

Diaries of Kafka, Great Czech Novelist, Cover His Most Fruitful Literary Years

"THE DIARIES OF FRANZ KAFKA." Second edition. New York, Schocken, \$3.75.

"IF I WERE YOU." A novel. By Julian Green. New York, Harper, \$3.

By ROBERT W. MINTON

THE SECOND EDITION of "The Diaries of Franz Kafka" completes the great Czechoslovakian novelist's own view of himself. They cover his most fruitful literary years, 1914-23, when he wrote "The Trial," "The Castle," "In the Penal Colony" (recently published) and others. These years were also the ones of his worst torments, for in 1917 he contracted tuberculosis.

"Those who are still strangers to the writings of a man who more than any writer in this century has expressed the essence of modern man's tragedy need only know these facts to enjoy the diaries."

He was born in 1883 and died in 1924. His life aside from his writings was taken up with dull legal work in Central Europe, an abortive love affair and incessant masochistic introspection.

It is the introspection which makes his diaries one of the most fascinating works of literature since "Hamlet."

Let us not mention the word neurosis. It is too obvious. Here is a genius so choked with self-pity, self-doubt and spiritual emptiness that about every 10th day he can exclaim, "This is the end! I can't go on."

Yet he went on, not only living out a miserable existence but writing, writing and writing.

"THE DIARIES" consist on the one hand of remarkably vivid flashes of insight into his own sick soul and on the other of hundred of literary fragments which he was compelled to jot down. What a marvelous composition!

So entwined is his own life with that of his literary life that it is often difficult to know when he is writing about himself and when he is writing fiction (I am assuming that so-called autobiographical fiction is fiction and not autobiography).

In one entry he has just awakened when his friends come to call. Horrified, they step back. A sword is protruding from his neck. They draw the sword without loss of blood.

THIS is the sort of dreamlike writing that is juxtaposed beside such keen observations as: "Parents who expect gratitude from their children are like usurers who gladly risk their capital if only they receive interest."

Although he was not interested in events—he scarcely notices the war—he is intensely interested in people. He somehow has room for others in his mind as well as himself. In this respect he is like Browning's poet, who walks down the street and sees twice as much as anyone else is aware of.

And he remembers to jot down his observations: "The dirty little barefoot girl running along in her shift with her hair blowing." This is the raw material of his art.

I venture to place these diaries in the romantic tradition. Kafka is all feeling and although his feelings have none of the physical beauty expressed by Keats, there is a kinship here. They differ as 1924 differs from 1824. Keats like Keats shows on that life without feeling is not life at all.

WHO HAS not said, "If I were you . . ." The longing at one time or another to assume someone else's identity is virtually universal. Julian Green, the American-born Parisian author, has long been interested in the question of why one is himself rather than anyone else. He has chosen the novel instead of philosophical inquiry to dramatize the enigma of human personality.

"If I Were You" is a slow-moving fantasy about Fabian Espeel, a Kafka-esque youth who is wondering just how he can go on living his stale life as a clerk, when he meets M. Brittomart. This elderly gentleman presents him with a secret formula enabling him to exchange personalities with whom-ever he wishes.

He begins by becoming his aging boss, but soon tires of his noisy trouble and recklessly enters the body of a vicious hound who such commits murder. From the predicament he has to be rescued by M. Brittomart, who suggests.

'Suspense' Novel Becomes Involved

"FOR US THE LIVING." A novel. By Heasen Chevalier, New York, Knopf, \$3.50.

"FOR US THE LIVING," by Heasen Chevalier starts out as a fascinating and unusual suspense novel, but the author's involvement later on detracts from the good beginning.

This is the story of a man who is murdered and the trials of three persons charged with his murder, none of whom is guilty. There is a background of union-industry troubles.

Mr. Chevalier impresses as being a good writer, but the organization of this book causes some confusion and eventual slackening of interest at a time when it should be building to new heights.

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Newswoman Writes

Twenty years of Washington newspaper reporting have gone into the writing of Bess Furman's "Washington By-line: The Personal History of a News-paperwoman," which Alfred A. Knopf is publishing Feb. 4.

Wood Cut Depicts Suffering of Poor



"Graveyard," a wood engraving by the late Ernst Barlach, eminent German sculptor, has been purchased for the collections of Herron Art Museum. Barlach's work, in tragic content and execution, rivaled that of his great compatriot, Käthe Kollwitz. Both depict the poor and suffering in stark, unsparing terms.

Book Follows Old Formula

"EVERGREEN." A novel. By Edward Holstius. New York, Doubleday, \$3.

"EVERGREEN," Edward Holstius' new novel, arrived early for The Times book page.

It was some time in December, and the publisher put in a special plug for the book as being exceptionally good.

Well, the novel is a good job of writing, and it's likely to get plenty of readers. It follows the tone, if not the exact formulas, of other British novels which have dealt with the same theme.

There are three major characters: Shandy, the strong silent narrator of Book I; Loraine, the charming young daughter of "Old Mort"; Follett, hearty country gentleman gradually sliding into poverty, and Benedict Drew, the talented dilettante and wastrel, whom Loraine marries.

You might know Loraine would marry that guy. It's part of an all-too-familiar pattern. Otherwise, strong, silent Shandy would have married her, and there would be no novel. I've omitted mentioning that Shandy was wounded in World War I. He still has leg-twitches and sometimes needs hospitalization, although he's able to build a mildly prosperous career as a London accountant.

Now maybe you see the picture. It's less likely to become a military menance than an economic one according to Edwin M. Martin, recent chief of occupied area economic affairs in the U. S. Department of State. His views are published in "The Allied Occupation of Japan."

Mr. Martin says that even in terms of World War II Japan could hardly be considered now a military threat, and the "whole trend of military technology is leaving the Japanese decades behind other powers, regardless of what we do with her steel or similar industries. It is also changing previous concepts of distance as to make it easier for the Western powers to prevent Japanese encroachment on other Far Eastern countries.

"THE PRINCIPAL security problem presented by Japan is in the field of economic warfare where an economically thriving Japan might be able, if proper safeguards were not maintained, to take advantage of present disorganized conditions in the Far East to re-establish a dominant position which could be almost as undesirable as political conquest."

A population shrinkage, Mr. Martin believes, is the "only real solution to the agrarian problem left to the Japanese. . . . It is not a problem which lends itself to solution by a directive from the occupying authorities.

"The best that can be said is that Japan is probably better off than those two other great land-hungry countries, China and India, for in Japan an increase in the standard of living is not so apt to produce for a considerable period an increase in the rate of growth of population as a result of a decline in death rates."

Kenneth Roberts Autobiography Due

Kenneth Roberts, author of such best-selling historical novels as "Northwest Passage," "Rabbit in Arms" and "Lydia Bailey," has written an autobiography.

Under the title "I Wanted to Write," Mr. Roberts' reminiscence will be published Mar. 10, by Doubleday. According to the publisher, the volume contains vivid portraits of Mr. Roberts' literary friends, including the late Booth Tarkington.

Deutsch Book Due

A revised edition of "The Manly Ill in America," Albert Deutsch's history, from colonial times to the present, of the care and treatment of the victims of mental illness, will be published Feb. 14 by Columbia University Press.

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REV. EDWIN H. WILSON
Minister, Salt Lake City Unitarian Church,
Speaking on
"THE UNFINISHED REFORMATION"
11 A. M. SUNDAY

Radio—Sun. 9:15 A. M.—WIBC
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INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

RADIO PROGRAMS

THIS EVENING

WFBM 1260 CBS	WIBC 1070 Mutual	WIRE 1430 NBC	WISH 1310 ABC	WLW 1590 FM After 8:00 P. M.
:00 Max Miss Music	Easy Does It	Leelee	Joe Star	WLW—700 NBO
4:15 " " "	" " "	DePauw University	Guest Star	Tropical Echoes
4:45 " " "	" " "	Dr. I. O. R.	Lean Back and Listen	Dr. I. O. R.
5:00 " " "	Career Girl	To Be Announced	Eddie LaMar Orch.	Sports Review
5:15 Tom Corleone	Waite Hoyt	Joan Leslie	Dance Parade	News
5:30 Indians Roar	True or False	Marlin Bros.	Music for Dining	Midwestern Hayride
5:45 Spartacus	" " "	Ozzie & Harriet	News	Saturday Jamboree
6:00 Gilbert Forbes	Havell Calls	Luke Walton	Patti Clayton	Vic Damone
6:15 Music for Moderns	Gene Kelly—News	Frank Edwards	Music from W'wood	W'wood Star Theater
6:45 Vaughn Monroe	Horn's to Vols	Dick Jurgens	Music for Saturday	Truth or Consequences
7:00 Gene Autry Show	Songs of Twilight	Starring Key Star	Speedway—Washington	Hill Parade
7:30 Philip Marlow	Take a Number	Dick Todd	" " "	Judy Canaway
8:00 Gang Busters	Housler Hill Parade	Famous Army Trio	" " "	Dennis Day
8:30 Claude Thornhill Orch.	Judy Canaway	Dennis Day	" " "	Grand Ole Opry
8:45 " " "	Amazing Mr. Malone	Music Etchings	" " "	News—Peter Gruen
9:00 Sing It Again	Country Hill Parade	Doris Day	Lullaby in Rhythm	Morton Downey
9:15 " " "	Grand Old Opry	Grand Old Opry	" " "	Dance Orchestra
9:45 " " "	Tall-Hatley Debate	Tall-Hatley Debate	" " "	News—Moon River
10:00 Gilbert Forbes	Gene Kelly	News—Music Hour	" " "	Platter Time
10:15 National Guard Ball	Easy on Record	Doris Day	" " "	" " "
10:30 " " "	Kelly—Kobbous	Variety Hour	" " "	" " "
10:45 Dell Trio	Easy on Record	Lennie Herman Quint.	Sign Off	" " "
11:00 Million \$ Party	" " "	The Smoothies—News	" " "	" " "
11:30 " " "	" " "	" " "	" " "	" " "

One of Best Holmes Tales

"THE ADVENTURE OF THE BLUE CARBUNCLE." By A. Conan Doyle. Introduction by Christopher Morley. New York, the Baker Street Irregulars, Inc., \$2.50.

By J. N. WILLIAMSON

IT IS true that critics will no longer be able to scribble delighted words of praise over the appearance of a new volume of original Sherlock Holmes tales, since the man who signed his name to all of said tales has been dead for nearly 19 years. The next best thing is a good variant edition, or what Holmes enthusiasts love to term, "the writings about the Writings."

The Blue Carbuncle," one of the best Holmes stories and therefore one of the best short efforts in literature, originally appeared in the old Strand Magazine, way back in 1892, and is published separately for the first time from what editor Edgar W. Smith calls "the bolstering company" of fellow-tales.

This volume could be guaranteed to warm the hearts of all who read, not only because of the fine Sherlockian problem, but because of famed novelist Christopher Morley's superb introduction and Mr. Smith's interesting "A Note on Baker Street Irregulars."

MR. MORLEY will astound many who read his statement that this story is "a far better work of art than the immortal Christmas Carol." While a reviewer isn't intended to give his opinion, I must admit that I agree with Mr. Morley, who is the president of the Baker Street Irregulars—those happy souls who like to escape occasionally into the foggy, beloved Shetland.

Mr. Morley also declares that "The Blue Carbuncle" is "a Christmas story without slush," and everyone will agree with that. This tale concerns a battered black hat and a Christmas goose with a gemp—hence "The Blue Carbuncle"—in its crop.

Holmes performs some of his marvelous deductive feats, although it must be admitted that he solves the problem mainly by common police work. The tale, though, is excellent, and Holmes and Dr. Watson are the usual wonderful detective duo.

THE APPEARANCE of the volume is excellent, being illustrated by Sidney Paget and designed by a Sherlockian. I haven't seen the \$2.50 trade edition which non-Sherlockians are offered, in the hopes of making them Sherlocks, but the \$5 limited edition is magnificent all-around.

Reveals Catholic View

The Newman Press will publish on Feb. 15 "Two in One Flesh," by the Rev. E. C. Messenger, a three-volume explanation of the Catholic doctrine on sex and marriage, which doctrine the publisher says has been greatly misunderstood.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Feathered Friend

HORIZONTAL

1 Depicted
2 Songbird

3 It is a red

4 Marked by

5 Interstices

6 Sheaf

7 Hardens

8 Handled

9 Sesame

10 Thus

11 Accomplish

12 Extinct bird

13 Stearnship

14 Sesame

15 Revert

16 Light knock

17 Skiff

18 Behold!

19 Italian river

20 Electrical unit

21 Type measure