of progress.

The automobile oil of an American company is advertised in flaring red on the side of the town hall. The roads are being resurfaced. The ancient

"American Language Will
Soon Predominate World"

The English language is now the first language of the world, spoken by more races and peoples than any other; but in the end it will be conquered by the American language. Indeed, it has almost done so already. So argues Henry L. Mencken in his article, "The Future of English," in the April number of Harper's Magazine.

"It is really too late for the English to guard the purity of their native tongue," says Mr. Mencken, "for so many Americanisms have already got into it that, on some levels at least, it is now almost an American dialect. It has often amused me to count the Americanisms in articles written to put them down. There are hundreds of them in daily use in England, and many have become so familiar that an Englishman, on being challenged for using them, will commonly argue that they are actually English."

"Thus a note of despair reveals itself in the current oburgations, and there are Englishmen who believe that the time has come to compromise with the invasion, and even to welcome it. The father of this pro-American party seems to have been the late William Archer, who was saying so long ago as 1899 that Americans had 'enormously enriched the language, not only with new words, but (since the American mind is, on the whole, quicker and wittier than the English) with apt and luminous colloquial metaphors.' 'In England,' said Mrs. Wool not long ago, 'the word-coming power has lapsed. . . . When we want to freshen our speech we borrow from American — poppycock, rambunctious, flip-flop, booster, good mixer. All the expressive, ugly, vigorous slang which creeps into use among us, first in talk, later in writing, comes from across the Atlantic.'"

How to Play Better Baseball

By Ralph Henry Barbour and LaMar Sarra.

Ralph Henry Barbour, one of the boys' favorite writers, and LaMar Sarra, popular director of athletics at Plant High school, Tampa, Fla., have collaborated on an unusually practical book, *How to Play Better Baseball*. This volume is devoted exclusively to the perfecting of the amateur game of baseball, whether it be of the sandlot variety, with an organized neighborhood or city club, or on the school diamond. The authors have consistently kept in mind the limitations of the junior player. It tells him everything he wants to know about the game—how to bat, how to run bases, how to slide, how to pitch, and manage a team. Emphasis is placed on offensive playing in which the boy is primarily interested, although due attention is given to defensive playing.

arcades of the Maire are being repaired with cement. A branch bank is opened and does business once a week.

Thus it is that in the decade and a half covered by Mr. Hudson's three novels, the Gascony of the Middle Ages has dramatically become the Gascony of today. Sardac shares the fate of every remote corner of the world; it is being swept along, as Mr. Hudson shows it, in that triumphant sameness which threatens to make all humanity brothers! Externally, that is, but if one listens to Jay William Hudson one mustn't be too sure.

Newspapers in China
Described in Article
in Current Magazine

An American newspaper reporter would have a very difficult time finding his way around a Chinese paper according to an article in the May number of Harper's written by Dr. Lin Yutang and entitled "Some Hard Words About Confucius."

"The Chinese run their papers as they play their mahjong," says the author. "I have seen Chinese daily papers so edited as to require no editor-in-chief, whose business is but to write editorials. The man in charge of domestic news has his page; the man in charge of international cables has his, and the man is charge of city news again has his own ground. These four men handle their respective departments like the four hands at a mahjong table, each trying to guess what the others have got. Each tries to make up his set and throws out the unwanted bamboo to the next man."

"If there is too much domestic news, it can conveniently flow over (without warning, so far as the reader is concerned) to the page for city news; and if this again has too much copy, it can conveniently flow over to the murders and conflagrations. There is no necessity for front-page make-up, no selection, no coordination, no subordination. Each editor can retire at his own blessed hour. The scheme is simplicity itself. Moreover, both the editors and the readers are born individualists. It is the editor's business to publish the news, and the reader's business to look for it. They don't interfere with each other. This is the journalistic technic of some of the oldest, biggest, and most popular daily papers in China to this day."

"If you ask why there is no coordination, the answer is, there's no social mind. For if the editor-in-chief tried to initiate reforms and fire the city editor for obstruction, he would run up against the family system. What did he mean by interfering with other people's business? Did he mean to throw the city editor out and break his rice-bowl, starving all the people dependent upon him? And if the city editor's wife was the proprietor's niece, could he throw him out? If the editor-in-chief had any Chinese social consciousness, he would not attempt such a thing; but if he were a raw American returned graduate of the Missouri School of Journalism he would soon get out. Another man who knew Chinese social ways would get in; the old scheme would go on working; the readers would go on hunting for their news, and the paper would go on increasing its circulation and making money."

Six Stories From Shakespeare

By Hugh Walpole and others. Illustrated.

Six Stories from Shakespeare is the result of an interesting experiment in which six of the foremost writers of the day have cast in story form six of Shakespeare's most popular plays. Hugh Walpole does the story of "King Lear," John Buchan does "Coriolanus," Francis Brett Young does "Hamlet," Clemence Dane gives her story version of "The Taming of the Shrew," Viscount Snowden writes "The Merchant of Venice," and Winston Churchill contributes "Julius Caesar." The strength of the authorship of these stories makes the volume a remarkable one—a sort of modern counterpart of *Lamb's Tales*. Each story is appropriately illustrated by Fortunino Matania.