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Scott Fitzgerald's Prep-School Writings
Several Newly-Discovered Additions to the Canon of His Published Works
by Henry Dan Piper '39

When the writer published a comprehensive check list of Scott Fitzgerald's published writings some years back (Chronicle, XII, No. 4 [Summer, 1951], 196-208), there was an unavoidable gap for the period 1911-1919. These were the two years that Fitzgerald was attending the Newman School, then located at Hackensack, New Jersey, in preparation for Princeton. It was known that he had written for the Newman News and, during his last year, had been associate editor (chief editor that year was Charles W. Donahoe, Princeton '17, later one of Fitzgerald's Princeton classmates; the other associate editor was Herbert Agar, g. '22). No known copies existed, however, of Fitzgerald's Newman School writings. Efforts to obtain back copies of the News from his former classmates were fruitless. The Newman School itself, after moving from Hackensack to Lakewood, New Jersey, ceased operations during World War II. Its library and administrative records were finally tracked down to a storage warehouse in Hoboken, but screening this voluminous material for Fitzgeraldiana was much too formidable an undertaking at that time. (It is possible that material relating to Fitzgerald's Newman career is still preserved among those files.)

It seemed very strange that Fitzgerald had kept no copies of these early prep-school pieces somewhere among his extensive papers, since he clung so assiduously to every other scrap that related in any remote way to his writing career. His contributions
Beginning with his first appearance in print in 1909 at the age of thirteen, and ending with his last Nassau Lit contribution (nail from officers’ training camp in 1918), Fitzgerald published during this nine-year period a total of sixteen short stories, ten poems, five book reviews, and a dozen or so miscellaneous humorous pieces in *The Princeton Tiger*. During this time he also wrote, directed, and acted in three of his own full-length plays, and collaborated on the writing and production of three Princeton Triangle shows.

The next thing to be noted about this early work is that in Fitzgerald’s talent was much better suited to the short story than to any of the other literary forms he attempted. As a dramatist he could be clever and amusing, but his plays lack the variety and range of his short fiction. His occasional flights into verse taught him quite a bit about the use of imagery, just as his plays and Triangle shows gave him good practice in the handling of dialogue. But his poetry, at best, is conventional and undistinguished. His early book reviews (like his later ones) lack both the learning and detachment necessary for good literary criticism. They tell us much more about Fitzgerald himself than about the book he is supposed to be reviewing. But his short stories grew better and better.

In other words, *This Side of Paradise*, the novel which Fitzgerald began to write during his senior year at Princeton, did not owe its later spectacular success with the public just to a lucky historical accident. Behind it lay ten years of serious apprenticeship in the difficult craft of fiction.

The short stories of these apprentice years, for which the canon has now been finally established, cluster around two distinct periods. The first group consists of the seven prep-school pieces which Fitzgerald published in literary magazines at Saint Paul Academy and the Newman School between the ages of thirteen and sixteen, 1909-1915. Next came three years as a Princeton undergraduate, 1913-1916, during which he concentrated on writing and producing his own plays and three successful Triangle shows. This career as a theatrical impresario came abruptly to a halt midway in junior year, however, when he was obliged to withdraw from the University for academic reasons. The second and most prolific period of short story writing occurred after his return to Princeton to begin junior year over again in September, 1916, and lasted until his departure from Princeton in October, 1917, a year later.

his play “The Captured Shadow.” According to a letter he wrote to “Morrie,”

in *The Fitzgerald Papers* (Princeton University Library), his mother de-

stroyed “all but two” of his early unpublished manuscripts.
for officers' training camp. By now he was hard at work on his first novel and his apprenticeship as a writer of fiction was over.

The most striking thing about Fitzgerald's seven prep-school short stories is their virtuosity. Naturally, there are the inevitable gaucheries of the teen-age amateur. It is easy to see that he has been writing them with a copy of the latest issue of The Smart Set or Cosmopolitan open at his elbow. But what a lot he has already learned about the tricks of writing popular magazine fiction. Each of the seven stories is a conscientious imitation of a well-established model, and they are all different. Moreover, his plots and themes become increasingly more complex and ambitious. "The Mystery of the Raymond Mortgage," his first published story, is a descendant of the Sherlock Holmes mystery. "Reade, Substitute Right Half" is a dramatic account of the last minutes of an exciting prep-school football game. "The Room With the Green Blinds" is a ghost story that depends for its effect on its atmosphere of terror. "A Debt of Honor" is a historical narrative based on one of his father's Civil War anecdotes. "A Luckless Santa Claus," the first of Fitzgerald's Newman School stories, turns around the ironic idea that it is difficult to give away money in a nation of individualists like the United States. The hero, at the request of his fiancée (a sentimental "do-gooder"), tries to hand out twenty-five dollars as charity to passers-by on the streets of New York but only gets insulted and beaten up for his pains. "Pain and the Scientist," the least successful of all these early stories, is a farcical satire aimed at the foibles of Christian Scientists; its humor is too strained and exaggerated, though, to be very effective. "The Trail of the Duke" is a fantastic and rather incredible story of young love in Manhattan in which Fitzgerald makes use for the first time of the O. Henry surprise ending, a device that he would fall back on again and again in his later commercial fiction.

Even though the greater part of this schoolboy writing is no more than clever imitation, every now and then the reader comes across something that reveals the presence of a fresh and already accomplished talent. For example, Fitzgerald begins his first published story, "The Mystery of the Raymond Mortgage," as follows:

When I first saw John Syrel of the New York Daily News, he was standing before an open window of my house gazing out on the city. It was about six o'clock and the lights were just going on. All down Thirty-third street was a long line of gaily illuminated buildings.
Topics. The fashionable hero of "The Trail of the Duke," for instance, is described as follows:

In his house on upper Fifth Avenue, young Dodson Garland lay on a divan in the billiard room and consumed oceans of mint juleps, as he grumbled at the polo that had kept him in town, the cigarettes, the butler, and occasionally breaking the Second Commandment. The butler ran back and forth with large consignments of juleps and soda... .

Fitzgerald's ignorance of East Coast geography is often just as funny. "The Mystery of the Raymond Mortgage" has an express train in it that commutes directly between Princeton and Cornell.

In general, most of this schoolboy fiction is important only as it served to initiate its teen-age author into the trade of the popular "magazinist." It is no wonder that he was a well-established Saturday Evening Post short story writer by the time he was twenty-three. But the greater part of it, like so much of his later slick magazine fiction, is rarely more than clever and accomplished; most of the time he seems to be merely writing off the top of his mind.

The single exception, the only one of Fitzgerald's seven prep-school stories that shows signs of having been written with his viscera and his heart, as well as his head, is a short piece called "Reade, Substitute Right Half," which he published in the Saint Paul Academy Now and Then when he was thirteen. It tells of a "light-haired stripling," closely resembling his youthful author, who, in spite of his small size and inexperience, is sent into a school football game at the last minute, and who heroically scores and saves the day. It is, of course, a typical case of wish-fulfillment. Fitzgerald had gone out repeatedly for the Saint Paul Academy eleven, always without success. He was much too small and fragile to make any kind of a showing. In one practice scrimmage an accidental bump cracked three of his ribs; another time an inexpert fumble on his part allowed the other side to score. These were humiliations that ranked in him for years. "Reade, Substitute Right Half!" was written out of a deep inner compulsion; Fitzgerald has lived every moment of it so intensely and reported his feelings so accurately that every word has been made to count. It communicates directly with a force and an economy unequalled by any of the other stories of this period.

The only other piece of work comparable to it is a poem, "Football," which he published in the Newman News soon after his arrival at the school in the autumn of 1911. Once again he hopefully had gone out for football, only to be embarrassed in exactly the same way he had been back home at Saint Paul Academy. During an important match, he missed a pass at a crucial moment and the opposing team scored. "I remember the desolate ride back to school," he still recalled twenty-five years later, "with everybody thinking I had been yellow." But, as had also been the case two years before, shame inspired him to redeem himself by means of his literary talent, and he "wrote a poem for the school paper which made as big a hit with my father as if I had become a football hero. So when I went home that Christmas vacation it was in my mind that if you weren't able to function in action, you might at least be able to tell about it because you felt the same intensity —it was a back door way out of facing reality."

Since both "Football!" and "Reade, Substitute Right Half!" were inspired by the same emotions, a comparison of them is particularly illuminating. It emphasizes how much more at home Fitzgerald's talent was in the medium of prose than in poetry. His short story is sturdily built on concrete, intensely felt details, and has been pruned down to the most transparent kind of statement. The poem, on the other hand, even though written when Fitzgerald was two years older, is much more artificial an exercise in every way. The necessity of tailoring his feelings to his rollicking Kiplingian meters has obliged him to conventionalize them; the result is a very undistinguished example of schoolboy verse.

Except for "Reade, Substitute Right Half," Fitzgerald's early fiction was written more out of a desire to impress and divert his classmates than from any deeper inner compulsion. Writing, compared with social and physical action, seemed only "a back door" to reality. It is not surprising, therefore, to find him gradually gravitating from the narrow confines of the printed page to the larger, more public arena of the stage and, finally, ceasing to write fiction altogether. During his last year at Newman he starred in a school play, won an elocution prize, and spent both of his summer vacations from school (as well as the vacation of his freshman year at Princeton) writing, directing, and acting in three of his own full-length plays. They were given successful performances before fashionable audiences and raised considerable money for local charity, earning their precocious author headlines on the front pages of the Saint Paul newspapers as well.

Following his entrance at Princeton in the fall of 1913, Fitz-
gerald devoted himself almost exclusively to writing for the stage. Like Amory Blaine, his hero in This Side of Paradise, he soon discovered that "writing for the Nassau Literary Magazine would get him nothing." Instead he provided the lyrics and collaborated on the books for three successful Triangle shows, which he also acted in and helped produce. He also published a flock of nonsense jokes and parodies in the Tiger. By the beginning of junior year his strategy had paid off handsomely. The unpopular schoolboy of several years earlier, who had failed so miserably on the football gridiron, was now a prominent campus leader. He had been elected to the fashionable eating club of his choice, was an officer of both the Tiger and Triangle and, according to rumor, was the probable next president of Triangle. Many of his friends now also predicted a spectacular career for him on Broadway. Newspaper critics had rated his Triangle show lyrics with Tin Pan Alley's best. Several Times Square producers had already offered him lucrative contracts. His mail now contained requests for autographed photographs from unknown girls as well as engraved invitations from equally unknown debutantes who requested the pleasure of his company at their balls and parties. Most exciting and glamorous of all these honors was the wealthy, beautiful, and popular Chicago debutante with whom he had fallen head-over-heels in love. This triumph, too, was largely due to his precocious literary talent; she was fascinated, at least temporarily, by the romantic poems and letters with which he deluged her daily.

Then abruptly mid-way in his junior year every one of these precious honors and trophies was snatched away from him. He had neglected his studies so long that it was inevitable he should be declared ineligible for further extra-curricular activities and dropped back into the sophomore class. To Fitzgerald, though, it seemed the vengeful act of some malicious fate. His starring role in the Christmas Triangle show was taken from him; his chances of being elected president of Triangle evaporated overnight; moreover, after having produced three of his shows in a row, Triangle now brusquely turned down his project for a fourth. Hardest blow of all, he lost his girl.

It was a chastened Fitzgerald who returned to Princeton in September, 1916, to begin junior year all over again. Instead of writ-
ing for Triangle and the Tiger, he now turned to the more serious pages of the Nassau Literary Magazine. There was at least a story, and a poem or a book review, in every issue. It was the stories, especially, which announced the emergence of a new and impressive talent. Prominent critics like Katherine Fullerton Gerould and William Rose Benét, for instance, singled out Fitzgerald’s fiction for special praise in the reviews of Lit issues they wrote for The Daily Princetonian. Moreover, when Fitzgerald sent one of his stories to H. L. Mencken, editor of The Smart Set magazine, Mencken wrote back enthusiastically asking to see more of his works. The quality of his six Nassau Lit stories written during this year can be gauged from the fact that three were later bought and reprinted by The Smart Set, three others were reprinted by Fitzgerald himself in two later volumes of short stories, and three were included in This Side of Paradise.

Most significant of all this acclaim, however, was the response his Nassau Lit stories elicited from his own contemporaries. Editors of literary magazines on other Eastern college campuses discovered his stories with the shock of recognition and praised them vigorously in their editorial columns. Here as early as 1917 is evidence already of Fitzgerald’s special gift for voicing the feelings and attitudes of his own generation then just coming of age—a gift which by 1920 would be nationally famous. He carefully clipped out all this comment and pasted it into his already bulging scrapbooks.

Like “Reade, Substitute Right Half,” the best Nassau Lit stories of this later Princeton period were also written directly out of Fitzgerald’s own emotions and experience. During his first three years in college he had contributed only two stories to the Lit (in contrast to the six he now wrote during junior year). Both of these earlier pieces also touched on personal problems. “Shadow Laurels” reflected his ambiguous relationship with his father, whom he both was ashamed of and admired. “The Ordeal” (later revised and reprinted under the title “Benediction”) was inspired by his widening separation from the Catholic church. Both of these early Princeton stories were weakened by his desire to make something clever out of them; the first is spoiled by its fake Paris setting, the second by its plot.

The scars of the year before were still very fresh, however, when Fitzgerald began writing seriously for the Lit in the autumn of

* Mencken to Fitzgerald, June 3, 1909, Princeton University Library. For the comments of Mrs. Gerould and Mr. Benét, see the Princetonian clippings for 1917 in Fitzgerald scrapbooks, which also contain the editorial comments from other college literary magazines.
1916. The best stories of this period were written out of the need to come to terms with these bitter disappointments. "Babes in the Woods" and "The Debutante," for example, explored the implications of his blasted love affair; in "The Spire and the Gargoyle" he is trying to get on record his mixed feelings about the Princeton system of education. It was natural that he should make these stories important chapters in This Side of Paradise, which, in a sense, is only a more extended account of his ambiguous relationship to both of these experiences.

In stories like these Fitzgerald had come a long way from the early fiction which, as an unpopular Saint Paul schoolboy, he had written chiefly to amuse and impress his classmates. It was only when he was deeply and unexpectedly hurt by life—in his football dreams, or in his relations with his parents, his girl, his university—that he was driven to treat the concrete material of his own feelings with the imaginative skill and care that he gave to his more lucrative and more popular, but also more superficial, fiction. Out of the need to purge himself of some inner conflict through the disciplining order of art came his finest work, at the beginning of as well as throughout his career. Naturally, early stories like "Reade, Substitute Right Half" and "Babes in the Woods" fall far short of Fitzgerald's more mature and more complex later fiction. Still, the best of this early work has an excellence that sets it quite apart from Fitzgerald's other apprentice writing, and that qualitatively links it with such later things as "The Rich Boy," "Babylon Revisited," and The Great Gatsby.

Reade, Substitute Right Half*

BY F. SCOTT FITZGERALD '17

Hold! Hold! Hold!" The slogan thundered up the field to where the battered, crimson warriors trotted wearily into their places again. The blue's attack this time came straight at center and was good for a gain of seven yards. "Second down, three," yelled the referee, and again the attack came straight at center. This time there was no withstanding the rush and the huge Hilton full-back crushed through the crimson line again and shaking off his many tacklers, staggered on toward the Warrentown goal.

The midget Warrentown quarter-back ran nimbly up the field and, dodging the interference, shot in straight at the full-back's knees throwing him to the ground. The teams sprang back into line again, but Hearst, the crimson right tackle, lay still upon the ground. The right half was shifted to tackle and Berl, the captain, trotted over to the sidelines to ask the advice of the coaches.

"Who have we got for half, sir?" he inquired of the head coach.

"Suppose you try Reade," answered the coach, and calling to one of the figures on the pile of straw, which served as a seat for the substitutes, he beckoned to him. Pulling off his sweater, a light-haired stripling trotted over to the coach.

"Pretty light," said Berl as he surveyed the form before him.

"I guess that's all we have, though," answered the coach. Reade was plainly nervous as he shifted his weight from one foot to the other and fidgeted with the end of his jersey.

"Oh, I guess he'll do," said Berl. "Come on kid," and they trotted off on the field.

The teams quickly lined up and the Hilton quarter gave the signal "6-8-9-G." The play came between guard and tackle, but before the full-back could get started a little form shot out from the Warrentown line and brought him heavily to the ground.

"Good work, Reade," said Berl, as Reade trotted back into his place, and blushing at the compliment he crouched low in the line and waited for the play. The center snapped the ball to

* Reprinted from the Saint Paul Academy Now and Then, II, No. 8 (Feb., 1910), 10-11, with the kind permission of Harold Ober, literary agent for the estate of F. Scott Fitzgerald, and Edward M. Rem, Headmaster of Saint Paul Academy, Saint Paul, Minnesota. A few obvious typographical errors have been corrected.
quarter, who, turning, was about to give it to the half. The ball slipped from his grasp and he reached for it, but too late. Read had slipped in between the end and tackle and dropped on the ball. "Good one, Reade," shouted Mridge, the Warrentown quarter, as he came racing up, crying signals as he ran. Signal "9-10G-57." It was Reade around left end, but the pass was bad and the quarter dropped the ball. Reade scooped it up on a run and raced around left end. In the delay which had been caused by the fumble Reade's interference had been broken up and he must shift for himself, even as he rounded the end he was thrown with a thud by the blue full-back. He had gained but a yard. "Never mind, Reade," said the quarter, "my fault." The ball was snapped, but again the pass was bad and a Hilton line man fell on the ball.

Then began a steady march up the field toward the Warrentown goal. Time and time again Reade slipped through the Hilton line and nailed the runner before he could get started. But slowly Hilton pushed down the field toward the Warrentown goal. When the Blues were on the Crimson ten-yard line their quarter-back made his only error of judgment during the game. He gave the signal for a forward pass. The ball was shot to the full-back, who turned to throw it to the right half. As the pigskin left his hand, Reade leaped upward and caught the ball. He stumbled for a moment, but, soon getting his balance, started out for the Hilton goal with a long string of Crimson and Blue men spread out behind him. He had a start of about five yards on his nearest opponent, but this distance was decreased to three before he had passed his own forty-five-yard line. He turned his head and looked back. His pursuer was breathing heavily and Reade saw what was coming. He was going to try a diving tackle. As the man's body shot out straight for him he stepped out of the way and the man fell harmlessly past him, missing him by a foot.

From there to the goal line it was easy running, and as Reade laid the pigskin on the ground and rolled happily over beside it he could just hear another slogan echo down the field: "One point—two points—three points—four points—five points. Reade! Reade! Reade! Reade!"

The Plays of Booth Tarkington

BY ALBERT VAN NOSTRAND

From the sale of his first novel in 1899 to his death in 1946, Booth Tarkington published thirty-nine volumes of prose fiction and two volumes of essays. A fragmentary novel and three more short novels were published posthumously; and there remain uncollected but originally published in periodicals half a dozen serialized novels, over two hundred short stories, and as many articles and informal essays. During roughly the first thirty years of his authorship Tarkington also wrote twenty-one plays for the professional stage, of which eighteen were produced on Broadway. Compared to the extraordinary success of his fiction, the popular reception of these plays was modest. As a result, the plays have received almost no critical attention; and yet, similar in themes and in technique to the novels, the plays render a tabloid account of the author's entire professional endeavor. Moreover, their reception during this period reflects a noticeable change in the tastes of the New York theater-going public.

The similarity between Tarkington's plays and his novels is qualified only by the special conditions levied on the playwright. Unlike the novelist, the playwright does not work alone, but depends upon other specialists—actor, director, producer, and, often in Tarkington's case, collaborator—in order to render his work before an audience. This process usually entails a difference of opinion, and a necessity for compromise. It was so with Tarkington, and he often found it necessary to step back and defend his ideas. 1

1 An appendix lists the available information about the manuscripts and the productions of these plays. Added to these are a number of one-act plays, five of which appeared in The Ladies' Home Journal and were later published separately and made available for amateur production: The Ghost Story (1908), The Treasoning Place (1916), The Ghost Story (1916), The Treasoning Place (1917), and Station YW10 (1927). Bimbo, the Pirate is a farce based on several "historical" testimonials about gentlemen-pirates along the New England coast. The other four farces in this series exploit the domestic scene and some of the familiar problems of adolescence and courtship. Tarkington also wrote, in the form of one-act plays, two scripts for radio production: The Help Each Other Club (1934), intended to demonstrate a faith in free enterprise despite the economic depression, and Lady Hamilton and Her Nelson (1938), written in 1940 to protest the need for national mobilization. Beauty and the Jaunlar (1918), a comic melodrama intended for amateur production, belongs with five other plays among Tarkington's juvenilia, which are noted in: Dorothy R. Russo and Thelma L. Sullivan, A Bibliography of Booth Tarkington, Indianapolis, 1940, p. 149.
about the conception of a play, of its plot and its characterization, of the casting and the acting. Many of his opinions about these plays, and the details of their production, exist in Tarkington’s long correspondence with George C. Tyler, a member of the firm of Liebler & Co., a close friend of the author, and the producer of eleven of his plays. These letters document Tarkington’s playwriting career. The association of these two men began with Tarkington’s second play, *The Gentleman from Indiana* (1905), a dramatization of his earlier novel. The play failed, but Tarkington was soon at work on a new one for Tyler.

Tarkington had already met Harry Leon Wilson, who had published two novels, and had decided to write for the stage. A Middle Westerner on tour, Wilson joined the Tarkingtons in Paris, traveled with them to Capri, to Rome, then to Champaign, where the two men agreed to write a play. Their first collaboration, *The Man from Home* (1907), produced by Tyler, was an emphatic success. It played for a year in Chicago before moving to New York; with Will Hodge in the leading role, it continued to tour the country for six years after the New York engagement. Wilson later commented on their method of collaboration, and on some of the results of it:

I did most of the work. In fact, I did all of it. From start to finish he never struck a note on the typewriter. All he did was to sit around and smoke those giant cigarettes. He did, to be sure, outline the action, describe the characters and recite their speeches, but I had to take it all down. . . . Anyway The Man From Home was so successful, running six years with our first star, Bill Hodge, that we at once wrote some more plays, ten or a dozen, following our original scheme of collaboration. I have never been able to decide why Tarkington wanted a collaborator in those plays—except that he always feels the need of someone to talk to.  

Some ten years and eight plays after *The Man from Home*, Alexander Woollcott, drama critic for *The New York Times*, reviewed yet another of their collaborations, saying that it was the work of Booth Tarkington and Harry Leon Wilson, “two of the most richly entertaining and altogether dependable authors now overwriting anywhere in America.” Woollcott was conscious not only of the repetition of plots, but also of certain familiarities in the dialogue—the latter a result of their technique of collaborating. Wilson commented on the method which they later worked out:

Our method of collaboration is almost primitive. One or the other of us has an idea that will serve as the basis of a plot; we meet and talk it over. We decide upon the general course of the story, and take turns in telling each other that story in the simplest form possible.

When we have it in a compact and tangible form we chop it into chunks or scenes. Then we discuss the characters and some of the principal details, both of us taking notes, and then we are ready to call in a stenographer. In the case of a dialogue between two characters we each take one and act out our scene, while the stenographer jots the dialogue down in shorthand.

Of course, I don’t mean to say that we rattle it right off, for it often takes a long time to get a speech to sound real. When we have gone through with the play in this way, we make the poor stenographer read it to us, and bombard him with corrections and alterations. Then he types the whole thing and turns it over to us. We each go through it separately, revising and correcting, and then read it to each other to hear just how it sounds. After that, we each read it through once more before we have a clean copy made for the manager’s perusal. You can very well see how the identity of individual passages is lost in this procedure.  

This facility for talking a character alive became the means of mass production. The similarity of characters through their speech was inevitable: in many cases, pallid; in a few, utterly convincing. The great achievement of their technique, in fact, was the creation of the provincial American who found himself inexplicably in a cosmopolitan society. But more of this later.

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*The manuscripts of these letters are a part of the Tyler Papers in the Princeton University Library. There are approximately two hundred letters, memoranda, and telegrams written by Tarkington from 1914 to 1919, concerned primarily with the production of the plays. Tyler’s letters to Tarkington are in the Tarkington Papers, also in the Princeton Library. About a quarter of Tarkington’s letters are unedited, but fall within the period mentioned. In promoting the various plays Tyler issued some of these letters in the press. A record of the published letters is in the Robinson Locke Collection, in the Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

Wilson to Arthur Bartlett Maurice, Oct. 18, 1919, Princeton University Library; quoted with the kind permission of Leon Wilson.

Meanwhile, Tarkington was writing other plays by himself. *Clarence* (1916), starring Alfred Lunt, played a long engagement in New York. And in the next four years, five plays crowded after it, their variety tempered by the significant fact that each was written around the talents of a particular actor selected at the outset to star in the production. Their success was mixed, and, burdened by the commitment to write fiction for the magazines, by the gradual loss of his sight, and by the death of his daughter, Tarkington decided that play writing was one distraction he could forego; although there were, in fact, three more plays forthcoming. The news of the closing of the last of these, in the winter of 1921, reached him by telegram at the hospital in Baltimore where he was undergoing an eye operation. Tarkington's audience had somehow grown away from him, but there were no formal valedictorys. He cheerfully wrote to Tyler that the two of them were now free to retire to the woods and live on roots and birch bark.

With one or two exceptions, Tarkington's plays dramatize the subjects of his novels: the American abroad, the ideology of capitalism, and the domestic comedy. Moreover, these plays tend to caricature these subjects. The American tourist, for instance, so thoroughly treated in the novels, becomes in the plays the prototypical provincial who is thrust into one exotic and urban society after another, whether abroad or at home; and the humor arises inevitably from this incongruity. To this group belong *The Man from Home* (1907), *Foreign Exchange* (1909), *Getting a Polish* (1910), *Mister Antonio* (1916), *The Country Cousin* (1917), and *Up from Nowhere* (1919).

These are all variations on *The Man from Home*, the saga of Daniel Voorhees Pike, the Indiana lawyer who travels to Italy to rescue his ward from her misalliance with a degenerate aristocrat. This play was so enthusiastically received that the intended satire of Pike's chauvinism never materialized, as Tarkington later reminded Tyler:

When we made our hero say absurd things which we not infrequently heard first-trip Americans saying, in Europe, we were not very well understood, I fear. We had been in the habit of collecting naive patriots, and found the collection handy—but the effect of them, as given forth by Daniel Voorhees Pike, was unforeseen and astonishing. When he declared "I wouldn't trade our State Insane Asylum for the worst ruined ruin in Europe" we were laughing at him; though the audience would laugh at him, as we did, forgivingly. The
New York critics thought we meant that we wouldn't trade the asylum for Pompeii, and reproved us for bunkum and for
attacking the culture of Europe. Of course, I don't mean that
this play could be thought a proper piece of work today;
thank heaven it couldn't! The "types" and the coincidental
impossibilities of plot have long since become stock stuff in
the general discard, but the thing wasn't contemporaneously
attacked for the coincidental impossibilities—it was attacked,
as I say, principally for its "Middle Westness."  

The "stock stuff" which Tarkington mentions in his letter, the
melodrama, and the polarity of the characterization as regards
moral behavior, was at the time part of its tremendous appeal.
Nearly twenty years after the play's opening, when Tarkington
had agreed to Tyler's request that he revise it for a new produc-
tion, he wrote to the producer analyzing what had made this ap-
peal, and acknowledging the need to conform to new fashions.
Structurally, he wrote, the play was good and not to be interfered
with; it merely needed "resurfacing." But to the purpose of con-
forming to present fashion, he declared, the "exaggerated coloring"
must go. With the encouragement of his audiences, Will Hodge
made the character of Pike into a braggart. Pike must be made
genuinely modest, yet conscious of no social inferiority. His ad-
versaries—the aristocratic pretenders—must also be made more
credible.

For all his humorous idiosyncrasies, nevertheless, Pike's con-
victions were meant to be taken seriously, and the temptation
to draw a moral from the discrepancy between provincial virtues
and cosmopolitan vices was even more evident in the next play of
Tarkington and Wilson, Foreign Exchange (1909). Located in
France and concerned with an American couple on the grand tour,
visiting their daughter whom they have married into a titled
French family, this play is a caricature of most of Henry James's
early novels. It dramatizes the rescue of an American girl and her
child from her husband, the Count of Savorgne. Like James's
Madame de Mauves, this heroine has married an idea, a distorted
notion of aristocracy, only to find herself surrounded by a strange
and frightening code of morals. But, unlike the formidable heroine
of James, this girl contrives to run away. The plot of her escape
involves a series of episodes which cure the girl's mother of social
climbing. The play closed a week after it opened, in Chicago's
Grand Opera House, and it was immediately followed by another

one like it. *If I Had Money* (1909) again demonstrates the disparity between provincial and suburban societies. The adversaries belong respectively to Yellow Dog, Montana, and New York’s Fifth Avenue. An impoverished scion tries to subsidize his philandering by marrying a miner’s wealthy widow. When this play failed, the authors rewrote the story as a vehicle for the droll songs of May Irwin. New York was changed to Paris and the situation of the bride about to be sacrificed was made intentionally farcical.

*If I Had Money* marked one more development in the treatment of the provincial. The authors discovered that this character did not have to be sent abroad in order to manifest his kind of Americanism. There might, in fact, be some advantage in juxtaposing his virtues with the dubious type of person who apparently denied these same virtues right here at home. George Tyler suggested some years later to Tarkington, pointing out that the plot of *The Man from Home* could be readily adapted with a young lady fulfilling the function of Daniel Voorhees Pike. The playwright was amenable. In the summer of 1915 Tarkington set to work with a collaborator, Julian Street, and their first draft was completed in two months. Revised considerably, it was produced as *The Ohio Lady* (1916), and completely rewritten it appeared the following season as *The Country Cousin* (1917).

It is a permutation of *The Man from Home*. The expatriate in the new play is a young lady from Ohio, the legatee of a wealthy uncle, who yearns to escape from the Midwest and to live like the people in the Cotugno. She goes to Long Island to live with her father and her stepmother, who allow her to rent for them an expensive suburban estate. When it becomes evident that the girl is being victimized by her parents, her elder cousin, Nancy Price, is sent to her rescue. Miss Price is the counterpart of Daniel Voorhees Pike in *The Man from Home*, and her adversaries, the socialites, are equally familiar. They are represented primarily by the character of George Tewksbury Reynolds, III, “a superior and triumphant youth of twenty-eight; very smart, half-Bostonese English, yet altogether a New Yorker,” whose action signifies the capitulation of this whole group to the superiority of Middle Western virtues. Some indication of his particular function in the play is seen in the playwright’s letter to Tyler cautioning him about casting the role:

Above all for ‘George.' Don’t put the play on at all if you don’t get THE ‘George.' If he isn’t right we haven’t a show.

If he’s better than right we hit bullseye. Look out—Look out! He’s got to have something damn sweet and fetching about him that grabs people in spite of his snob lines. The person and soul of the actor must be the reverse of snob, so that from the start they’ll long for him and Nancy to come together. The man must have charm—we must feel good sense, humor and gentility underneath his surface, and that must be in the texture of the actor’s personality. He must be good looking and a ‘gentleman.’*

The intention, obviously, was to make the hero and heroine represent opposing kinds of Americanism, and to convey an attitude toward this disparity by means of the plot. The Ohio spinster tamed the cosmopolite by ignoring his pretensions and judging him on her own terms. Moreover, 1917 offered a ready market for the play’s chauvinism. Miss Price’s continual iteration that these bounders are wasting their time when they might more profitably employ themselves in the service of their country finally rouses the hero, who enlists in the army and goes off in the last act to begin his training at Plattsburg. At least one other person in the Galley Theatre on the night of the play’s New York opening was responsive to the heroine’s exhortation. Teddy Roosevelt was so impressed that he rose in his box after the fourth act curtain and addressed the house with an eloquent endorsement.

One other play in this group, *Mister Antonio* (1916), develops the antipathy between urban and provincial. The play is an account of small town hypocrisy, and it anticipates Tarkington’s later novels, in which he assumes “provincial” to be a relative term, and champions that character who most represents the homely virtues. His method is to contrast the uncomplicated faith of the hero in himself to the pretension of his antagonists. Mr. Antonio is an Italian hand-organ man who rescues a tourist about to be thrown out of a New York bar. The disgraced tourist is next discovered in his professional capacity as the mayor of a small Pennsylvania town, about to ostracize one of his servants for her harmless indiscretion in patronizing a local roadhouse. Tony’s arrival on the scene, and his threat—in the girl’s behalf—to expose the mayor’s own indiscretion, prompts the mayor to try to have him shot. There is an unconvincing reconciliation, but the play’s worst offense is mistaking comedy for melodrama. Otis Skinner’s success

*Tarkington to Tyler, Dec. 12, 1915. This passage is included among extracts from Tarkington’s letters to Tyler published in *The New York Times*, Sept. 9, 1917, sec. 4, p. 4 and in *The Indianapolis News*, Dec. 7 and 14, 1918.*
with the play was surprising, particularly after he took it on tour, since the piece exposes the rural scene to disadvantage; but even more puzzling to Tarkington was the critical comment accorded this play and The Country Cousin, a year later.

Last season I had a play in New York and put into it a group of small town Middle Westerners—at least, that’s what the critics called ‘em. The critics said that these small-town Middle Westerners were too vile for belief—too stupid, too narrow-minded, too mean. This season I wrote, with Julian Street, another play in New York, and we put into it a group of small-town Middle Westerners, all but one of ‘em the same sort of people that were in the previous play, though the circumstances were, of course, different—and the critics said that these midlanders were too virtuous for belief. Naturally, I am unhappy about this; in both cases the effort was to portray people who were neither virtuous nor vile. . . . Should we publish diagrammatic keys? Or be satisfied that the critics find us so simple, while we find them so perplexing?1

Tarkington also wrote several thesis plays about the ideology of capitalism. These are associated with his economic novels, although developing more bluntly than the novels the conservative attitude toward free enterprise. The most important of these plays was Poldekin (1920), starring George Arliss. It was the single occasion on which the author frankly used the stage for editorial comment; and its failure caused him sharp disappointment. The play concerns the fortunes of a missionary band sent by Soviet Russia to hasten, by whatever means at its disposal, a proletarian regime in the United States. One of the revolutionaries is Poldekin, despised by his colleagues for his inclination to doubt the wisdom of his party’s policies. From the back yard of a New York tenement, where the group has established its headquarters, Poldekin sets out to find his own America: befriends a taxi-dancer next door, watches a parade, and gets himself blacklisted by his comrades. Having learned the printing trade, he is spared liquidation until he can produce a press-run of seditious handbills. These he delivers to headquarters, only to discover that the taxi-dancer’s boy friend, a federal agent, is waiting for him; although it turns out that Poldekin has printed, instead, a basketful of handbills containing the Declaration of Independence.

The play is an informal debate, and its characters are embodied points of view. At the time the author was criticized for setting up and knocking down a “Bolshevist strawman,” and for portraying as well an Americanism equally unformidable, even smug. But by his caricature of the revolutionaries Tarkington did achieve their absolute humorlessness and, hence, a suggestion of the sinister. As he wrote to Tyler, he had not meant to present an exegesis of Marxism but only the Bolshevists’ opinion of it. His aim, he said, had been to show the confusion of their thought and the intensity of their feeling. This much he achieved—he counseled Tyler to play the whole piece “artistic-as-hell”—but there was no drama to carry it.

Tarkington was after a tone of whimsy and pathos, as he made clear in an issue which arose over the ending of the play. As originally written, Poldekin was slain by his comrades after revealing what he had printed. But in the out-of-town tryouts George Arliss made the character so winning that the audiences were dissatisfied with his death. Arliss and Tyler both demanded a new ending, one in which Poldekin would somehow escape harm, winning at the same time the sympathies of the daughter of one of the revolutionaries. This the playwright stubbornly opposed. He conceded the validity of the box office, but pointed out that a happy ending would be insipid; that it would belie the characters of the antagonists. They are revolutionaries, he reminded Tyler, they hate Poldekin, who manages to mortify their ideals, and they are bound to kill him anyway after the play is over. The happy ending, he wrote, was a palpable between-the-eyes lie, and there was no way to tell it without getting caught. The alternative of having someone shoot at Poldekin but miss him impatiently rejected, and his argument was a comment on the kind of play he was attempting. Arliss’ Poldekin, he explained, was a gentleman; it was an intellectual performance; and to introduce and then disregard a threat on his life at the last instant would be a melodramatic scare which had no place in a satiric comedy. He saw in his original version a balance between “the comic and the sinister forces,” and he wanted it played in a mood harmonious to a pathetic ending.

The argument between playwright and producer was an anticlimax. When the play reached Baltimore after touring for a month, Arliss and Tyler devised a happy ending in which Poldekin was shot but not fatally wounded. It was played with some success before Tyler informed his author what had been done. From Baltimore he telegraphed:

I'm a realist and opposed to absent treatment. Come on and see the patient with your own eyes. I'll double your royalties if you won't agree, after one look, that we simply can't let Poldekpin die.  

Resigned but unconvincing, the author set about revising the earlier acts to anticipate this conclusion, although in this matter, artistic and practical considerations were one. He warned Tyler that the out-of-town audiences might put up with this sort of melodrama, but that there was liable to be a real murder by the New York critics.

He was not far from right. Tyler, the showman, made one last effort to exploit the reception which the play had received; and the readers of the Times Sunday theater section encountered the following invitation:


Considering the cavalier reviews the play had received, it is not surprising that this publicity notion caused repercussion among the members of the company. The day following its appearance two letters were written to Tyler, commenting on the producer's audacity. Arliss wrote that he was "overwhelmed with shame" to have been associated with the stunt. Tarkington applauded it.

In contrast to the thesis plays are others singularly unburdened by editorial comment. These are the domestic comedies dramatizing the family scene, and corresponding to the domestic novels. Clarence (1919), The Wren (1921), The Intimate Strangers (1921), Rose Briar (1922), and Tweedles (1924) belong to this group. Two of Tarkington's fictional juveniles, Penrod and Seventeen, were adapted for the stage by other authors; although as a play-doctor Tarkington helped to repair these adaptations, he nevertheless disavowed any claim to authorship. Similar in theme, his domestic novels and domestic plays move, however, in different directions. The novels are preoccupied with the mutual involvement of the characters in a given domestic situation. The plays were all written with some actor in mind, and characteristically use a situation to develop the character represented by that actor.

Such is Clarence (1919), which begins with the domestic situation of a tired businessman whose family ignores his authority. His second wife, his two adolescent children, and their governess, whom his wife considers unnecessarily attractive, maintain a continued state of civil war. Into this household Clarence is brought, a weary veteran of the infantry who is willing to work in any capacity that might arise, and who is hired solely on the strength of his assertion that in the army he drove mules without swearing. The antics of the family provide a humorous situation which is then developed almost exclusively through the person of Clarence, a pathetically comical figure whose only claim to a soldier's sacrifice came when he was shot in the liver at target practice, somewhere in Texas. By piano-tuning, plumbing, and playing the saxophone he manages to charm the family into a state of peace; and the remainder of the play concerns the excitement over discovering his identity. The issue of whether his name is "Smith" or "Moon" is rendered academic with the accusation that he is one "Short," a deserter from the army, and resolved finally by the discovery that his name is "Smith," and that he is an entomologist whose published studies on potato bugs have made him an acknowledged authority on the habits of coleoptera.

The play was constructed around the character of Clarence, or more precisely, around the personality of Alfred Lunt. When The Country Cousin was taken on tour in 1918, the part of George Tewksberry Reynolds was given to Lunt, largely through the efforts of Alexandra Carlisle, who was playing the heroine. Tarkington happened to be in Boston when the play arrived at the Hollis Street Theatre. He had never met the young man who was playing the part of the effete Easterner, but he was so struck by Lunt's performance that he hurried backstage, introduced himself, and offered to write a play for him. The Country Cousin, it developed, was heading west, and Lunt eagerly agreed to visit the author when the play arrived in Indianapolis. Meanwhile Tarkington proposed to George Tyler that he would write a play for Lunt if Tyler would produce it without any revision. At once he set to work, and so definitely was the character in his mind that he finished the script in a few months. Lunt paid his visit, accepted the part, and shortly after, the script, typed without change from its first draft, was sent to Tyler with the admonition that as he read it, he keep Lunt continually in mind: his personal-
ity, voice, looks, and mannerisms. The part as written he said, would have meaning only as it expressed Alfred Lunt.

The character of Clarence had been spontaneous; but as the play took shape one other role grew to fit a particular personality which the author had in mind. When two acts had been written, Tarkington interrupted himself long enough to write impulsively to Tyler that he must have Helen Hayes for the sixteen-year-old sister. This he claimed to be the best female part ever written, but meaningless without this particular actress to play it. From this point on the part was purposely written for Miss Hayes, with the playwright counting on what he called her "wiseful sweetness" to keep the character from being a vixen. Once he was assured of Alfred Lunt and Helen Hayes, he turned painstaking attention to casting the other parts. The process of casting Clarence took considerably longer than writing it, but the combination was an emphatic success.

Lunt, he asserted, was irreplaceable; but he was also impressed by the performance of Helen Hayes, so much so that he wrote a play exclusively for her. The play was The Wren, begun during the fall of 1920 and produced in New York a year later. Like Clarence, it was intended to dramatize a family scene, developing it through one particular character. The play begins in the conventional situation of two young people obviously to be paired but evidently heading in opposite directions. Eusebia Olits, who runs a boardinghouse for her father somewhere on the New England coast, is impervious to all summer visitors except a young artist. When it appears that his art is endangered by his infatuation for one of the other boarders, it becomes Seeby's chore to extricate him and set him back to work at his easel. Seeby is modestly dedicated to managing the men in her life. Tarkington was aware of the dangers of this unbelievably sweet heroine. To Tyler he wrote that he wanted her to play it "a little sour and vinegar in spots" and at all costs to avoid "the sweet-type." This was done; and the character of Seeby did impress the reviewers. In fact, the whole play was favorably reviewed, and the audiences seemed to agree. But for some exasperating reason, The Wren lost money from the start and continued to play to half-empty houses until it closed.

The Intimate Strangers (1921), which opened several weeks later, was also written for a particular personality. The notoriety of Clarence had brought Tarkington a request to write a play for Maude Adams. Miss Adams came to Kennebunkport to meet the
author, and he was impressed during the visit by the actress' facility for assuming the appearance of different ages, as the occasion seemed to warrant. Upon her arrival, Tarkington later wrote to Tyler, after a wearisome journey and still wearing the dust of the Boston and Maine Railroad, she had appeared to be of a convincing, although attractive, middle age, but after a brief retirement she had rejoined the company, looking like an ingénue. The Intimate Strangers, the play which he wrote for her, exploits the possibilities of a compatible situation of a woman's courtship depending on her ability to seem of indeterminate age.

Still another play which was built to dramatize the personality of a particular actor was Colonel Satan (1930). During the winter of 1928 George Arliss asked Tarkington to write a play about Aaron Burr: a curious combination of realtor, soldier, and statesman, both patriot and conspirator. Several months later Arliss visited the playwright and a story was worked out which Tarkington completed by the following summer. The playwright invented a credible episode during Burr's exile in France during the period of the First Empire. Starving gallantly in a Paris winery, Burr implicates himself in one of the many conspiracies to restore the Bourbon to the throne. The intrigue in the plot is exclusively a matter of conversation, relieved only in the instance of a duel between the hero and a jealous young friend of the late Alexander Hamilton. The dialogue reads well, although the reviewers agreed unanimously that the intrigue carried no conviction on stage, and that the scenes were long and overstressed. Actually, the organization of the conspiracy does establish tension at the outset. But the play is not able to sustain it because Burr is not genuinely involved in any conflict; he is in no real danger.

The play, in fact, depends not upon Burr's part in the action but on presenting a portrait of Burr, created exclusively for the personality of George Arliss. The playwright emphasized that Burr's personality must coincide with the actor's. A good Romeo, he said, was the wrong man; on the contrary, Arliss' "lack of theatrical romantic gallantry" was precisely the needed personality. Shortly after the play was finished, Arliss wrote curiously that he could not accept the part "for personal reasons"; which reasons, it developed, were that he had once played Alexander Hamilton and had now decided that he could not make Hamilton's antagonist attractive to an audience. The play was shelved temporarily, and the author's task became one of discovering another actor...

18 Tarkington to Tyler, Apr. 14, 1930, Princeton University Library, explains the process by which this play took shape.
who lacked 'theatrical romantic gallantry.' He wrote repeatedly to Tyler, cautioning him not to hurry the process of casting, but to wait for the right man. The play needed one ingredient to boil, he said: 'the unromantic-romantic,' which must be found already existing in an actor. In all probability the playwright could no longer distinguish between the actor and the part, so inseparable had he made them.

Colonel Satan belongs to a group of Tarkington's period plays, which share exotic settings, sentimentalism, the perilous joining of comedy and melodrama, and the fact that they were all vehicles for particular actors. Like Tarkington's occasional historical novels, these plays represent a recurrent interest of the author and what he thought to be a recurrent interest of his audiences. The first of these was Monsieur Beaucarie (1901), a dramatization of his own novel to suit the talents of Richard Mansfield. The action of the original story was extended; the conflict between Beaucarie and his adversaries was underscored; a duel not called for in the original was written into the script and fought onstage; there was a new and more passionate scene between the hero and heroine; and the ending was changed to make certain their reconciliation. The effect of these changes was to elaborate the character of Beaucarie, and, in fact, under Mansfield's direction the other characters were allowed even less individuality than in the original story. The author generously accorded the play's success entirely to Mansfield's performance. But as was evidently his habit, Mansfield claimed even more, implying that the play was his, and that Tarkington's story had been written following the stage production. Mansfield's implication is contrary to fact, although through repeated revivals and adaptations the play's ownership became less conspicuous. Still another tailor-made play was Springtime (1909), a vehicle for Mabel Taliaferro, constructed around a scenario written by the play's producer, Frederic Thompson, who in turn had based his work on a story by Bronson Howard. The story concerned the love affair of a Louisiana belle; and the sentiment, twice-compounded, was intended to exploit Miss Taliaferro's facility for childlike simplicity.Cameo Kirby (1908), about the exploits of a river-boat gambler, was written at George Tyler's request as a vehicle for Nat Goodwin. Magnolia (1909), concerning the re-education of a Mississippi gentleman, was commissioned by Lionel Barrymore, who had even written several outlines of the story before deciding that he did not want the part.

Reconsider these plays for a moment. From Tarkington's first stage production, in which he modified the role of Beaucarie to suit Mansfield, to his last, which he wrote for Arliss, the genesis of nearly every one of his plays lay in the personality of some particular individual. Nearly a third of them were written at the request either of actors themselves or of producers with certain players in mind. Following Your Humble Servant, Otis Skinner commissioned a dialect role about a hand-organ man, around which the play Muter Antonio was built. Maude Adams' request for a new play resulted in The Intimate Stranger. Magnolia, at the outset, had been Barrymore's own idea; and Cameo Kirby, Springtime, and Rose Brier were forgotten at the requests of their producers. To these are added those plays which Tarkington himself undertook for some particular actor: Clarence for Alfred Lunt, Poledine for George Arliss, The Wren for Helen Hayes, and the revival, Hoosiers Abroad, for Glenn Hunter. Still other plays were revised to suit the talents of particular actors. Such was the case with Magnolia and Colonel Satan, and similarly with The Man from Home, originally written for David Warfield. In all of these Tarkington sought a special kind of authenticity.

His technique of organizing a play around a particular personality was not compatible with the system of casting plays which Klaw and Erlanger and the Frohmans were exploiting at the time. His long correspondence with Tyler, which began in earnest with the production of The Country Cousin, emphasizes the author's disregard for the prominence of his players. When casting The Country Cousin, Tyler suggested a dozen or more actresses for the role of Nancy Price before he could find one to suit the playwright. Tarkington believed that a personality already established with the audiences would limit the play. To Tyler's suggestion that the comedienne Elsie Janis play the role, Tarkington countered that audiences were used to seeing her as herself and would not be interested in watching her play a straight part. It would be like asking Charles Dana Gibson to paint landscapes. His own suggestions pointed in the opposite direction. On one occasion he told Tyler: that there was a Maude Adams somewhere, playing small parts and able to do bigger; and he urged that if Tyler should happen to find her, and if she appeared to fit the part, she would be far better than a mature star. In another letter concerning this same role he wrote:

I have a hunch toward Miss Rambeau. I'd a great, great deal rather have an actress not so well known as a star. She'd probably be more amenable to managerial plans and advice
and always 1,000 per cent. better for the play, if personally effective.

The practical and the artistic were one in this respect; the correspondence continued, and Tarkington’s remarks about the candidacy of yet another actress are characteristic:

If Miss Ferguson is to read the play, wait till she has the revised manuscript. It may be wholly unsympathetic to her— as ‘The Man from Home’ was to Nat Goodwin. There’s no hurry about this play; the important thing, of course, is to find just the type of actress. Unless Miss Ferguson is instantly enthusiastic about the part she isn’t the type. I don’t think any one should be urged to play it. . . . It’s not that every actress who might be enthusiastic about it wouldn’t be right, but any actress who isn’t would certainly be wrong for it.

The process of dovetailing an imagined character with a living personality was repeated meticulously in every new production. Deciding on a play for Helen Hayes, for instance, he told Tyler that he had thought a lot about her and was confident that he could “feel out” about what was needed for her. When The Wren was ready for revision, he arranged for Miss Hayes to visit him for several days to study the script, so that he might build into it some of her particular mannerisms. Tarkington insisted on this philosophy, and some years later when they were looking for an actress to play the part of Madame de Bannalac in Colonel Satan, the producer could scarcely have been surprised at the playwright’s counsel to “get a stunning heroine and take the acting out of her.”

The New York critics came to expect skillful casting of each new Tarkington play. They took for granted the author’s insistent attention to what he called “balance.” It was his search for “balance,” for the right combination of players, which delayed so long the production of The Country Cousin. His objection to the happy ending in Poldkein lay in his contention that it would disturb the balance between the comic and the sinister which the play had achieved. Whether to modify a character or to make the player adapt himself to it was ultimately determined by this concept of balance, as Tarkington understood it. When Tyler urged that the adolescent son in Clarence be made mature enough to suit the talents of Glenn Hunter, the playwright refused to alter the part. The play, he said, was balanced like a watch: with the wrong piece in any place, none would work.

Tarkington’s insistence that character be made convincing through small details was equally urgent. As he continued to write, his tendency was to allow a play more time on the road while revisions continued, before it was taken to New York. The immediate concern for any new play was, of course, its casting; but once a production was under way, Tarkington corresponded continually with Tyler, offering changes in a scene or a line, or explaining the motivation of a particular character, often intangible changes. Before the opening of Clarence, for instance, Tarkington had sensed, without knowing what, “some falsehood” in the part that Alfred Lunt was playing; and it occurred to him finally that as the play progressed Clarence appeared to understand himself too readily, an impression which blunted his appeal as a whimsically indecisive person. It was not a matter of altering lines but simply of calling it to the actor’s attention. Tarkington appeared to have memorized the plays, for even after sending his own script to Tyler with its new revisions, he would change a line, first by quoting its present version. Some months after rehearsals had begun on Poldkein, it occurred to him that the word “liquor,” used by one of the Bolsheviks, could scarcely have as much meaning in a character as “wine”; the word was changed accordingly. When he recalled that Poldkein used the word “sure” in a colloquial sense, he instructed Tyler to insert the word, in the previous act, in a speech already explaining to Poldkein some of the vagaries of American idioms.

All of his changes were directed toward an audience’s more certain conviction of the authenticity of a character, which he believed was the only valid kind of realism. Toward this end his most frequent insistence was that a regional character sound like a native, as he reminded Tyler while The Country Cousin was being rehearsed.

With O’Brien and a good support you ought to be able to see what’s in the play, if Miss Carlisle and your Eleanor can SOUND LIKE OHIO. A subtle, but actually vital, effect will be lost if they don’t. Reading the play over, after a long forgetting of it, I perceive that it hangs on the love-story first, but almost as much on a mid-westerness contrast which, if not audible in manner of speech . . . will cost us heavily. The audience would not consciously know whether the Middle
West is there or not. It lies in cadence and in distinctness, but not burting the ‘Rs.’

Tell Miss Carlisle to listen to you when you talk and not to notice the meaning of anything you say but the sound and cadence and pronunciation. You ought to give her a great deal of time and talk continuously. ... If she heard the Midland speech several hours a day for a week or so it would seep into her, and she couldn’t help speaking it correctly. 18

One of his several letters to Tyler on this subject is an essay illustrating the Midland pronunciation of “the pure English ‘r,’” purposely ignoring the fact that Tyler himself had grown up in Chillicothe, Ohio.

The explicitness of these suggestions he matched in listing the exact age of characters in nearly every play. Sometimes the author interrupted stage directions and dialogue alike with an editorial comment on a character, or a careful description of the life and times being dramatized. In this careful explication of his own narrative for the purpose of authenticity, Tarkington’s plays bear their most immediate resemblance to the novels. Occasionally, for the sake of this total impression, the editorial details are replaced by a casual suggestion. The mayor’s son in Mister Antonio is described merely as a good-looking youth of twenty-three or so, who is probably not a graduate of Princeton or Yale but who might be of Penn and State. In The Wren, it is left largely to the observation that she gets her fashions from the magazines. Tarkington said that he always sought the illusion of actuality.

And if you are showing an audience a section of life with which that audience is familiar, your truth to the subject must be absolute or you’ll be caught lying. You can make your millionaires all silk-hatted villains to the happy satisfaction of a Poor House audience; you can make Kit Carson say “My word!” for a London audience, but unlikelihood can be successful only in proportion to the ignorance of the audience, and this ignorance is very unstable; it cannot be depended upon. 14

Authenticity was Tarkington’s unyielding purpose. He believed to be the legitimate limit of realism, and he defended it against all other notions of realism in art. But the fact that he considered a defense to be necessary best explains his own position as a twentieth-century author. In the opinion of reviewers most of his plays were not pertinently realistic. This opinion started a significant argument over The Wren (1918). The playwright certainly achieved authenticity in his characters; but an issue was raised over just how realistic this play might be considered. The hero’s liaison with a married woman could be represented either as an infatuation or as an illicit love affair. Tarkington preferred the former, arguing that wholesomeness was precisely what he intended, partly for the sake of his protégée, for whom it had been written. Tyler conceded the point; but warned that critics would nevertheless consider it “a little play.” As Tyler had anticipated, the reviews, although favorable, tended not to take the play seriously. Alexander Woolcott likened his own experience, attending the play, to a hungry man searching the icebox and finding a lettuce sandwich. And Tarkington’s obituary of The Wren took notice of the epigram. He told Tyler that his work was an attempt to tell the truth about something other than genre situations, and he conceded that this was likely to taste like lettuce to anyone used to a diet of “high meat, fried Bull and Gin.” Woolcott’s charge and Tarkington’s rebuttal over what constitutes “realism” reflected at the time one of the primary concerns of American dramatists and critics; the degree to which city explicit references to sex, sin, and animal functions would be accepted on the stage. Tarkington’s opinions are advanced in an essay on realism in art, in which he likens the play-reviewer to a gourmet who has had to eat partridge daily for several years, and is naturally grateful for any new sauce capable of disguising its flavor; but he suggests that this new naturalism might itself be only a halfway measure, “a naturalism that was not yet natural.”

The fashion appears to be mainly interested in hints of sexual detail offered for its inspection—and getting more and more interested and asking for stronger and stronger hints. For one of the oddest things about all this frankness is that frank is the one thing it certainly is not. The toughest and most illicit lovers on the whole sex stage speak of their sins like rather literary people playing a game of synonyms; though of course now and then one of them will use a good, strong, fashionable, literary bad word to show how frank the author is being. 15


14 “Making Characters Live,” Toledo Blade (sometime in December, 1919), now in the Locke Collection.

In view of the lack of formal criticism of Tarkington's plays, the reviews must be considered contemporary official opinion. In these reviews there is a great deal of speculation over why Tarkington's plays are not more impressive "art," why they do not present more authoritative comment on contemporary problems, why, in short, they are not more conspicuously successful. Most reviewers speculated that since he was a novelist he took his plays less seriously. But this does not hold up. The similarity between plays and novels in theme and in language is extraordinary. The novels, in fact, often approximating a stage dialogue, and with their technique of advancing the narrative by scenes, frequently suggest the presence of a stage production. Moreover, the only distinction Tarkington made between his plays and his novels was that his plays were intended to be, if anything, the more popular...

...when I am writing a play, I think of what the public wants. When I see that the public doesn't want anything in one of my plays, I try to cut it out and write something that it does want. But I do not make these concessions when I am writing fiction.16

Quite to the contrary of the reviewers' opinions, the fate of his plays was precisely because they were so like his novels. The discrepancy which the reviewers sought between Tarkington's plays and his novels was a property not of his writing but of the audiences for which he wrote.

Tarkington's thirty years as a playwright compass the period of sweeping changes on the American stage, and the virtual disappearance of any national theater. During the opening decade of the twentieth century this obliteration was hastened by a syndicate of booking agents in New York, the firm of Klaw and Erlanger, which had so monopolized the theaters throughout the nation that the enterprise of road companies became unprofitable. And with the disappearance of touring companies the legitimate stage became increasingly associated with New York. After 1915 fashions in realism began to change when, among other factors, the programs of the Washington Square Players and the Provincetown Players were assimilated into the commercial stage productions. It became acceptable to dramatize sordidness, despair, moral confusion, or whatever other qualifications upon absolute good and evil are presumed actually to exist. And commercial producers found it advisable to keep pace with the change. The theater audience which demanded new conventions of realism during the twenties was not a national but a limited audience; and the arbiters of its fashions were not necessarily representative of national tastes.

It would be difficult to ignore Tarkington's antipathy to the New York reviewers, whom he rightly or wrongly considered to be primarily responsible for the success or failure of a play. As his letters to Tyler indicate, he refused to make concessions to the prevailing opinion of his critics; and notwithstanding his statement that he tried to satisfy the inclinations of his audiences, he evidently disbelieved that they might want any startling departure from what was in his fiction. The marked tone of provincialism and the deliberate lack of sophistication remained stable elements in his plays, yet, as he continued to write through the nineteen twenties, the New York engagements of his plays became less impressive. Conversely, a number of his plays which barely survived a respectable Broadway engagement nevertheless succeeded eminently on the road.

Whether consciously or not, Tarkington actually represented the interests of a larger audience than that which he discovered on Broadway. He believed that it demanded entertainment; a well-defined narrative, with characters into which a reader or viewer could easily project himself, although with heroes and heroines perceptibly above normal; the assurance of a moral world, in which these characters could determine their own actions, and in which a just retribution afforded a final security. Upon these conditions, he believed, this audience would tolerate benevolent satire on its own shortcomings. As the twenties progressed, he had in mind, actually, not the tastes of the New York playgoers, but rather of the larger public, which also read popular fiction, and, inevitably, the novels of Booth Tarkington.

16 The Cleveland Leader, Feb. 1, 1916.
### THE PLAYS OF BOOTH TARKINGTON


This compilation represents the limit of information which these sources yield in the matter of Tarkington’s plays, although nowhere does there exist a complete factual record of them. The manuscripts of most of these plays are included in the Tarkington papers in the Princeton Library.

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<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>COLLABORATOR</th>
<th>OUT-OF-TOWN OPENING</th>
<th>NEW YORK PRODUCTION</th>
<th>PRODUCER</th>
<th>STARRING</th>
<th>PUBLICATION</th>
<th>REMARKS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Monsieur Beaucaire</em></td>
<td>Evelyn Greenleaf</td>
<td>Philadelphia, Garrick, 10/7/01</td>
<td>Herald Square, 12/9/01, 64 perf.</td>
<td>Richard Mansfield</td>
<td>Richard Mansfield</td>
<td>1901; also <em>promptbook</em> (New York Public Library and Princeton)</td>
<td>Lewis Waller opened in London 10/31/01, and revived the play in New York, 1912; the play was produced also as an opera in London and New York, 1928. Reviewed in <em>Theatre</em>, 2 (1/1/90), 21; and <em>N.Y.D.M.</em> (1/1/90), 16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Gentleman from Indiana</em></td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Indianapolis, English’s, 8/7/05</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Liebler &amp; Co.</td>
<td>Edward Morgan</td>
<td><em>promptbook</em> (Princeton)</td>
<td>Suppressed by the author.</td>
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<th>PUBLICATION</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Man from Home</em></td>
<td>Harry Leon Wilson</td>
<td>Louisville, Ky., Macaulay’s, 9/25/07; Chicago, Studebaker, 9/25/07</td>
<td>Astor, 9/17/08 &amp; Co.</td>
<td>Liebler</td>
<td>William T. Hodge</td>
<td>1908; French, 1944; <em>promptbook</em> (New York Public Library and Princeton)</td>
<td>An earlier version of the play was <em>The Guardian</em> (1907), n.p. 45 copies were printed for copyright purposes. Revised as <em>Hoosiers Abroad</em> (1907) and failed; n.p. (<em>promptbook</em>, Princeton).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Springtime</td>
<td>Harry</td>
<td>Philadelphia,</td>
<td>Liberty,</td>
<td>Frederic</td>
<td>Mabel</td>
<td>n.p.</td>
<td>Earlier manuscript titles were:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3 acts)</td>
<td>Leon</td>
<td>Garrick, 10/4/09</td>
<td>10/19/09, 79 perfs.</td>
<td>Thompson</td>
<td>Taliaferro</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Lights of Valetta, Young Love, and The Return of a Soul. Reviewed in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wilson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Theatre, 10 (12/1909), 170 and N.Y.D.M. (10/30/09), 35.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your Humble Servant</td>
<td>Harry</td>
<td>Rochester,</td>
<td>Garrick, 1/9/10,</td>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>Otis</td>
<td>n.p.; promptbook (Princeton)</td>
<td>The manuscript was completed in 1908. Reviewed in Theatre, 12 (9/1910), 97;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting a Polish</td>
<td>Harry</td>
<td>Chicago,</td>
<td>Wallack's,</td>
<td>Liebler</td>
<td>May Irwin</td>
<td>n.p.; promptbook (Princeton)</td>
<td>The play opened in Chicago under the title If I Had Money, starring Madge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3 acts)</td>
<td>Leon</td>
<td>Grand Opera House, 10/17</td>
<td>11/7/10, 48 perfs.</td>
<td>&amp; Co.</td>
<td>and George</td>
<td></td>
<td>Carr Cook, and was extensively rewritten before the New York production.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wilson</td>
<td>to 10/30/09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fawcett</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reviewed in Theatre, 16 (12/1912), xiii; and N.Y.D.M. (1/16/10), 8.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Country Cousin</td>
<td>Julian</td>
<td>Philadelphia,</td>
<td>Gaiety, 9/3/17,</td>
<td>George C.</td>
<td>Alexandra</td>
<td>French, 1921; promptbook</td>
<td>The first version of the play, entitled The Ohio Lady, was presented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leonard</td>
<td>Broad St, 4/23/17</td>
<td>138 perfs.</td>
<td>Tyler, Klaw &amp;</td>
<td>Carlisle,</td>
<td></td>
<td>at the Hartman Theatre, Columbus, Ohio, 1/24/16. 62 copies were printed</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Street</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Erlanger</td>
<td>Eugene</td>
<td></td>
<td>for copyright purposes. It was extensively rewritten in 1917. Reviewed</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>O'Brien</td>
<td></td>
<td>in Theatre, 26 (10/1917), 207.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The American</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Harry</td>
<td>Indianapolis,</td>
<td>Stuart</td>
<td>George</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>Saturday Evening Post, 7/12-</td>
<td>Earlier manuscript title: George Washington Silver. Reviewed in Theatre, 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leon</td>
<td>Murat, 7/14/19</td>
<td>Walker</td>
<td>Gaul, Margaret</td>
<td>16/19; Doubleday,</td>
<td>1919; promptbook (Princeton)</td>
<td>10 (1/1919), 820; and N.Y.D.M. (9/18/19), 5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wilson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mower</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(3 acts)</td>
<td>Leon</td>
<td>Shubert-Belasco, 9/1/19</td>
<td>40 perfs.</td>
<td>Williams</td>
<td>Trevor</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rewritten as Karabokh and produced by the Garrick Players at Kennebunkport,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farewell</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Atlantic City,</td>
<td>Hudson, 9/20/19,</td>
<td>George C.</td>
<td>Alfred</td>
<td>French, 1919; promptbook</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Apollo</td>
<td>900 perfs.</td>
<td>Tyler, Lunt, Helen</td>
<td>Hayes</td>
<td></td>
<td>(Princeton)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outside Skin</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>New Haven, Shubert, 2/23/20</td>
<td>Park, 9/9/30, 44 perfs.</td>
<td>George C.</td>
<td>George</td>
<td>McClure's Magazine, 52</td>
<td>Rewritten as Karabokh and produced by the Garrick Players at Kennebunkport,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3 acts)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tyler,</td>
<td>Arliss</td>
<td>(8-7-1920); promptbook</td>
<td>8/1/39. Reviewed in Theatre, 32 (10/1939), 571; and N.Y.D.M. (9/18/39), 9.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Princeton)</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colonel Stan</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Columbus, 12/26/30</td>
<td>Fulton, 1/12/31, 17 perfs.</td>
<td>promptbook (Princeton)</td>
<td>French, 1930; promptbook (Princeton)</td>
<td>French, 1930;</td>
<td></td>
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Library Notes & Queries
With Special Reference to Princeton

THE GOETZ COLLECTION

One of the most interesting purchases of out-of-the-way old books ever made by the Princeton University Library is the large collection of sixteenth-, seventeenth-, and eighteenth-century volumes formerly belonging to the noble German family of Goertz von Schlitz. It is such a polymath library as we learn of with astonishment from the old sale catalogues of scholars and collectors, that, for example, of the library of Sir Thomas Browne. Only here it is not the catalogue but the books themselves we have. Though these books have been on the shelves for fourty years and have proved a perennial source of interest to scholars in many fields, their history as a collection has been and is still little known.

Only about half of the thirty-five hundred or more volumes at Princeton remain together. The rest have been recatalogued and are distributed throughout the general collection. They are, howevet, listed in full by one-line entry in the Princeton printed catalogue of 1910. From the accession book under the date 1915 we learn that they were bought abroad by the former Librarian, Ernest Cushing Richardson, for the amazingly low price of one thousand dollars. Mr. Richardson himself in a foreword to an off-print of this list tells us that the volumes acquired for Princeton are those remaining from a larger collection after the Royal Library in Berlin had supplied its lacks. There is apparently no other information in the Princeton archives. I have, however, ascertained from Dr. Horst Kunze, present Berlin librarian, that the books were acquired in 1906 from an antiquarian bookseller in Bonn. He refers to the collection as "die Gröfliche Goertz-Wirsbergische Bibliothek," located at Wirsberg-Holzen near Hildesheim in the former duchy of Braunschweig-Lüneburg. That this library, as sold, consisted of nearly twelve thousand volumes is shown by the bookseller's numbering, which is to be found on slips inserted in the volumes and which was used regardless of gaps in the original designation of the Princeton items.

It will be remembered that there was an important ducal library in nearby Wollfenbüttel. This library still exists, and I have appealed to its director for more exact data regarding the collection at Wirsberg-Holzen. Because the wheels of such inquiries turn slowly and those of periodical publication fast, I have thought fit to write this report without awaiting his reply. To do so is of course to risk having one's inferences upset. I nevertheless venture the opinion that the Goertz collection was in process of formation before the time of Karl Friedrich, Graf von Goertz and Wirsberg, who in 1735 married Katharina Eva Sophia, heiress of the Counts of Wirsberg, and whose descendants have lived in Wirsberg-Holzen to the present day. It apparently, however, received many additions during his lifetime and a few thereafter. He died in 1790.

In physical appearance the Goertz books at Princeton have certain striking features of uniformity. Almost all are in parchment bindings, almost all are labeled or stamped on the backstrip in similar color and tooling, making them immediately recognizable on the shelves. A bookplate having the pheasant on a hill of the Wirsberg arms and the coroner and stag supporters of the Goertzes occurs regularly, in various sizes, on the inside of the front cover, and there is a carefully made bibliographical note written on the verso of the blank leaf preceding the title-page. The bindings are hard to date but would seem to be of the eighteenth century.

1 See Max Brodzke, ed., Neumanns Oste- Und Verkehrs-Lexikon des Deutschen Reichs, Leipzig, 1905, under the name Wirsbergthal. The village had a population of 475. There is a church and a castle, the memorial estate surrounding which has been broken up in modern times.

2 Genealogical information regarding the Goertz von Schlitz and Goertz-Wirsberg families is to be found in Johann Strömmer, Grozes und Allgemeines Wappenbuch, Nuremberg, 1878-1895, Bd. I. Aufl. p. 11 and pls. 24-28, and in Genealogisches Handbuch des Adels: Die Gröfliche Hüsner, Glückeburg, 1915, I, 352-353. For an account of Katharina Eva Sophia and her ancestors, see J. P. Pflugler, Historie des Braunschweig-Lüneburgischen Hauses, Hamburg, 1791-94, J. D. Wörter, Heiratentages innen und außenherrlicher Ehrenbeghied, Hildesheim, 1793, is not available to me. Friedrich Wilhelm, Karl Friedrich's grandfather, is described as Geheimrat and Prime Minister to the electoral duke of Braunschweig-Lüneburg. He received a grant of arms in 1766 and died in 1792. It is reasonable to think of him as having had a hand in assembling the library. The more famous Braunschweig statesman, Georg von Goertz, who undertook an imperial mission to Italy in 1751-1765, is also plausibly as a collector. He died without issue in 1796 and Friedrich Wilhelm was presumably his heir. But there were also distinguished Brunswickers among the counts of Wirsberg and the use of their bearings on the armorial bookplate, without the von Schlitz quartering, suggests that a part of the library may have descended from them. All this, however, is mere conjecture.

3 About ten per cent of the books have sixteenth-century imprints, seventy per cent seventeenth, and twenty per cent eighteenth. I count only fifteen titles bearing imprints later than 1750.
are in excellent condition, except for some cockling which has taken place under the variable climate conditions of this country. The books themselves are often so clean that it looks as if they had been bought new and left long unopened on the professional library shelves. It seems likely that the big binding job was done under a single direction but over a period of years, and the same is true of the bibliographical processing. These notes are mainly but not entirely in a single hand. They show a great deal of erudition in the book science of the times, and the presence of many catalogues and reference books in the collection points clearly to professional custodianship. It would be quite interesting to know the name of this expert curator as to know that of the main collector himself. I have searched for both in vain in such comprehensive sources as Gustav Bogeng's Die Grossen Bibliophilen, Leipzig, 1922.

What I have thus far said of the Goertz books applies to by far the greater number of them. Volume after volume will be found to have all the identifying marks I have listed. Other features of interest characterize certain smaller groups. There are, for example, traces of more than one older numbering system on the spines of a good proportion of the volumes. The autograph signature of Johann Albert Fabricius, eighteenth-century author of many learned reference books and himself a great collector, occurs on the title-pages of several. A number of sixteenth-century lawbooks bear the inscription: “Joannes Conradus à Thorberg, Imp. Cam. Assessor” (i.e., Associate Judge of the Imperial Chamber).

This brings us to the matter of coverage and content, which cannot be dealt with so summarily. What the great Goertz collection was like in its integrity can only be conjectured. It is not possible to estimate it accurately from the Princeton sampling, since the Berlin selection is likely considerably to have varied in proportion. The fact, for example, that there are no incunabula in the Princeton unit may mean simply that Berlin took them. Perhaps, also, that library already had most of the German imprints and left for Mr. Richardson an unusual percentage of them, which it is to his everlasting credit that he took. With such reservations enough remains to permit of a characterization of the Goertz library as at once comprehensive and individual. The usual categories as given by the old catalogues are all well represented: theology, science, law, medicine, history, philology. There are fewer theological works and fewer editions of classical authors (and these not the best) than one finds in the typical scholar's library of the times. And medical books are there in no such formidable array as that presented by the library catalogue of the English physician Nathan Paget. Lawbooks, on the other hand, are very numerous so to argue a professional interest in the collector, though here again we have to reckon with the possibility that the Berlin library did not take so many in this category. It is, however, the great richness of the collection in biography, history, geography, bibliography, and humanistic rhetoric which chiefly characterizes it. A striking number of the books are connected in one way or another with the state of Braunschweig-Lüneberg. This is as one might expect, considering the location of the library and the services of the Goertz and Wrisberg families to this province and its ducal house. Numerous also are books dealing with imperial matters. The collection would seem on the whole to reflect most clearly the interests and needs of a practical statesman who was at the same time an academically trained scholar, presumably in law, and who belonged at least by sympathy to the great Latin speaking republic of letters. There is, however, enough mere literature (French romances, court memoirs, satire and burlesque, curiosa and even erotica) to suggest a more eclectic taste. As to language, Latin predominates; German, Italian, and French come next in about that order. There are numerous learned books of British origin but only a few in English. Grammars and dictionaries are available for mastering this and the other foreign tongues.

Librarian Richardson, in his prefatory note already mentioned, says that the books are solid, of a character suited to many lines of research, and not common in this country. They are so indeed. The obscurity of the authors and the strangeness of the titles are well calculated to pique the curiosity of anyone who loves the byways of the past. Each volume is a nut to crack, even for the scholar reasonably well-seasoned in seventeenth-century erudition. Mention of a few individual items may serve to illustrate the interest of the collection more concretely. Very intriguing, for example, is a book by one Gottlieb Spitzel giving examples of the sudden conversion of scholars in many times and places to religion (Goertz 7); another dealing with visions and revelations by Friar de Nider, inquisitor and witch-finder, enemy of Hus (Goertz 259); and a third (Goertz 600) retailing political gossip through the mouths of reavers (the "fifth shade" is Charles I of England, discounting to his son). By way of variety, Goertz 615 is a satire on barber-surgeons, Goertz 770 an anthology of comic encomia on sheep, elephants, lice, flies, the gout, and Goertz 471 a pseudo-scientific
treatise on animal light. More serious, though not necessarily more reliable, are books of Eastern and Near Eastern lore: histories of India and Arabia, of Chinese medicine, of the kings of Persia and the Ottoman sultans. I have not, alas, read any of these volumes, though sorely tempted by curiosity to do so and let the world go by. Nor have I explored the wisdom of Joachim Lange’s Medicina Menti or of Gaiusheus von Fürtwinten’s Antidoti Melancholie, published at Frankfurt in 1670, or sought entertainment from Le Jolle’s Description De la Ville d’Amsterdam, En vers Burlesques. I have, however, grappling a little with the Alphabetum Naturae of the scientist and mystic, F. M. van Helmont, friend of Lady Conway, which undertakes to demonstrate that the Hebrew characters diagram the vocal organs in the act of making the corresponding sounds. (He does something more sensible when he proposes a program of phonetic study designed to make lip reading possible for the deaf.) And I have examined with interest, though not with the attention they deserve, a number of Latin volumes relevant to the poet Milton which are not easily come by. There are three titles by Jacopo Gaddi, Milton’s Florentine patron, and a book of his orations published the year of the poet’s visit to his house, and there are several volumes of humanistic correspondence which contain letters to and by his continental friends.

The collection contains, finally, large numbers of books of modern Latin poetry, the work of Milton’s fellow practitioners of the learned art which was considered the fine flower of classical culture in that age: Bartholin, Beza, Boxhorn, Druracius, Franciscus, Fraschin, Fürstenberg, Guinissius, Heinsius, Mascaldi, Ménage, Mühlforst, Nessel, Noël, Prachs, Rhodoman, Schurtzfreisch. The complete beadroll of their forgotten names would fill a page, but those I have given will suffice to remind us of the great cloud of darkness which hangs over the literary past. Schurtzfreisch and Prachs, Mühlforst, Noël, and Nessel, where if not at Princeton are your memories enshrined, and who, even among the Princeton learned, will spell out these dim testimonials of your fame.

Oddly enough, one set of Goertz volumes is neither at Princeton nor in Berlin, but here before me at the Newberry Library in Chicago. It is the Nova Literarum Maris Baltici, an ephemera of publications in the Baltic countries from 1698 to 1709, as recondite a bibliography from the modern point of view as one could wish to see. These books were purchased in 1949 from Gottschalk for sixty dollars. They have all the stigmata, including the biblio-
graphical references, though the armorial bookplate has been removed from all but one of the six volumes. The price of ten dollars a volume represents, I should say, considerably less than the current average for the Goertz books, a fact which further illuminates Ernest Cushing Richardson’s achievement in acquiring them, in the good old days when a dollar was a dollar and the mad rush of America after such materials had not yet begun.—JAMES HOLLY HANFORD

"ELIAS BOUDINOT’S JOURNEY TO BOSTON IN 1809"

On the twenty-second of June, 1809, Elias Boudinot, Trustee of the College of New Jersey and sometime President of the Continental Congress, set out from his home at Burlington, New Jersey, in his coach for a trip to Boston. Accompanying him were his daughter Susan, the widow of William Bradford, Jr., United States Attorney General under Washington, and Miss Mary Binney, "a young Lady, in a very ill state of health," who was the sister of Horace Binney, the Philadelphia lawyer. One hundred days later they returned to Burlington safe and sound, and in the course of time Boudinot assembled the diary notes he had been taking and wrote up a manuscript account of about a hundred pages which he entitled "Journey to Boston in 1809."

This travel diary ultimately passed out of the family’s possession and was acquired by Governor Samuel Whitaker Pennypacker. At a sale of his famous library of Americana in 1906 the manuscript volume was purchased, together with a number of other Boudinot items, by Frederick Julian Stimson (Yale 1877) of New York, who bequeathed them to his son Frederick Burnham Stimson. These Boudinot items were placed on deposit in the Princeton University Library in 1947. Following the gift of the Boudinot collection of family portraits, furniture, china, and silver, by Mrs. Julia Loomis Thorne, a descendant of Boudinot’s brother Elisha, and her husband, Landon Ketchum Thorne, and the establishment of the Boudinot rooms in the Firestone Library, Mr. Stimson presented the documents to the University in 1954.

In the late autumn the Princeton Library will publish, under the sponsorship of the Friends of the Library, Elias Boudinot’s Journey to Boston in 1809, which has been transcribed, edited, and annotated by M. Halsey Thomas of Princeton, Chairman of the Friends’ Princetoniana Committee, archivist of Columbia University, and co-editor of The Diary of George Templeton Strong. This will be the fourth in the series of occasional volumes
sponsored by the Friends, and all members will be invited to accept a complimentary copy. Previous volumes in the series are Anthony Trollope’s comedy *Did He Steal It?*, with an introduction by Robert H. Taylor ’90; *John Witherspoon Comes to America* by L. H. Butterfield; and *The Rittenhouse Oryx* by Howard C. Rice, Jr. These volumes were designed by P. J. Conkwright and printed at the Princeton University Press; the Rittenhouse volume was selected by the American Institute of Graphic Arts as one of the “Fifty Books of the Year 1954.”

Boudinot’s *Journey* is a lively and readable account and at times very moving account of the last extended tour taken by one of the Founding Fathers of our country. He visited scenes familiar to him many years before, and called upon several of the other Founding Fathers who still survived, notably William Samuel Johnson, Jonathan Trumbull, John Adams, Timothy Pickering, and John Langdon. In New Haven Timothy Dwight took him to see Eli Whitney and his new manufactory of firearms. In Boston he was lionized by the Higginsons, the Cabots, and the Otises; he heard the last lecture given at Harvard by Professor John Quincy Adams, he was impressed by a sermon preached by William Ellery Channing, and he spent a month in bed with the gout. He visited Bunker Hill with Judge William Tudor, a survivor of the battle. At Andover he was entertained at the newly-established Theological Seminary, and at Providence he spent several days at the home of the great merchant Thomas Poyntot Ive. He visited all the colleges on his route and commented on their building and libraries. Except for a vexing three-and-a-half hour ferry trip by sail across the Hudson, during which the vessel was carried out of its course as far as Long Island, Boudinot’s journey was singularly free of untoward incidents: the new turnpikes facilitated traveling immensely, the great wooden bridges were wonders to behold, the taverns were clean, and the horses performed unexceptionably. Nevertheless, Boudinot was overjoyed to reach the soil of his beloved Jersey again, and after a brief stay at “Morven,” the home in Princeton of his brother-in-law Richard Stockton, necessitated by another touch of the gout, he returned to Burlington full of gratitude to divine providence.

Among the illustrations in Boudinot’s *Journey* will be a reproduction of a sketch of Boston in 1811 by J. S. Glennie, a Scottish traveler who visited the United States in 1810–1811. The sketch, which has apparently not been previously reproduced, is one of over sixty drawings included in Glennie’s autograph manuscript journal of his trip, bequeathed to Princeton by the late Andre deCoppet ’15 as a part of his collection of American historical manuscripts.

**TROLLOPE’S “DID HE STEAL IT?”**

Miss Muriel Trollope, granddaughter of the novelist and his only descendant left in England, died nearly two years ago. Before her death she had on various occasions disposed of many pieces of literary property associated with her grandfather: manuscripts, letters, books from his library, and so on. The final group of these items has been purchased by Robert H. Taylor ’90. Among them is a complete run of first editions of Anthony Trollope, bound in full calf, with inscriptions from the author to his son Henry. Some of the inscriptions are obviously much later than the publication dates (Henry Trollope was only a year old when *The Macdermots of Ballycloran* was published, and not altogether likely to receive an early copy), and, of course, there are none in the posthumous books.

One volume is worthy of special mention because of its rarity: a copy of the play *Did He Steal It?*, unproduced and, indeed, unpublished until the Friends of the Princeton Library issued a facsimile reprint in 1958. Only two copies had been located at that time, one in the possession of Michael Sadleir and the other in the Parrish Collection of the Princeton Library. This third copy has been bound in calf like the other volumes in the set, although it is so thin that the title has been lettered vertically on the narrow spine. The wrappers have not been preserved; but on the title-page, to compensate for this bibliographical lack, in Trollope’s hand are the words:

> Harry Trollope
> unfortunate
> from the author

**CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE**

**HENRY DAN PIPER ’39**, Assistant Professor of English at the California Institute of Technology, is completing a book on Scott Fitzgerald’s literary career.

**ALBERT VAN NOSTRAND** is an Assistant Professor of English and American Literature at Brown University. He is the author of an unpublished doctoral dissertation on the writings of Booth Tarkington (Harvard, 1951).
JAMES HOLLY HANFORD, Visiting Bibliographer at the Princeton University Library, 1954-1955, is now a Resident Fellow at the Newberry Library in Chicago.

HENRY L. SAVAGE '15 is Archivist in the Princeton University Library.

ALAN DOWNER, Associate Professor of English at Princeton University, is writing a biography of William Charles Macready.

SUZANNE WEBER is a consultant to the Theatre Collection of the Princeton University Library.

New & Notable

THE SHAKESPEARIAN LIBRARY OF HENRY N. PAUL '84

By the generous provision of the late Henry N. Paul '84 (1863-1954) Princeton became the possessor, in the early spring of 1955, of the greater part of his valuable Shakespearean library. From his undergraduate years Henry Neil Paul had been drawn to Shakespeare, and all through a busy and successful career as a patent lawyer he never lost that first love. So complete and competent was his knowledge of matters Shakespearean that eventually he became Dean of the Shakspere Society of Philadelphia, serving from 1930 until 1950, and to that dignity were later added honorary degrees from Amherst and Princeton. The last year of his deanship saw the publication of his masterly book, The Royal Play of Macbeth. Over the years Mr. Paul assembled an important collection of books relating to Shakespeare and his age, many volumes from which he presented during his lifetime to the Folger Shakespeare Library and to the Princeton Library. He was a judicious buyer with an original mind. Perceiving quite clearly that there was little to be gained by the acquisition of more Shakespeare quartos and folios, he bought those works which threw light upon Shakespeare's world or which inspired the dramatist to speak and think as an Elizabethan. Consequently his collection is rich in books on natural science, Puritan and Anglican theology, witchcraft, and history.

To give some indication of the types of books that may be found in this collection of more than five thousand volumes, the following few titles may be mentioned: Plutarch's Vitae Romanorum & Graecorum, Florence, 1517; the 1507 and 1609 editions of King James I's Daemonologie; Albions England, by William Warner, London, 1602-6; Samuel Harsnet's A Declaration of egregious Popish Impositions, London, 1603; the Rex Platonicus of Sir Isaac Wake, Oxford, 1607; James Maxwell's The Laudable Life, And Deplorable Death, of our late peerless Prince Henry, London, 1612; and Rowe's edition of the works of Shakespeare, London, 1709-10.
For this, as for every gift, the Library is genuinely grateful, but with this bequest there is something more that goes with it than the mere giving. Henry Paul loved his alma mater, and he showed that love by his solicitude that her Shakespearean collection should live, grow, and flourish. We remember that in life he often expressed this interest, and proved its reality by gifts previously recorded.  

THE GIFT OF GORDON A. BLOCK, JR. '36

Princeton has received from Gordon A. Block, Jr., '36, who has been for many years a generous donor to the Library, a small but exceptionally attractive group of books and manuscripts. Of particular interest in Mr. Block's gift are several Carlyle items, including two letters in Carlyle's hand (one of which is addressed to John Wilson), a letter written to him by his wife, and inscribed presentation copies of two of his books: the second edition of the Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell, edited by Carlyle, London, 1846, with an inscription from the editor to his mother and a later inscription from Mrs. Carlyle to Thomas Smeele; and The Life of John Sterling, London, 1851, presented by the author to the English actor William Charles Macready. Certainly the most unusual volume given by Mr. Block to the Library is Carlyle's Two Note Books, published by the Grolier Club in 1898. This particular volume is one of three copies printed on vellum and was bound by Tiffany in covers of shark bone, with inlaid borders of shark vertebrae, and with a snakeskin spine. An exhibition piece is a fair copy in Wordsworth's hand of his famous poem "She dwelt among the untrodden ways," signed and dated by the poet, London, May 20, 1828. Since the Library already had on its shelves a number of volumes which had previously belonged to Mrs. Fiozzi, 1 it was especially grateful to receive from Mr. Block Mrs. Fiozzi's copy of the first edition of Scott's The Lady of the Lake, Edinburgh, 1810, inscribed by her and with annotations and markings in her hand. Welcome additions to the Graphic Arts Collection are five Kelmscott Press books; eighteen Bruce Rogers items, including The Song of Roland, printed by the Riverside Press in 1906, and a specimen page for two special copies of the American Prayer Book; and some thirty private press books.

Among the latter is a copy of the Essex House Press's edition of Whitman's "When lilacs last in the dooryard bloomed," published in London in 1900, laid into which is a manuscript in Whitman's hand concerning his health, written on the verso of a letter to the poet from Samuel B. Sumner. Finally, to conclude with the earliest book, Mr. Block's gift includes a copy of John Stow's A Summary of the Chronicles of England, London, 1574:

THE REMINISCENCES OF WILLIAM CHARLES MACREADY

William Charles Macready (1799-1873), the leading actor and producer of the Victorian English theater, is well represented in the holdings of the Library. Several of his promptbooks and a good deal of important correspondence are to be found in the Theatre Collection and in the Manuscripts Division. During the past summer the Library acquired a Macready item of especial value not only to students of the theater but of English literature in general.

In 1855, four years after his retirement from the stage, Macready began to write his reminiscences, based on a voluminous diary which he had kept throughout his adult life. For some reason the manuscript was completed only to the year 1846. After Macready's death the completed portion of his reminiscences with selections from his diaries was published in two volumes (1875). In 1912 the diaries were re-edited under the vigilant eye of Macready's second wife, who ordered that the manuscript be destroyed after publication. There are many omissions even from the fuller edition of 1912 and there are contradictions in the passages duplicated in the two editions. For the most part the contradictions cannot be resolved and the omissions cannot be filled up, although two small portions of the diary escaped burning. However it is now possible to correct and fill out the portion of the reminiscences published in 1875. The Princeton Library, through the generosity of the Friends of the Library, has purchased the original manuscript of the reminiscences. It is in two quarto volumes totaling 455 leaves. It is in Macready's own hand and the period of its writing may be dated as between 1855 and 1856. Penciled onto the manuscript are several dated quotations from the diary preserving items which Macready did not include in the reminiscences and which are not to be found in either printed text of the diary. The manuscript has been heavily edited partly by Macready himself and much more by his over-cautious editor. The elisions affect many of the details of his education and school days and particu-

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1See the Chronicle, VI, No. 2 (Feb., 1945), 84-85.
2See Jeremiah S. Finch, "Mrs. Fiozzi," the Chronicle, XIV, No. 8 (Spring, 1955), 160-164.
larly his relations with his brother Edward. It will now be possible
to fill out the story of his life, one so typical of the artistic and pro-

cessional life in England between 1800 and 1850.—ALAN DOWNER

SUMMER THEATER U. S. A., 1955

In 1950 the Theatre Collection of the Princeton Library under-
took to acquire programs, pictures, and publicity from off-Broad-
way summer theater productions. The purpose was to build a
permanent record of such productions from a wide variety of
sources. The first appeal brought thirty-five replies. With the aid
of managers and publicity agents, we have added each succeeding
year new names to our list and new categories to our fall ex-
hibits of summer theater material. The 1955 returns show that
135 theaters are now represented, ranging geographically from
coast to coast, and from Canada to Texas.

Devotees of the straw hat circuit are usually under the impres-
sion that the summer theater movement originated when certain
daft individuals began producing plays in barns. The true be-
ing was in the theater built by John and Mary Elish on their
ranch at Denver, Colorado, in 1891. After several seasons of vaude-
ville and light opera, the stock company inaugurated the 1897
season with its first dramatic performance. The director was
George Edeson, with James O'Neill, father of dramatist Eugene
O'Neill, as leading man. An unbroken series of successful seasons
followed. This, then, is the oldest summer stock theater. In gen-
eral, theatrical companies do not enjoy invariable successes, but
widespread popularity has made summer theater a major industry,
so that there is virtually no section of this country that does not
boast at least one such dramatic group.

From a study of the programs that come to us each fall, we
learn that while the barn is still in good standing for summer
theater purposes, firehouses, roofs, and tents are also acceptable.
We find theaters in-the-round and on-the-square, and more popu-
lar with each season are the outdoor theaters situated on hillside-
ors by lakes.

The performing companies may require their members to
belong to Equity, the actors' union. It is also possible to combine
professional and local talent. The Cape May Theatre, Cape May,
New Jersey, and Barter Theatre, Abingdon, Virginia, use Equity
resident stock companies. Examples of non-Equity companies are
those of the Hedgerow Theatre, Maylan, Pennsylvania, and the
Ramistell Opera House, Manistee, Michigan. Almost all college-
and community-sponsored groups fall in the latter category. The
inevitable exception which is supposed to prove the rule is found
at Fayetteville, New York, where the Fayetteville Firemen's Asso-
ciation sponsors the Famous Artists Country Playhouse, using
Equity stars.

Traveling units of actors, known as package shows, serve the
majority of theaters on the straw hat circuit. Under this arrange-
ment, the playhouses supply the settings, equipment, and bit
players. Such groups reach a large summer audience, and, in
response to popular demand, Broadway hits are the usual fare.
The following plays were favorites of the 1955 season: The Caine
Mutiny Court-Martial, Dial "M" for Murder, Time Out for
Ginger, and The King of Hearts.

Companies connected with colleges and universities are engaged
in educational programs for which college credits may be earned.
Their productions are often of an experimental nature. Schedules
of the widest interest and dramatic requirements have been re-
cieved from colleges in almost every state of the union. Plays by
Euripides and Sophocles are given side by side with works of
Ferenc Molnár, George Bernard Shaw, and Christopher Fry.

The relaxed atmosphere of summer theaters is ideal for tryouts
of new plays. In fact, the operating policy of many managers calls
for the presentation of at least one original play a season. Audi-
cences at Provincetown, Massachusetts, witnessed in 1955 the pre-
mière of Heaven Come Wednesday, by Reginald Lawrence '21, a
founder of Princeton's Theatre Intime, and The Difficult Widow,
by Argentine playwright Nalé Roxlo, made its bow for the first
time in this country at the Hedgerow Theatre. The White Barn
Theatre Foundation, Westport, Connecticut, is unique in that
its performances are planned to furnish an opportunity for new
playwrights, directors, actors, and designers to exhibit and develop
their talents pertaining to the theater.

Shakespeare's plays take their place in summer theater schedules
with no loss of popularity or prestige. Two annual festivals, both
of which celebrated their twentieth season this summer, are held
at Ashland, Oregon, and at Yellow Springs, Ohio. The latter,
known as the Antioch Area Theatre Shakespeare Festival, main-
tains an attractive tradition during the month of these perfor-
manences. A weekly forum is held when audiences and students meet
with directors and actors for a discussion period while tea is served.

Other festivals devoted to these plays are given at Balboa Park,
San Diego, California; Hofstra College, Hempstead, New York;
the University of Toronto, Ontario; and Stratford, Ontario. The performances of single plays are a feature of innumerable schedules. It is perhaps inevitable that important musical events have been made a part of these festivals. It will be interesting to watch the development of the latest Shakespearean undertaking at Stratford, Connecticut.

From the evidence that comes to the Theatre Collection each fall, the attractions that consistently draw large crowds each season are the light operas and musical shows. With their color, dancing, and gay music, they threaten to surpass in popularity even Broadway hits. The Finger Lakes Lyric Circus, Skaneateles, New York, and the Melody Circus, Detroit, Michigan, are extremely successful.

An undisputed leader in the field of outdoor operettas is the Municipal Opera Company of Saint Louis, Missouri, which has just completed its thirty-ninth season. Its reputation rests on the uniformly lavish mounting of each production, as well as on the excellent voices of the imported guest stars.

Similar productions have been brought to New Jersey by St. John Terrell, founder of the Lambertville Music Circus. He repeated his initial success with the establishment of music circuses at East Meadow, Long Island, and at Neptune, New Jersey. He also mounted a set of shows on wheels and sponsored a successful run at the Dallas State Fair in Texas.

As far as is known, the Princeton Theatre Collection is the only one currently striving to acquire material that will give a picture of drama all over the United States. The response to requests for such material has been generous, but we still hope for more complete coverage.—Suzanne Wever

Biblia
DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF
THE FRIENDS
OF THE PRINCETON LIBRARY
Volume XXVII, Number 1
Autumn 1955

FINANCIAL REPORT

The summary of financial transactions on the Operating Account for the year 1954-55:

RECEIPTS

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EXPENDITURES

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**Balance 30 June 1955**

$22.17

**Contributions to the Friends Book Fund during the year 1954-55 totaled $5,449.11 and to "Needs" $4,813.10.**

**PUBLICATION FUND SUMMARY**

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**CONTRIBUTIONS**

A donation of $1,100.00 has been received from John G. Buchanan '90 to support purchases of titles still to be secured on the Princeton list of the Hundred Great English Books and also for the memorial to the late Professor Allan C. Johnson.

**GIFTS**

A number of interesting Joel Barlow items were included in a recent gift from Elmer Adler. Among these were the first edition of *The Columbiad*, Philadelphia, 1807, with a presentation inscription from the author to William Eustis and tipped in a letter of presentation from Barlow to Eustis, April 7, 1811; the edition of *The Columbiad* published in Paris in 1813; and the first English edition of *The Vision of Columbus*, London, 1797. Mr. Adler also presented two letters written by Eustis, who was Secretary of War from 1807 to 1812 and later Governor of Massachusetts; and proofs of Stephen Phillips' *Paolo and Francesca*, dated December 1, 1898. Sinclair Hamilton '06 has added thirty-nine volumes to the Hamilton Collection of American Illustrated Books. These latest additions to the collection include Samuel Nowell's *Abraham in Arms*, Boston, 1678, printed by John Foster and containing a vignette probably cut by him; the sixth edition of *The History of the Holy Jesus*, Boston, 1749, with woodcuts attributed to James Turner; *Der Kleine Kempis*, Germantown, 1750, with a full-page woodcut which may be the work of Christopher Sower; and *The Royal American Magazine* for March, 1774, containing a portrait of John Hancock and a cut, both by Paul Revere. From Edward Nammurburg, Jr. '24 came a number of gifts, including playbills, programs, and photographs for the Theatre Collection. Robert H. Taylor '30 has given a pen-and-ink drawing by Aubrey Beardsley of a fox-hunting scene. The drawing, executed when the artist was only sixteen, is dated November 29, 1888.

The Friends of the Princeton Library, dedicated in 1969, is an organization of scholars and friends interested in library development and the printed word. It has received gifts and bequests and has acquired funds for the purchase of rare books, manuscripts, and periodicals which would not otherwise have been acquired by the Library. Membership is open to individuals subscribing $25.00 annually or $500.00 or more. Checks payable to Princeton University Library should be addressed to The Friends.

Members select two Princeton University Library staff, and serve on the Princeton University Library Council. Special lectures and exhibits are sponsored by the Friends, and are attended by Princeton students and faculty and by the public.

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