

"CONTINENTAL STAGECRAFT"
(Harcourt, Brace) is a sumptuous performance in book making. Fortunately, it is neither so heavy nor so holy as the purple on the cover would seem to indicate. Kenneth Macgowan is always readable, and in this case he is more than that. He manages to tell the story of a play in Germany, or a theatre in Vienna, with such insistence on its importance to him, to the theatre, and to the reader, that his narrative carries with it something of the movement and flair of fiction. These pages contain chiefly an account of a trip through Europe which Mr. Macgowan and Robert Edmond Jones made last summer, together with their deductions from an intimate study of things theatrical on the continent. Macgowan is a clever critic, or rather, perhaps, he is cleverer at pointing the way than at tackling the problem of a specific play. His rich store of information cannot but have its effect on the work of such intimates of his as Eugene O'Neill. The result of this trip is already visible in Arthur Hopkins's production of "Hamlet" for John Barrymore. In that rich and varied spectacle is the very mood of

this rich and varied volume. There are many fine chapters in the book. "Light as Setting" is particularly suggestive. I don't know that I have ever seen a clearer discussion of acting than chapters seven and eight. If you would understand what is happening to our theatre, here is a book which should be read. The present season has already brought us some of those productions discussed here, "R. U. R.", "The World We Live In", and soon we are to have the Moscow Art Theatre and "Masse Mensch". Jones, with the same unfailing and unflagging genius that animates his stage sets, has illustrated this volume and the publishers have given him adequate reproductions. This is a book of youth and enthusiasm — but there is growing wisdom in the work of these men.