AMONG THE BOX

The World War

in Three Plays

How Two Americans and an English Poet Dramatize the Struggle. It seems next to impossible to write an uninteresting play about war. The world conflict in Europe has such a hold on our minds even after eight months of deadening carpage that the horrid truth of man killing man because a Rhein, or a channel, or a geographical

Ine divides them can't help being unbearably alive with emotion.
"War Brides" (Century Company, New York) testifies to it this week at Keith's. "Across the Border" (Henry Holt, New York) made as sensational an appeal at the Princess Theatre, New York. Even when the far-from-robust verse of Alfred Noyes and his half-baked philosophy cloud the truth, as in "A Belgian Christmas Eve" (Stokes, New York), there is still a terrible bite in it.

line divides them can't help being un-

Of the three short plays-sole product the war thus far-Beulah Marie Dix's "Across the Border" is by far the most satisfying. Like the others, it is a tract; but, unlike one, it doesn't stulity itself with a pulingly blind solution, and, unlike the other, it is not reality sundered by set speeches and "fixed" facts. In its first scene and its last it is a picture, just a picture. A lieutenant, caught in an old barn with half a dozen men, tries to make a break for succer, and shots record his fallure. The last scene shows him dying amid the horrors of a field hospital, striving piteously and vainly, before death comes, to tell the others of their beastly folly. Between these scenes come two visions of his delirium which make the sheare is him. delirium which make the change in him. show his reception "across the where he meets "the master of the house" and listens to the cries of the slain, until revulsion from all that has given meaning to his life releases him from torment.
"Across the Border" unites a horrific
realism and an intellectual plea, and joins them both fine elements of dignity and philosophy that bding an almost perfect accomplishment of the playwright's ob-

Marlon Craig Wentworth's "War Brides" would do as much if it were only a little less artificial. It is cast in the older theatrical mold, where sons are called to fight, news comes of the death of others, and daughters are pledged as "war-brides" all in the same half hour when the curtain happens to be up. And, of course, in this theatreland, Miss Went-worth forgets what Miss Dix remem-bered when she explained the English idiom of her play: "The men speak Eng-lish because that is the language in which American plays are written, and they speak colloquial English because to people, anywhere under the sun, talk like books." Mrs. Wentworth, too interested in her solution of war to think of art. forgets those lessons in pungent, thought-compelling reality which the Irish players brought us, and plunges us into consistent, well-thought speeches that no living person ever accomplished, let alone peasants under pervous stress

All of which doesn't alter the excitement that a war play commands or the is a consciousness of power driving across the terrible pain which has been women's since war first took her sons. If she will refuse to bear children, instead of rushing to the altar when her country holds out the iron wedding ring; if she will say: "If breed the men for you, why don't let us say what is to become of m"—then, Mrs. Wentworth believes, we shall have peace.

As for the other war-play and its solution. "A Belgian Christmas Eve" seems designed to show how much tomfool prejudice and error even a pacificist is capable of. Under the fire of the 42-centimetres, Alfred Noyes' protestations of poetic amity have become nothing but the narrowest of patriotism the breed r of war. 'Ra'a," which attacked war, is now done over as "A Helgium Christmas Eve" into a picture of Teuton-wrought horrors to be mended by the coming of the British. Gone-if Alfred Noves ever had it-is the war lies in the fact that it corrupts both sides to atrocity and leaves no one with right or justice. Mr. Noyes must wait Englishmen are sweeping German vil By that time he may be less content with the old notions of a warring god and a warring nation which ruled in the divine Victorian age to which he would recall England. By that time he may recognize that the end of this carnage will not come till we laugh at such surrender as Mr. Noyes':

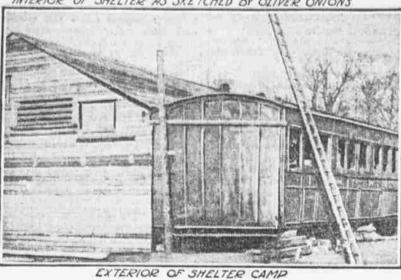
Choose, England! For the eternal for Within thee, as without, grew strong, By many a siper-aubtle blow Hurring the lines of right and wrong In Art and Thought, till nought seemed true But that soul-slaughtering cry of NEW!

A Trifle Too "Smart"

Sophistication spoils "Angela's Busi-ess" (Houghton-Mifflin Company, Boston). The flowing spontaneity, the sense of naturalness, which were the essence of "Queed," are missing in this new novel by Henry Sydnor Harrison. The style of his latest book is mannered and the in-quiry into character is made with a cyni-cal eye. Yet it is searching and subtle. and to those who do not mind too great "knowingness" on the part of their au-thor, with a wink of his eye and a shrug of his shoulders as manifestation thereof this narrative of the "feminine unrest" will prove agreeable reading. Two women win prove agreeable reading. Two women are concerned, one a type of the self-sufficing, competent girls of the period, the other an old-fushloned homemaker, who, however, somehow seems to lack the innate dignity, the lavender sweetness of the best women of a former generation. How their sharply divergent ideals affect the career of a young novellat furnishes. the career of a young novelist furnishes the material for the contour of the story, but its character and color are afforded by its penetrating insight and somewhat by its penetrating insight and somewhat astirical view of feminine unrest. As an exposition of this movement the novel has worth, and it will be appreciated by devoted readers of Ellen Key, Charlotte Perkins, Stetzon Gilman and Floyd Dell. Others readers will be likely to keep their loyality to the ever-delightful "Queed" and the quaint "V. V.'s Eyes."



INTERIOR OF SHELTER AS SKETCHED BY OLIVER ONIONS



OLIVER ONIONS AS NOVELIST, ARTIST AND MILITARY SHELTER BUILDER

features. Its length, for instance, is to be reckoned, not in words or pages, but nto sections and chapters, but into cubic space of accommodation per man. It is bound, not in cloth, but in tarred and sanded felt, well battened down against the wind, and it has been set up, not by compositers, but by contractors. In a word, as camp quartermaster of a Brit-ish voluntary defense organization, his latest task has been to construct winter ish voluntary defense organization, his of purchasing the best food wherever it latest task has been to construct winter could be bought at the lowest price. Thus quarters for the shelter of some hundreds the author of "Mushroom Town" may be

Two rows, each of three railway coaches the rain and mud to taste the stew, alignwith bays left between the ends, have
been set up and the intervening space nal to the bugler and seeing the camp
roofed over. The bays and ends have ready before departing to eat his own roofed over. The bays and ends have ready before departing to eat his own also been boarded up, thus providing a supper.

A Reluctant Adam

"First novels" differ from first bables

in being quite as interesting to spectators

as to creators-more so, in fact. Most of us can't expect to supply our own

mental progeny, and have to depend on comparative strangers. Hence the in-verted autopsy that welcomes each new

The present instance, "A Reluctant Adam" (Houghton, Mifflin, Boston), at-

tracts a reviewer's friendly interest for far better reasons than because its au-thor is the literary editor of the Boston

its own feet. Behind its engaging title-one of the best in years-there is promise

of things to come, as well as work ac-

There are flaws to be picked, of course. The hard abstraction of Mr. Williams' style—there are fewer "the's" and "a's"

tue it should be by the fact that this

story of a man's love is written with no mention of all the mere physical and financial facts of life that are bound to

woman love him and lose him in some-what the atmosphere of a drawing room

problem play, where neither poverty nor children are permitted to complicate the solution which the author has ready. This Adam's problem is an individual

problem, a matter of inner psychology; yet it must have its reflections, its ll-luminations, in the life by which he rises to comfort and independence. Rob-

rises to comfort and independence. Rob-ert Herrick's novels—not to mention H. G. Wells'—keep the reality of this work-aday world even in the deeps of emo-tional revelation. All of which captiousness is the pen-alty of the new author, who writes a book that really stimulates thought as well as emotion. The only just recom-pense is the frank avowal that "A Re-juctant Adam" is a book which repays

luctant Adam" is a book which repays with understanding, sympathy and those rare touches of emotional reaction which a figure in pain does not always com-

a figure in pain does not always com-mand. Each episode of love calls forth memories and acquiescence. The play of them upon the unanswering temperament and yet keenly self-conscious mentality of this lonely here amid adorers is beautiful to watch, but not so easy to bear unanswered by tears.

The Little Mother

Who Sits at Home

We watch woman after

"A Reluctant Adam" stands on

author's new novel.

complished.

It is supposed generally that the latest central hall, 100 feet by 20 feet, exclusive work of Oliver Onlons, the distinguished of the depth of the conches themselves, novellst, is his new book. "Mushroom To these additional busiks have been Town." But actually Mr. Onlons' latest fitted, so that each compartment provides work is characterized by several amazing sleeping accommodations for four men.
features. Its length, for instance, is to The sketch of the interior above is from
me reckoned, not in words or pages, but the novelist's own hand.

the novellat's own hand. In middion to the constmiction of these winter quarters, Mr. Onions has also been jointly responsible with his superior, the battalion quartermaster in distinguished Lordon solicitor), in the feeding of a not by contract, but by a "free" system seen any Saturday night plowing through

"Be-al-by"

It is a grave question whether any cress clipping bureau in the United States can find a review of H. G. Wells' new novel, "Bealby" (Macmillan, New York), that doesn't begin by quoting the subtitle, "A Holiday," Of course, there is really no earthly objection to standardizing the work of the critics. By enough limitations of form, they might be driven to marveluse reflections of state. driven to marvelous refinements of style and meaning. If they knew beforehand that they should have to fill in a stan-dard form beginning with the remark on "A Hollday," they might get round to asking why on earth a great novelist should have a holiday, and if he insists on one, why he should take it in public by writing below his best, instead of going to a summer resort like the rest of

nteresting. Indeed, it is one of the best reels of comedy that the movie school of novel-writing ever produced. We begin with a most engaging caption:

The cut is the offspring of a cat, and the dog of a dog, but butlers and lady's maids do not reproduce their kind. They have other juties.

Which introduces us to the drafting of Bealby, gardner's boy, to take up a career "below stairs" in "Shonts." He begins the first reel with rebellion and plunges up the stairs to but the Lord plunges up the stairs to but the Lord Chancelior in the tummy and generally play have before hiding in secret passages and going off to tramp the discreet English wilds. A "cut in" gives some amusingly satirical views of the Lord Chancellor and a lady who resembles shockingly Mrs. Humphrey Ward.

The second reel shows Bealby in association with a picknicking vanful of

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ladies; the third, his brief and disastrous travels with a tramp, including the Bat-tle of Crayminster; and fourth—well, the final catastrophe of the Lord Chancellor,

final catastrophe of the Lord Chancellor, Bealby, and a military gentleman must be left for the audience to enjoy.

One other fact of this "silent drama" remains to be mentioned. It isn't important, of course, in connection with a movie; but the hero's name is pronounced as in the headling above.

The Woman Alone

Best sellers that deal with the real tragedies of life in a serious manner are exceedingly rare. Mabel Herbert Urner, however, has written such a book in "The Woman Alone" (Harper & Bros., New York). The "eternal triangle" is the theme, but the treatment is novel. Although the author occasionally lapses into long passages of trite, sentimental writing, the predominant tone of the book is one of sympathy and broad under-standing for the sufferings and trials of the unfortunate characters she writes of. The climax to which the entire series of siternating joys and sorrows leads is the deliberate choice of the woman to con-fess the falsehood that she has been triffing with her lover through the years in which they have been dear to one another. This she does rather than wreck completely the life of her dear one's wife.

Aside from the commonplaces in writ-Aside from the commonplaces in writ-ing referred to there is a dignity and depth to the book which does more, even, than the story itself, to give the feeling of tragedy. There are few light places in the 286 pages at which the reader may and repose, except when the two characters whose lives are buffeted about find rest. The book is strongly mindful, in effect, of the most pessimistic passages of Omar. Two people struggling to live honest lives and noble loves are forced to the passage where there is the choice between misery for one or misery for the

Higher Individualism

"The Higher Individualism" (Houghton breached in Appleton Chapel, Harvard University, by Edward Scribner Ames, a Chicago minister and assistant professor of philosophy in the University of Chicago. It has a most suggestive quality and sets forth "certain fundamental ideas characteristic of the constructive tenin current religious thinking." ; these ideas are the social nature of the individual, the value of social service and the naturalness and accessibility of the central religious experiences.

In "The Mystical Quality in Religion" Dr. Ames says: "The promise of the di-vine compenionship is to an active, forward-striving church. The command and promise are, 'Go * * * and, lo, I am with you always.' It is as though Jesus were saying to the church yet: Go, teach: build schools and colleges, so heal the sick; found hospitals and laboratories and dispensaries; go, love your neighbors: found settlements and peace societies and boards of arbitration and be a friend to man of man; go, preach the Gospel; publish the poetry of love, dramatize the prodigal son and the good Samaritan and eveal to men the cross itself as the proof of the infinite compassion that throbs at the heart of the world, and the divine presence shall be with you, a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night."

The New Books

A list of books received for review, ore extensive comment will be made on one whose importance warrants further

those tenor important attention. MARY. By Temple Bailey, A love story in which a man, sick at heart with the world, finds a cure for lost faith. ISS pages, \$1.25. Penn Publishing Company, Philadolphia.
WHEN A MAN COMES TO HIMSELF. By Wnodrow Wilson. The distinguished author believes, with Kipling's ship, that every man finds himself some day, 38 pages, 50 cents. Harpers, New York. finds himself some day. 38 pages, 50 cents. Harpers, New York. LIKISTIAN PSYCHOLOGY, By Prof. James Stalker, D. D. The results of the last 25 years of psychology used in a constructive interpretation of the Christian life. 275 pages, 81.25. George II. Doran, New York. A DEALDR IN EMPIRE. By Amelia Josephine Burr. The dramatic story of Olivares, Prime Minister of Spain, and his dream of world empire. 288 pages, \$1.25. Harpers, New York. PHE SMALL, FAMILY COOK BOOK. By Mary Denson Fretlow. For the beginning housekeeper who has to cater to two or three persons, 216 pages, 75 cents, McBride, Pretlow. For the beginning who has to cater to two or 216 pages. 75 cents. McBride, New York.

three persons. 216 pages. 75 cents. McBride, Nast & Co., New York.
THE DIARY OF A BEAUTY. By Molly Elliott Seawell. From assistant postmistress of a small New England village to owner of a 5th avenue mansion. 212 pages. \$1.25. Lappincott. Phthadelphia.
THE CHALK LINE. By Anne Warwick. A new novel of modernity by the author of 'Victoria Law.' 278 pages. \$1.30. John Lane, New York.
SMIAL EVOLUTION. By Benjamin Kidd. A new and revised edition of the standard book. 404 pages. \$1.30. Macmillan, New York.

York.
THE ATRES OF IDEAS. By Henry Arthur Jones, A volume from the English playwright containing a burlesque allegory and three one-act plays. 173 pages. 11. Deran, New York.
THE WAYWARD CHILD. By Hannah Kent Schoff. A new volume in the Childhood and Youth Series by the president of the National Congress of Mothers. 2d7 pages. \$1. Hobbs, Merrill, Indianapolis.



MAN of IRON

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"Me" is called the 2 A. M. manuscript in THE CENTURY office, because all the veteran readers reported that they had to sit up with it until the early hours. It has been a long time ce a manuscript created such a commotion in this magazine office. It begins in The

OUT TO-DAY

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The Harbor

There is no justification for any one being disappointed in a book which is advertised with laudatory references to "The Jungle," Mr. Sinclair's prophylactic masterplece. Ernest Poole's "The Harbor" (Macmillan, New York) has been so advertised. As a result, one finishes with a distinct sense of relief at not being made sick. "The Harbor" is a story of modern life. Its scene is in and about New York; it takes its name from the great harbor there, and draws

from the great harbor their from that its inspiration.

The harbor, first a place of odd enchantment to the child for whom it is a forbidden garden, becomes later a place forbidden garden, becomes to the artist whose existence it threatens. It changes when the artist becomes an efficiency wor-shiper to the home of "big things," and when this house of sand is washed away. the harbor becomes the home of the restless tides of humanity that labor and are not paid. A dook strike is the last

are not paid. A dock strike is the last episode; the harbor is the home of tragedy. In the end the harbor speaks only as the eternal come and go of life, ceaseless, restless and triumphant.

To give such a resume of the book is actually to give its plot, because Mr. Poole's plotting is about the thinnest and the weakest even among American novelists. Like "Jean Christophe" and like "the Garden Without Walls," this book start with earliest recollection. Unlike the former of these works, the progress of the speaking hero is not interestress of the speaking hero is not interest-ing. The accidents and incidents of his life are banal. Unfortunately the author seems to think that they are vastly fas-cinating, and the result is a woefully amateurish treatment of practically every detail of the action of the book. The characterization is much better, and the theme of the book is quite plausibly implicated in the plot. The hero tries in the end to be fair, and pretends to be above the cyndicalist creed, but that, too, is somewhat forced.

The novel of a man who turned from

The novel of a man who turned from art to the I. W. W. is here presented. For art, one may note that on pages 211 and 213 occurs the noble word "enthuse." For the I. W. W. one may note that the presentation of its ideal is not made more persuasive by a patronizing attitude toward all others.

Something New for

Kitchen and Nursery These are new days, even in the kitchen and the nursery, and of course there are new books to go with them.

A good many women have found satisfaction in making the rearing of chil-dren a real profession, in teaching them a great many things that they used to leave to kindergartens, schools and in-dulgent uncles. In line with the work of Doctor Montessori, they are supplying constructive materials from which their skill. "When Mother Lets Us Make Toys," (Moffatt, Yard, New York), by G. Ellingwood Rish, gives some very handy suggestions along this line. With the aid of knife, scissors and brass fastenings, it shows any child how to make from pasteboard boxes—the most plen-tiful things in the house—all manner of from see-saws to street cars.

Another growing group of women, managing small households—usually for only their husbands and themselves wish to reduce kitchen routine to a minimum that will give time for other occu-pations. The old cookbook, with recipes pations. The old cookbook, with recipes built for boarding houses, and liable to produce a regiment of buns or a mo produce a regiment of buns or a mountain of egg souffe, is as much a hindrance as a help. In its place come little volumes like "The Smail Family Cook Book" (McBride, Nast & Co., New York), with proportions of Ingredients based on the probable consumption of two or three people.



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Love, War and a Duchess Love and war are nicely balanced by Percy J. Brebner in "The Turbulent Duchess," (Little, Brown & Co.), his romantic tale of Sundra and Bergolet, her jester, who turns out quite plausibly to be Prince Charming. It is somewhat of a relief to find the war element is on another day, has the second other day, inasmuch as the scene is Podina, a German state; the book, there-fore, offering no opportunity for military

fore, offering no opportunity for mintary experts' clinic.
Technically, the story is unusually well done. Mr. Brebner contrives to work up a lively interest in the mysterious absentes, Prince Maurice of Savaria, without making it obvious that the Prince and the ever-present Bergolet are one and the same. The author also is to be com-mended in that, after affixing the label of cleverness to the jester, he does not leave The author also is to be comthe rest to the imagination of the reader, but makes the character prove itself. Sandra, the Duchess, is alluringly drawn; a woman winsome, but firm, who is prepared to sacrifice her happiness to her duty until the magic touch of fiction makes it unnecessary. There also is a secondary romance for the ultra-senti-mental, and the fighting is of a type to inspire young men into enlisting, making no mention of the discomfort of trenches.

Book Gossip

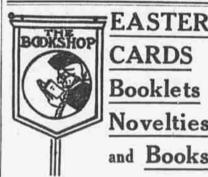
If somebody asked you who were the ten most famous figures in English fiction whom would the readers of the EVENING Lungua select? An Eastern critic names, on the spur of the moment, Hamlet, Tom Jones, Sir Roger de Coverley, Robinson Crusoe, Tristram Shandy, Rob Roy, David Copperfield, Becky Sharp, Richard Feverel and Tess Durbeyfield, Starting with "Hamlet," "Tom Jones" and 'David Copperfield," who are your other

On March 27 John Lane brings out the ewest novel of William J. Locke. It is called "The Fortunate Youth," and the gentleman in question is a slum raga-muffin who, after a "vision splendid," goes forward to great things in the cus omary way of Mr. Looke's genial vaga-

Booth Tarkington, so the publishers of "The Turmoil" tell us, writes all his pooks in pencil. In the study where he works he has arranged on the table in Front of him 30 or 40 well sharpened ead pencils. As soon as one of his implements loses its edge he throws it aside and takes up the next, and continues in this way until his day's work is finished

Part of the opening chapter of Kate Douglas Wiggin's "The Story of Walt-still Baxter" was used recently in the Portland Dally Press in connection with the campaign to prevent the damming of the Saco River. This river, which is described vividly in "Waitstill Baxter," flows by Mrs. Wiggin's summer home and figures in many of her stories. "The Saco River." Mrs. Wiggin says, "was the dearest friend of my childhood. The moment I had earned money enough by my pen I flew back to its side and bought a home. The river runs through all many than the control of the runs. nome. The river runs through all my books as it has run through my life, and the sound of it is in my ears whenever I am away from it.'

Tom Graham, the English essayist, has made out a list of all the really great



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standard English writers. It is held a mere compilation of library cards Arnold Bennett to H. G. Wells, Ris of the coming men is far more or and se he says, may infuriate ratio

persons in delightfully various warm Hugh Walpole, Oliver Onlone, Com Mackennie, Gilbert Cannan, J. D. Bern ford, Frank Swinnerton, F. Tennyes Jesse, D. H. Lawrence, John Trevens Macdougall Hay, W. S. Maugham, W. Dane Bank, W. B. Maxwell, W. L. Dane Hank, W. B. Maxwell, W. L. George, Coningaby Dawson, Morley Recerts, Pett Ridge, James Stephens, Rence Newte, Barry Pain, Cosmo Hamile Percival Globons, Edgar Wallace, A. Hutchinson, Jeffery Farnol, Patrick M. Gill, H. C. Balley, J. C. Snaith, Chara Marriott, John Palmer.

Circular No. 17 of the Simplified Spelling Board, says a writer in the Boston Trisseript, originally printed January 2, 128 has in the course of seven years coincided with the measured progress of time by reaching its seventh edition. It contains a list of its "Advisory Council," representing an imposing array of representatives of the arts and sciences who believe that our English orthography should be subject to the sudden arbitrary measurations of reformers rather than to the slow changes brought about by the mark slow changes brought about by the mark of time. That they are willing to us mild doses of their own medicine is disclosed by the professional tags that the append to their names. One, for instance is a "riter," a second is a "typicine" and others are successively clean is a "riter," a second is a "tysician and others are successively classed a "superintendent of public schools," "refessor of fision," "professor of fision," "professor of comparativ filology," "bell with the comparative filology," "bell with the comparative filology, " "bell with the comparative filology," " "bell with the comparative filology, " " bell with the comparative filology," " bell with the comparative filology, " " bell with the comparative filology, " " bell with the comparative filology," " bell with the comparative filology, " " bell with the comparative filology," " bell with the comparative filology, " " bell with the comparative filology," " bell with the comparative filology, " " bell with the comparative filology," " bell department of education and psycology, "mecanical engineer," "offis manages," and "professor of retoric."

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Boston Transcript

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