

# THE EDITOR RECOMMENDS—

## *Transcendent Villainy*

GIACOMO CASANOVA must have been an entertaining man to meet if you encountered him when you had your wits about you. He would have made an excellent editor for a modern magazine dealing largely with pleasures and personalities. What entertaining parties he would have given! This Italian rogue was one of the first masters of the parlor trick, and he knew all sorts of little games to entertain the ladies. Yes, indubitably Casanova would have been a success in literary New York. Perhaps it would have surprised him to discover himself so much at home in the twentieth century. "Casanova, Adventurer and Lover" by Joseph Le Gras, translated by A. Francis Steuart (Dodd, Mead), is a book filled with rapidfire anecdote and colorful description. Surely, if you are not easily shocked, you will enjoy this romance of peccadillos and bravados, of Venetian confidence games and knavish love making. Sidney Howard has made a play around this gay gentleman for the arch stage villain Lowell Sherman to act next year. It should prove entrancing. This is action for you. The young Casanova moves.

He was now alone, without a home, unprotected and without cash. Under this stress his real self leaped out. It was necessary to live and to find some money. Unhesitatingly he sold for his own profit all that he could of his father's furniture, regardless of his brothers and sisters. The Abbé Grimani, the zealous guardian of the children during the constant absence of their mother, was troubled. The lawyer, Razetta, intervened. Casanova rode the high horse. They shut him up in a semi-

nary, he made them expel him; they shut him up in the Fort of S. Andrea, he escaped one night for some hours, thrashed Razetta, broke his nose and three teeth, and having thrown him into the canal, fled back to sleep in his prison-fort and arranged an admirable alibi. All the mockers were on his side, and he was soon released from his captivity. That is the true Casanova, and in his best vein. Ingenious in adversity, elusive when doing wrong, tenacious in hatred, a furious, violent, indomitable and an incommensurable liar.

The world loves a lover; and I have a suspicion that it also loves a villain (*if he's attractive*). This new biography certainly makes Giacomo that.