THE CORDS OF VANITY, by James Branch Cabell (12mo, 330 pages; McBride: $2) is not the usual compound of intrigue, wit, and legend which the Society for the Suppression of Vice is so anxious to send into several editions. It is a second edition of a straightforward and frequently dull novel, concerned with the amours and immoralities of Robert Etheridge Townsend. One may not agree with Wilson Follett, writing in the introduction, that Townsend "may the better consummate in his art the auctorial virtues of distinction and clarity, beauty and symmetry, tenderness and truth and urbanity, precisely because his personal life is bereft of these virtues." But one must agree that, on the whole, this "comedy of shirking" is put on with much veracity and some sardonic humour.

THE WALL, by John Cournos (12mo, 286 pages; Doran: $2). A novel, sequel to The Mask, and dealing with John Gombarov's sentimental education in Philadelphia. The young intellectuals, their ideals, conversation, parenti-phobia, et cetera, are gone into at great length, while John, who was once the most harmless lad on earth, develops some bitterness and more cunning. The book closes as the hero sails for London, not knowing "that his life was just beginning" . . . an infallible promise of at least one more deck. If one is looking for the "representative" modern novel he can find it in The Wall, especially in its assiduous deference to the tenets of arrivism.

MODERN GREEK STORIES, translated by Demetra Vaka and Aristides Phoutrides (12mo, 270 pages; Duffield: $1.90) nine and an impassioned foreword apparently go on not far from where ancient Greek life left off. The accumulated unrest of a long sufferance of foreign influence is added, but the underlying spirit is strangely familiar. There is much tragedy in the nine tales, but a buoyancy of spirit keeps the tone from becoming too sombre. The best of the stories are remarkable for unusual turns of thought, a wistful feeling for beauty, a worship of freedom, and, curiously enough, for a naïve submission to forms of superstition in the matter of ghosts, cures by witchcraft, and sins quaintly expiated, that cling closely as barnacles of obscurantism on a race otherwise aloof and sceptical.

ZELL, by Henry G. Aikman (12mo, 326 pages; Knopf: $2.50) is a book of some exceedingly keen observation of American life. This observation eventually gets in the way of the book which intends to create a young man's life in the shadow of his parents' disgraceful divorce. Finally the loose ends are tied, but they dangle through the middle portions of the book hopelessly. Mr Aikman is removed from the other American realists by several things: he never gives the effect of writing a dull autobiography and his intrigue is worked out with a number of fresh and vividly presented incidents. The detestable children, the attractive father, and the pathetic sister in the book are better made than any of the principal characters.

A Few Figs From Thistles (8vo, 18 pages; Shay: $1) The Lamp and the Bell (12mo, 71 pages; Shay: $1.25) and Second April (12mo, 110 pages; Kennerley: $2) by Edna St Vincent Millay. The sauciness of the thin orange-coloured salvo, the immediate imagery and the poignant passages in her Elizabethan drama, and the fine casualness of Second April show Miss Millay for a young woman of rare gifts and real achievement. She has a genuine humour—the charm which no woman, perhaps, since Emily Dickinson has scattered like salt on her verses. She has, too, a youthful preoccupation with death and "savage Beauty." And her obvious indebtedness to poets as distant from her generation as Goethe and John Donne does not mitigate her intensity and originality.

In American, by John V. A. Weaver (12mo, 80 pages; Knopf: $1.50) is a collection of some twenty-five poems in American slang. The accuracy of the author's ear and his skill in adapting his words to rather simple verse rhythms are equal to the achievements of Ring Lardner in prose. Mr Weaver uses slang as his medium just as an electrician might satisfy himself with a fibre filament because the current he uses is of a low emotional voltage; high voltage through this medium might burn it out and it looks very much as if the same themes, subjected to any high intensity, would yield only ashes of sentiment. The dramatic monologues are more successful than the narrative and character is much more deftly done than action.

Poems New and Old, by John Freeman (12mo, 317 pages; Harcourt, Brace: $3) won the Hawthornden prize as the best book of poetry published in England in 1920. It is most interesting in its differences from current American verse, much of which seems self-conscious beside this simply-worded, deeply passionate, and sincere expression of the feelings life stirs in a poet. Mr Freeman is especially a lover of trees, of the music in all natural sounds, and of the effects of light. His poems of people ring true in their psychology though they are almost uniformly melancholy in tone. There is a restlessness about them that is lacking in the nature interpretations. These have taken their writer into a realm where, with his "nerve of being bared," he finds "unimaginable joyance" of vision and sound.

The Poems of Corinne Roosevelt Robinson (12mo, 280 pages; Scribner: $2.25) contains the work of her previous volumes along with several new poems. If this country were a monarchy Mrs Robinson would deserve to be its laureate, for she is almost the only American who devotes her talents seriously to occasional verse. She is not the only American humorous poet, but she is one of the more amusing.

The Old Soak, by Don Marquis (illus., 12mo, 141 pages; Doubleday, Page: $1.50) steers an appropriately zigzag course between columnar humour and a more enduring satire. The bar-room *habitué* is the hero of this epic, and he is deftly permitted to score his talking-points with just that insistence and reiteration, that flow of emotion and appeal to reason, which his departed prototype approached at the crest of his jag. Don Marquis has contrived a burlesque which will enlist sympathy and evoke reminiscence.

NOTES ON LIFE AND LETTERS, by Joseph Conrad (12mo, 262 pages; Doubleday, Page: $1.90) collects "a thin array . . . of really innocent attitudes: Conrad literary, Conrad political, Conrad reminiscent, Conrad controversial." Since it is always Conrad and therefore always distinguished, the book needs no further advertisement, but it should be noted that Mr Conrad's superb little essay on Henry James is at last rescued from the inaccessibility of the bound volumes of the North American Review. The earnestness of the political papers and the invective of the papers on the loss of the Titanic are significant examples of the relative unimportance of the subject-matter in the hands of a great writer.

THINGS THAT HAVE INTERESTED ME, by Arnold Bennett (12mo, 332 pages; Doran: $2.50) judging from the present volume of sketches, are matters of deep concern to the modern man of letters, but the studied journalism of their style, their self-conscious *dégagé* air, their breezy self-complacency overpower one with a sense of the gloating triumph of a lower order of commonsense over delicacy, imagination, and art. Bennett, for example, finds that Henry James lacked "guts." The single fact that Bennett can dash off such a play as Body and Soul in a day and a night, is ample testimony that he differs from James. Comparison of the Bennett notebook with the Journal of Amiel or with the table-talk of such men as Johnson, Coleridge, or Hazlitt indicates further differences. In point of fact *il ne donne pas des entrailles à tous les mots.*

MODERN DRAMA IN EUROPE, by Storm Jameson (12mo, 280 pages; Harcourt, Brace: $3) gives every indication of being the one book about the structure and content of modern plays which will be the starting point, for agreement or difference, of many others. The separate judgements are not necessarily final, but they are clearly the effects of a mind able and willing to think hard. How noteworthy that is can be determined by any one with the slightest acquaintance with modern dramatic criticism.

LOAFING DOWN LONG ISLAND, by Charles Hanson Towne (illus., 8vo, 212 pages; Century: $2.50) testifies to the consummation of that which everyone dreams of and no one undertakes—a walking journey. Probably Long Island has never been approached with a more unshakable will to poetry, for Mr Towne breaks into lyric measure at the end of almost every chapter. Discounting the rhapsodical tangents, one finds a narrative pleasantly informative, supplemented by Thomas Fogarty's drawings.

PAUL BUNYAN COMES WEST, by Ida Virginia Turney (illus., 8vo, 34 pages; University of Oregon Press) comprises Pacific Coast legends of Paul Bunyan, mythical lumberjack and one of the few folk-lore heroes of modern American origin. He has the qualities common to such characters. The Colorado Canyon was formed by his pick as he dragged it behind him. His ox was "a 'normous critter—forty axhandles an' a plug o' Star terbacker between the eyes." The book, which is beautifully executed, is exclusively a university product. Pupils of Miss Turney's collected the stories, while pupils of Miss Helen N. Rhodes' made the many linoleum cuts.

JAPANESE IMPRESSIONS, with a Note on Confucius, by Paul-Louis Couchoud, translated by Frances Rumsey, with a preface by Anatole France (8vo, 155 pages; Lane: $2.50) is a collection of four pleasant but meaty essays. The first is a French interpretation of the Japanese character: an attempt to present logically and humanly what Okakura and Nitobé tried to do in two volumes. The second considers the seventeen-syllabled haikai (or hokku) and is really a cento of free translations. The third is the transcript of M Couchoud's diary for the first two months of the Russo-Japanese war. The last is simultaneously a description of a visit to the tomb of Confucius and a resumé of his moralistic philosophy. M Couchoud is a sincere admirer of Japanese culture which, he claims, can be compared favourably at any historical moment with modern European culture.

THE LARGER SOCIALISM, by Bertram Benedict (12mo, 243 pages; Macmillan: $2.50) has value chiefly as a stimulating criticism, by an American Socialist, of current Socialist propaganda in the United States, though it presents also much strong argument for "the cause." The author attributes the slow growth of his party in this country to too dogmatic following of Marxian theory and failure to realize, pragmatically, American conditions, particularly as related to government. He urges recognition of a psychological as well as an economic interpretation of history, of a social more than an economic class-consciousness, and of an ethical basis in human action. The "larger Socialism" which Mr Benedict describes is not to deal exclusively with economic matters, but is to carry to fruition eugenics, feminism, and other modern movements—in short, to develop "a completely new orientation in every field of human endeavour."

COMMERCIAL ENGRAVING AND PRINTING, by Charles W. Hackleman (8vo, 790 pages; Commercial Engraving Publishing Company, Indianapolis) is a copiously illustrated and well documented text book of all the methods of reproducing pictorial designs for commercial purposes. It is largely non-technical and includes virtually everything suggested in the title plus chapters on auxiliary subjects. Although it deals with printing and engraving as accessories to trade it suggests that they are still capable of being fine arts.

MEMOIRES DE RUSSIE, par Jules Legras (8vo, 449 pages; Payot et Cie, Paris). Un curieux mirage qui fait voir à travers l'esprit et la sensibilité d'un professeur d'université français, officier d'état major, la personnalité étrange et rude de moujiks russes. Un livre à la fois plat et dur mais qui frappe. Après tout n'est pas la plus haute valeur de l'Europe que ces contrastes accentués par lesquels civilisations et types humains brillent en relief? M Legras n'a peut-être pas compris grand'chose à la revolution russe, mais il est des cas ou il est plus intelligent de ne pas trop comprendre. Le musée de bavardages que M Legras présente a plus d'intérêt pour un lecteur aventureux qu'une explication philosophique du cas russe. M Legras a subi le moujik, mais au moins l'a-t-il subi avec enthousiasme. Quelquechose de la pésanteur géniale du russe a passé dans ces pages. Il a la naïveté d'un bon chroniqueur, et bien qu'il soit professeur d'université, son livre a une forme française correcte, claire, et simple.