

## BOOKS THAT MAY HAVE ESCAPED YOU

1. "*Spinster of This Parish*" by W. B. Maxwell (Dodd, Mead). By far the best of Mr. Maxwell's novels, a real novel with a real plot.

2. "*Raw Material*" by Dorothy Canfield (Harcourt, Brace). Sketches that reveal at once a woman's understanding and an author's technique.

3. "*Sunrise Trumpets*" by Joseph Auslander (Harper). One of the best of the season's collections of poetry.

4. "*A Fable for Critics*" (Houghton Mifflin). First published anonymously, then acknowledged by Amy Lowell. A delightful criticism of American poetry.

5. "*The Genius of America*" by Stuart P. Sherman (Scribner). Essays of great worth by the new literary editor of the New York "*Herald-Tribune*".

## Another Fine War Novel

SINCE Thomas Boyd's "*Through the Wheat*" nothing so fine as "*Plumes*" (Harcourt, Brace) in the way of a war novel has appeared. In this case it is foolish to make comparisons; for the stories are so different from each other and so fine, both of them, that they are sure to remain permanently a part of our war record. "*Plumes*" is the story of what the war did to a young Anglo-Saxon and his wife. Laurence Stallings has already proved himself one of the most brilliant of the young critics. If he can go on writing novels as passionately conceived, as well planned, as swift and as true as this one, there is no question about his future as a writer. Anyhow, he has written "*Plumes*", and no consideration of his future is necessary. It is the story of a patriotic

young man, backed by generations of patriotic Americans, who leaves his wife, about to have a child, and goes off bravely to be a hero in France. He becomes a hero but his body is shattered; and when he returns to face life, comparative poverty, and the vagaries of governmental care of wounded men, the tragedies arising are staggering. "*Plumes*" is not a book of war scenes — only occasionally do they flash into the picture. It is a story of the problem that thousands of people are facing today, the awesome task of reconstruction, of body and soul. The woman of the book is heroic. If the story errs at all it is in slighting the proportions of the hero. Yet this slighting is probably a part of Laurence Stallings's plan of fairness, for his is a fair book if there ever was one. He is bitter, yet understanding. He would fight to end war; but he knows the greatest tragedy of mankind to be the fact that war is inevitable. His final picture is clear and terrifying. I can remember no recent novel with a more vivid opening chapter, and the climactic scene of the story has such psychological power that I shall not attempt to dull it by description. If only there were some new way of saying that here is a book every American should read! Well, then, if you have any respect whatsoever for my opinion, if you aren't afraid to look at war without sentimentality, I say this book is for you. Mind you, this is no "*Three Soldiers*". It is a book written by a brilliant young writer, a well bred normal young American, who knows every inch of the path he writes of, and more too — and can be impersonal about it!