

standards and he has no taste. To him a constantly inflamed gypsy singer is of the same calibre as a brilliant and profound pianist. Both are European and both are Art. So it is impossible to say what directs him to the really impressive number of good things he chooses and brings over. Maybe he meets the people in the know; maybe he reads the better critics in the better journals.

Because of the wild acclaim that so many of his importations evoke from embarrassed-into-art-appreciation Americans and the packed houses they play to, it is imagined that he is swollen with wealth. This is true on the average of once every four years. The other three years he is either appalled to find that he went and imported an authentic artistic phenomenon which has drawn no more than its natural small attendance, or that this is not the year for such a presentation, backward America being understandably but contemptibly resistant. Still, art and the esoteric remain a racket, even to a mind attempting to delude itself into the higher things, so he takes the bad years with the good. And it is not hard to be graceful about it, since the good years amply atone for the bad.

It is extraordinary how well the public mind has gauged him and come to the realization that he is not an authentic aspect of the theatrical horizon, since he is completely forgotten during the three bad years and regarded with incredulity and high suspicion during the good one. These alternations between utter obscurity and blinding prominence have their due psychological effects on him. He changes with startling rapidity from a humble and bewildered maker of strange plans to an intolerably officious and demanding money magnate. And the cycle is never-ending.

His clothes are an intrinsic feature of his personality, though they range in the type from sheer exhibitionism to utter neutrality. In the one case, he cultivates eccentricities of color or form which are ridiculed and imitated, so that for a time, at least, he becomes a public figure; in the other case, his dress has that lack of distinction which is never mistakable for retiringness but which immediately conveys the wearer's incorrigible foreignness and his inability to look as if he and American clothing had ever come to a real understanding.

He has a passion for exotic foods and is often known to make a meal of *hors d'oeuvres a la norvegienne*. As a kind of check to this passion, he periodically insists on bacon and eggs to prove that he is no mere alien with uncontrollable nostalgia for the foods of his country.

He keeps every variety of drink and liqueur, but never touches a drop of it himself. His business, after all, is to make an impression with no foundation whatever, and he dare not trifle with a reputation compounded of air and water.

His apartment is strictly masculine, even if its style is a slightly insane melange. Russian ikons and French bric-a-brac jostle with British sporting prints while characterless American furniture stares down at a profoundly Oriental rug. His home is a place of business and a place of professional entertainment. When he wants ladies, he visits them in their own homes. Stories of his involvement with the most ravishing female members of his importations are in constant circulation. None of them has ever been accurate. His taste runs to the mature and the companionable.

His method of handling recalcitrant newspaper reviewers is brilliant and exemplary. With utter casualness he summons the harsh critic to his offices, gives the man a job of scholarly research to do which he swears could be done only by this critic (and which, of course, he never puts to use), pays him a pleasant fee for the service, and unflinchingly gets a good review with his consequent attraction.

He is about 50, tremendously in debt, and just about the last outpost of irresponsible individualism.

THE BOOK REVUE

THE CURTAIN FALLS—by Joseph V. Reed—Harcourt, Brace. (\$3.00.)

Mr. Reed wanted to get into the theatre in the worst way. He did! He was very anxious to avoid being an angel. They nicked him for a very handsome sum. He had little knowledge but a great deal of enthusiasm when he entered the producing business. He came out the same way.

What is wrong with the theatre? Let Kenneth MacGowan's partner tell you. It's those damn unions. Unwittingly, Reed has given us a convincing account of the bankruptcy of the theatre. Strange where some books of reminiscence will lead you.

THREE PLAYS—by Clifford Odets—Covici Friede. (\$3.00.)

Odets has a strong sense of dramatic values and an authentic ear. Which is another way of saying that he is the most startling arrival in the theatre since Eugene O'Neill (the O'Neill of "Beyond the Horizon" and before; not "Strange Interlude" and after). "Till the Day I Die" falls in the class of finger exercises. It is skillful, deft, but unconvincing. "Waiting for Lefty" packs startling power and precision. "Awake and Sing!" bears out the prediction that when the next great play is written—Odets is the boy who will do it.

FULLY DRESSED AND IN HIS RIGHT MIND—by Michael Fessier—Alfred A. Knopf. (\$2.50.)

A pleasant piece of froth that starts off boldly in the direction of whimsy, changes its mind and becomes a murder thriller and then goes back to whimsy, as if that was its intention all the time. You are supposed to be able to read this at one sitting (Publisher's Note). You'd better, for if you don't, you'll never come back to it.

TIME: THE PRESENT—by Tess Slesinger—Simon and Schuster. (2.50.)

Tess Slesinger works in a corrosive medium. Her short stories are exactly the shorter pieces one would expect from the author of "The Unpossessed." This gal is exceedingly bright and can put her brightness down in words that bear up under rereading. She has been compared to Dorothy Parker and Katherine Mansfield. Which merely proves that there are people who don't know the difference between a diet of tulips and good robust fare.

Miss Slesinger has vigor, insight and wit. These can be a dangerous combination of talents, but the author of "Time: The Present" has achieved a high average in avoiding the phony, manneristic pitfalls.

College Liberalism, Incorporated

TWO instructors and three technicians are expelled from Columbia University Medical School for participation in anti-war activities—Charges of "radicalism" threaten Professor Frederick L. Schuman with dismissal from the University of Chicago—Granville Hicks is dismissed as assistant professor of English at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute for a printed attack on the Book Review Section of the New York Times—Dr. Leinhard Bergel is asked to leave New Jersey College for Women for his anti-Nazi views—Because he organized a branch of the American Federation of Teachers, Professor Winslow Hallett is "fired" from Cedarcrest College, Uniontown, Pa.—The Universities of Chicago and Wisconsin order Legislative Red hunts—The states of California and Illinois seriously consider sweeping bills aimed at liberal and radical teachers—The loyalty oaths for teachers recently adopted in Arizona, Georgia, Michigan and New Jersey are effective licenses for authorities to snoop into the private beliefs of any teacher—Discussion of the college R.O.T.C. is taboo on the campus, having been forbidden by the trustees of Connecticut State College—At the University of California (Los Angeles), University of Chicago, Wisconsin University, Connecticut State College, Michigan State, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, more of the same thing.

LO! THE POOR INDIAN!

Associated Press Dispatch:

Akron, N. Y.—An ancient art, "mis-laid" for nearly two centuries, was revived today for a group of Seneca Indians as they gathered at a long forgotten flint quarry and were taught arrow and spear point chipping by Dr. Arthur C. Parker, director of the Rochester Museum of Arts and Sciences. The revival of the "mis-laid" art is being carried out by Dr. Parker as part of the TERA program on the Tonawanda Indian Reservation, aimed at educating Indians in the crafts of their ancestors.

THE GWENCH

by LAURENCE VAIL

"WHAT is that, father?"
 "My son, that's a gwench."
 "What does it do, poppa?"
 "My son, it's a she."
 "What does she do, father?"
 "My boy, she lays eggs."
 "Why doesn't she peck, father?"
 "My son, she does."
 "Why does she weep so much?"
 "She does it very easily. And it makes me ill."
 "Do you like her, papa?"
 "I do and I don't."
 "Why do you like her?"
 "She's warm. She smells nice."
 "Why don't you like her then?"
 "She's hot. I don't like her scent."
 "Why does she run, father?"
 "She wants me to follow."
 "Poppa, will you follow?"
 "Oh yes. I don't want to."
 "What are you going to do with her?"
 "I don't know. Ask her."
 "Will she speak the truth, poppa?"
 "Of course not. She can't."
 "Why can't she, pop?"
 "She likes to be liked."
 "Is she liked, father?"
 "No. But she's needed and loved."
 "Why do you hit her?"
 "Because she is weak."
 "But why do you hate her so?"
 "I am in love."
 "Why throw her so far, papa?"
 "My son, she might stick."
 "Papa, don't tear your hair out."
 "I'm afraid she won't stick."
 "Why does she lean on you?"
 "To make me feel strong."
 "Isn't that nice of her?"
 "My boy—that's a trick."
 "Why do you stand for it?"
 "I like her tricks."
 "Why do you like them?"
 "They are pretty, sincere."
 "You mean she means them?"
 "Yes, she is that mean."
 "Why is that mean, papa?"
 "It always works."
 "Why don't you leave her?"
 "Where could I go?"
 "To the café, father."
 "There are too many men."
 "Well, to the park, papa."
 "She might be there."
 "Go to sea, father."
 "Why? Mermaids have no legs."
 "Do you like her legs, popper?"
 "No, they can't walk."
 "Why can't they walk, popper?"
 "She will wear the wrong shoes."
 "But why does she wear them?"
 "To make me rage."
 "So you really hate her?"
 "I try very hard."
 "Why don't you try harder?"
 "I might succeed."
 "What do you want, father?"
 "The right sort of peace."
 "You mean alone, father?"
 "No, I mean with her."
 "Doesn't she like peace, papa?"
 "Sometimes. But I might be bored."
 "So she is a bore, father?"
 "My son, she is."
 "Why do you stay with her?"
 "I'm afraid to be bored."
 "Why does she roll her eyes so?"
 "She wants to be scratched."
 "Are you going to scratch her?"
 "No. I might fall in love."
 "Why shouldn't you love her?"
 "My son, it interferes."
 "With what does it interfere?"
 "With biting my nails."
 "Why do you sleep with her?"
 "To get out of the world."
 "Where are you going, father?"
 "Out, my son. To see the world."
 "What will you do there?"
 "My son, I must build a town."
 "Are you going to work, father?"
 "I'm going for a walk."
 "Why do you walk so much?"
 "My boy, I want to think."
 "Does she think too, father?"
 "No, she takes short cuts."
 "And you take the long way, papa?"
 "Yes, because it is long."
 "Is she stupid, father?"
 "No, she doesn't think."
 "What do you think about?"
 "About thinking, my son."
 "Does she mind, father?"
 "She might—if I thought."
 "Why don't you think, father?"
 "She gives me no time."
 "Isn't that mean of her?"
 "She thinks it is kind."
 "Is it kind of her, father?"
 "Much too kind, my son."
 "Why don't you tell her so?"
 "I'm afraid she might stop."
 "Will she stop, father?"
 "No, my son. She's wound up."
 "Who wound her up, papa?"
 "I did, by mistake."
 "Why does she lay eggs, papa?"
 "She says it's my fault."
 "Is it your fault, father?"
 "I hope so, my son."
 "If it isn't your fault, father?"
 "I'll knock her down."
 "Why don't you knock her down?"
 "She likes to lie down."