



The American Heritage

RICHARDSON-ORIAN-BROWN

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For Members Only

TURRIS EBURNEA. The perennial slur is as specious as it is platitudinous. In this planet-stricken age let any of us who feel ashamed to be seen in an ivory tower reflect on the fact that under totalitarian government we would be forbidden to enter one. True scholarship, like true art, depends on that sense of detachment without which there can be neither intelligent nor intelligible *attachment*. Those who care most about truth should not apologize for standing back where it is perhaps possible to see it whole.

TEACHING AND SCHOLARSHIP. A person may be an excellent scholar and yet be deficient in the power to communicate facts and ideas orally; if so, he is, for those to whom learning is a passive process, a poor teacher. But there is nothing in the nature of scholarship to make one a poor teacher, and plenty to make one a good teacher; a scholar who is a poor teacher would probably be a poor teacher in any case. There are of course exceptions: it sometimes happens that teachers find scholarship so absorbing or time-consuming that they neglect their business for the sake of their avocation. But this is the fault, either of the individual, or of a vicious system which may insist that one be a scholar whether he likes it or not; it is hardly the fault of scholarship. Let us think and speak clearly of these things. We know of instances in which fishing, photography, gardening, golf, canasta, and even hay fever have caused men to neglect their teaching—but we would not say that these avocations (or afflictions) are incompatible with good teaching.

PEDANTRY. Kittredge once defined a pedant as "any man who uses a set of technical terms that differ from mine." As the speaker well knew, this was not so much a definition as a semantic bearding of human nature. Pedantry can be defined, and we believe that it is far more a matter of attitude than of performance, although of course it may manifest itself in performance. The pedant is the near-sighted scholar or teacher who allows himself to feel that the stone in his hand is more important than the cathedral into which it fits. He cannot see the Parthenon for the frieze. He cares about fact for fact's sake, and is little interested in the significance of facts. Working closely with details is not pedantry; getting lost in them is. Either teaching or scholarship becomes pedantry when it concerns itself unduly with the trivial and unimportant, when it lacks a sense of values. But teachers and scholars alike should avoid calling anyone a pedant when what they really mean is that they do not in the least understand what he is doing.

17th CENTURY NEWSLETTER. The new editor is J. Max Patrick (Anderson Hall, Univ. of Florida, Gainesville, Fla.), to whom subscriptions (\$1 p.a.) should be sent. In this pleasantly written newsletter articles dealing with 17th-century English literature are abstracted, and in future issues sections on 17th-century music and art will appear.

AMERICAN DOCUMENTATION INSTITUTE. The new MLA representative is Fred S. Tupper, George Washington University.

FOR YOU? "Please mail me two copies of Veré L. Rubel's *Poetic Diction in the English Renaissance* at the price reserved for members [\$2]. This fine book certainly deserves to be cleared from your 'stock-pile' of scholarly works. May it soon be out of print." Such was one member's response to our announcement last December that we were using a single MLA book to teach ourselves something about promotion. More than 200 copies of this book of 326 pages, originally priced at \$3, are still available to members at \$2 each.

SCHOLARLY RADAR. Since it would be an extremely expensive and time-consuming task to publish the entire compilation of "Research in Progress" every year, in 1950 we published a supplement to the 1949 compilation (plus a "report" on it), and this year we shall publish a second supplement and report, hoping to be able to print the full list again in 1952. We realize that this is not an ideal arrangement, but beg the patience of members in learning the very simple methods of using the supplemented list. Each Index is a *full index*. Thus, in 1951 you might find: "Kaplan, Hymen, 6572, X3977, Y5000." The plain Arabic number would

For Members Only—Continued

refer to the 1949 compilation; any number with "X" preceding occurs only in the 1950 supplement; any number with "Y" preceding occurs only in the 1951 supplement. In order to learn what research is actually in progress on any given author or subject, however, you will have to look at the listings under that topic in *all three lists*, 1949 and its two supplements. In both 1950 and 1951 we report on work completed or discontinued, and give other information which serves to keep the lists up to date. You will do your graduate students a favor by explaining this system to them.

MEMBERS SAY: "I am one of those Old Guard members who are almost equally interested in English, French, German, and Scandinavian literature, and who therefore for many years have read nearly every contribution to *PMLA*. . . . I heartily agree on our accepting only the third type of source study [The reference is to a paragraph on the last page of this section last March.—ED]. Unless they consider what the author *did* with the sources, such articles seem to me like an unconsummated marriage." . . . "Comparisons, I know, are said to be odious; but, as an old-timer, I have long wanted to tell you how much I think the *PMLA* has improved under your editorship. Your section 'For Members Only' I find remarkably informative and interesting." . . . "As one of the Old Guard I appreciate the improvements you have made in all departments of the journal." . . . "Please do *not* 'abandon the annual bibliography.' Not only do I learn a great deal from going through it, but I also have frequent occasion to refer to it. I know some administrative officers who should read the Lowry Report but I wonder if it would influence them." . . . "It has become a real honor to be published in *PMLA*! With each issue I read an increasing number of articles. The quality of writing improves along with the quality of the material. The latest issue [Dec. 1950] had a number of interesting papers and several that were fascinating and intellectually exciting." . . . "I read 'For Members Only' with minute care, and derive from it much profit and pleasure." . . . "I should like to congratulate you upon the usual most excellent editing. The section 'For Members Only' is always enjoyable, adding the warm, human note once so conspicuously absent." . . . "I am enclosing \$1.00 for 10 copies of the excellent report on 'Literature in American Education.' By reprinting this report you have rendered a real service to me . . . it is the most effective material I have seen to win friends and support among my colleagues in other departments." . . . "You have no idea how informative your 'For Members Only' is for those of us who operate in a near academic isolation." . . . "I find 'For Members Only' one of the most interesting sections of any periodical that I read." . . . "I hope you will not follow Louis Wright's unduly chatty and intimate Folger Library Bulletin." . . . "I enclose my check for 15 copies of the article, 'Literature in American Education' [Dec. *PMLA*]. The argument is stated so clearly and forcefully that I feel impelled to place it in the hands of a few Philistines." . . . "I think the first and only article I ever published in *PMLA* appeared some 38 years ago. . . . I may again be moved by the spirit." . . .

SPENSER QUADRICENTENNIAL. *ELH* is willing to help celebrate by devoting a 1952 number exclusively to Spenser articles—provided that enough publishable material is submitted. Articles, preferably critical rather than antiquarian, should be submitted to William R. Mueller, Univ. of California, Santa Barbara Coll., Santa Barbara, Calif. All final decisions as to the acceptance of MSS are to be made by the Editorial Board of *ELH*, to which articles initially recommended by Professor Mueller will go.

AMERICAN QUARTERLY, formerly published at Minnesota, is now published (from Jan. 1951) by the Univ. of Pennsylvania Press. The new Editor is Anthony N. B. Garvan; the new chairman of the Editorial Committee, Robert E. Spiller.

THE 1950 MEETING. Members always seem to be interested in the attendance figures—like the man, staggering to his feet, inquiring how many elephants were in the stampede. There were 1,608 *advance* registrations in 1950; only 1,069 persons elected to register at the hotel. Three or four hundred guest badges were also dis-

tributed. The total attendance must have been between 3,000 and 3,500—less than that in 1948. Members write: “a marvelous convention” . . . “the most interesting and successful I have ever attended” . . . “one of the very best” . . . “Every member of the Association with whom I have talked seems to feel that this meeting was one of the most successful and stimulating that we have ever had. The papers were of extremely high standards. The programs were exceedingly well balanced” . . . But one member wrote: “The meeting was quite a success. I must confess, however, that I haven’t enjoyed a convention so much in years as the one at Stanford in 1949. There was an intimacy about that meeting that reminded me of the old days, and I suppose the exercise in the open air going and coming also contributed.” . . .

HIS FIRST MEETING. A member sent us the following comments: “Although I cannot compare it to previous occasions, I felt that it was a most successful gathering. The papers in general were good and the conferences I attended, excellent. I especially appreciated the fact that . . . I finally met all the scholars in the field, persons of whom I had heard and read much and whom I at last had an opportunity to discuss common problems with. Many lasting friendships will, I hope, be thus initiated. . . . I drove to the meetings in my automobile and alone . . . bad weather hampered my progress and it took me 36 hours of straight driving to make the 970 miles to New York . . . in order to keep awake I had only two snacks during these 36 hours. I was thus ascetically prepared upon my arrival to enjoy all papers in my field, the Spanish 17th century. . . . I am submitting all this information . . . as a proof that the academic profession may be exciting and that even an MLA meeting may be regarded as a thrilling adventure. . . . While I am still desperately trying to catch up on my lost sleep, I again thank you for a most successful meeting.”

AMERICAN CIVILIZATION. The recent MLA conference to discuss the feasibility of an American Civilization Society passed the following motions: (1) that the Conference support a newsletter, (2) that the Conference favor the formation of a Society for American Studies, i.e., primarily a federation of related studies, (3) that membership in the Society be open to all interested persons, and (4) that the Society give every possible support to the *American Quarterly*.

ARTICLES submitted to *PMLA* during 1951 can be published within approximately nine months of their acceptance by the Editorial Committee. We are now filling the December number.

THE IDES OF MARCH. Last September in this section we said that postdoctoral fellowships, including Fulbright awards, are liable to tax on the premise that the Ph.D. represents completion of the educational process. Several members, writing in some distress, have asked us to publish more information on this point. It is not easy to do so, for the situation, at present covered with bureaucratic confusion over terms, may change before we can get these words into print. Some facts: The Bureau of Internal Revenue is ready to decide individual cases on their merits. Fulbright awards are still theoretically taxable. Last summer, when two ACLS Faculty Study Fellows asked that their stipends be considered tax-exempt, they were refused on the grounds that their awards “constitute compensation for services” and, as such, are taxable. We know of another case in which a rich postdoctoral scholarship has been ruled as tax-exempt by the local internal revenue people. The Guggenheim Foundation is currently seeking a ruling on its awards. The ACE Committee on Relationships of Higher Education to the Federal Government has interested itself in the problem. Light may soon come, but, meanwhile, all post-doctoral awards are being scrutinized very critically. The legal straw lying so heavily on many a dromedarian spine is the common (and, from the MLA point of view, false) notion that the Ph.D. marks the end of a scholar’s “training.”

\$1,000 PRIZE. Because no awards were made in the 1950 MLA-Macmillan and MLA-Oxford contests, the 1951 prize in each competition will be \$1,000 cash, plus royalties from publication. The deadline for submitting MSS is June 1 (*not* April 1, as before). If you have a MS nearing completion, see the full announcement several times published in *PMLA*.

For Members Only . . .

THE MLA-MACMILLAN AND MLA-OXFORD AWARDS

Rules for the Competitions

1. MANUSCRIPTS submitted by members in competition for the two 1951 awards must be mailed or expressed to reach the MLA Secretary (at 100 Washington Square East, New York 3, N.Y.) *before* June 1, 1951. Manuscripts must *not* be sent to the Oxford University Press or to the Macmillan Company.
2. THE TWO winning manuscripts will be published by the Oxford University Press and the Macmillan Company, each author receiving a one thousand dollar cash prize *in addition to* all royalties payable under a usual contract. Manuscripts which fail to win the award may nevertheless be recommended by the MLA Committee to the Macmillan Company or the Oxford University Press, and authors of manuscripts thus accepted for publication will also receive all royalties under a usual contract. Still other manuscripts may eventually be recommended by the MLA Committee to other presses.
3. IN PREPARING manuscripts, contestants should bear in mind that Macmillan, Oxford, and the MLA wish to make available the results of sound scholarship to *the widest possible audience*. This does not mean vulgarization. Preference will be given to manuscripts which set forth research *in a style worthy of its literary subject*. Authors should therefore write, not for their fellow specialists or for graduate students in their field, but for the literate public which does not need to be persuaded to the values of literature.
4. MANUSCRIPTS must be of single book length, i.e., between 60,000 and 120,000 words approximately. They must be typewritten, with double spacing. Documentation, including footnotes, should, if possible, be typed with double spacing separately from the text. (If two copies can be submitted, the work of the Committee of Award will be considerably facilitated; but only one copy is required.)
5. TO BE ELIGIBLE, manuscripts must be the original work of members of the MLA in good standing, must be written in English, and must represent first-hand research in the field of some modern literature or literatures. Ineligible are bibliographies, concordances, anthologies, collections of essays without a unifying theme, and monographs of criticism or "appreciation" which do not involve research. Eligible are editions, biographies of literary figures,

WHO HAVE BOOKS IN PROGRESS

fresh critical appraisals resulting from independent investigation, comparative studies, and studies of trends or topics or periods or forms. Manuscripts eligible for the MLA-Macmillan Award must be in the field of English or American literature; those eligible for the MLA-Oxford Award must be in the field of some literature other than English or American or must be comparative studies involving a foreign literature. Questions about eligibility should be addressed to the MLA Secretary.

6. **BEFORE SUBMITTING** manuscripts, contestants must send for, fill out, sign, and return a form relieving the MLA of any responsibility for the safety of manuscripts (carbon copies should be retained by the authors), and giving either the Macmillan Company or the Oxford University Press first refusal of manuscripts. These forms should, if possible, be returned to the MLA Secretary as early as possible, so that appropriate readers may be selected and their consent to read obtained.

7. **FORMAL ANNOUNCEMENT** of the third annual awards will be made at the 1951 Annual Meeting. It is expected, however, that all contestants can be notified during the summer or early autumn of the decision reached by the MLA Committee.

MLA-MACMILLAN

Committee of Award

STANLEY T. WILLIAMS, *Chairman*
Yale University

HARDIN CRAIG
University of Missouri

CLARENCE GOHDES
Duke University

HOWARD MUMFORD JONES
Harvard University

LOUIS B. WRIGHT
Folger Shakespeare Library

MLA-OXFORD

Committee of Award

ORIE W. LONG, *Chairman*
Williams College

HENRI M. PEYRE
Yale University

ERNEST J. SIMMONS
Columbia University

RENÉ WELLEK
Yale University

ERNEST H. WILKINS
Oberlin College

These two special committees were created by the Executive Council to select annually, from manuscripts submitted by members of the Association, books which through sound research contribute significantly to general understanding of modern literature.

NO ACORN. We have several times suggested in this place that universities should seek the help of experts on the staff of their own university presses for the instruction of graduate students on practical problems of publishing. Two years ago we even wrote to a number of department heads and press directors, urging this sensible step, and we also made the suggestion in a Report on MLA Publishing which went to more than 100 prominent members. Nothing much happened. Now, the ACLS and the American Association of University Presses have joined forces in a direct appeal to graduate school deans, a number of whom have already agreed to try the experiment. In February of this year Victor Reynolds of the Cornell University Press jumped the gun, offering a series of four lectures on scholarly printing and publishing at his institution. We take no credit for this development, but again urge MLA members to do all they can, locally, to help it succeed. If nothing is yet happening in your own institution, write to your graduate dean.

ELSEWHERE in this section we offer a few definitions of pedantry. After writing that paragraph we attended the ACLS meeting at Rye and heard George Boas remark that pedantry consisted of solving *past* problems. That's a different slant, and we wonder if our readers have some even better definitions to offer. We'll print the best we receive.

MLA STYLE SHEET. Because we have already received orders for about 5,000 copies, *price unknown*, we think it best to announce the price of reprints in advance of publication (late April). Because the MLA undertook this compilation and wishes to give it the widest possible distribution *as a service to the profession*, we are keeping the price as low as possible. We shall accept orders for the Style Sheet (a 32-page pamphlet) at the following rates: single copies, 10 cents each; 2 to 24 copies, 10 cents each; 25 copies, \$2.00; 26 to 49 copies, 8 cents each; 50 copies, \$3.50; 51 to 99 copies, 7 cents each; 100 copies, \$5.00; 101 or more copies, 5 cents each. Orders should be addressed to the Treasurer at 100 Washington Square East, New York 3, N.Y. These low prices are made possible by the cooperation of our printers, the George Banta Publishing Co., who are giving us a generous discount on our initial order of 15,000 reprints. We beg the indulgence of members if there are occasional delays in filling orders, for our small staff in the national headquarters has never had to cope with such a situation. Incidentally, as this notice is being written, 43 journals have agreed on a common style. The MLA Style Sheet will appear in the April *PMLA*.

SOCIÉTÉ D'ÉTUDES DU XVII^e SIÈCLE. Léon Wencelius (Swarthmore College) is the American representative and is authorized to receive the membership-subscription fee (\$1.50 p.a.) entitling one to receive the twice-yearly *Bulletin* containing scholarly articles on 17th-century French literature.

TRANSLATIONS. A subcommittee of the Executive Council is gathering material relevant to the suggestion that the MLA sponsor a series of translations. The chairman of the subcommittee, B. Q. Morgan (Palm Terrace, Gainesville, Fla.), reports that they are now trying to assemble information on inexpensive translations (i.e., \$1.50 or less per item) of western literature from the Renaissance on, and that he will therefore welcome letters from members giving critical evaluations of any such "in print" titles, with data on size, contents, style, names of translators, etc. The subcommittee will try to serve as a clearing-house of information in this important field. Professor Morgan also invites information about *unpublished* translations available to scholars in American libraries.

NOT MASOCHISM. James Foster's *History of the Pre-Romantic Novel in England*, which we published in the MLA Monograph Series in 1949, has now had a number of reviews, most of them distinctly favorable. The latest we have noticed was not so. Ernest Bernbaum (*JEGP*, Oct. 1950) found the work written in a "rather pedestrian style," its author's "restricted and undramatic method of expounding literary history" making his book "not a very informative or exciting one." According to this review, from which we quote for the good of our secretarial soul, "there is also lacking a sense of historical perspective," Foster casting little

light "upon the interest which his subject has for us today. His performance is spiritless because it evades difficulties, ignores challenges by scholars whose assertions and theories differ from his own, and has too narrow a notion of the true scope and responsibilities of literary historiography." Price, to members, still \$3.00.

COUNCILLORS. Your representative Executive Council, three members of which you elect annually, has an average age of 58. Two members are in their 40's, four in their 50's, the remaining six in their 60's. One was born in Germany, one in Canada; four were born in Massachusetts. Birth-states of the others: Colorado, Connecticut, Michigan, Mississippi, Pennsylvania, Virginia. Two took their Ph.D. at Leipzig, three at Harvard, two at Princeton, two at Yale, one at Oxford, one at Chicago. They are prolific authors, having produced an average of eight books each. One of them joined the MLA in 1907; another joined in 1934.

COMMITTEES. Your American Council of Learned Societies has a number of working committees of direct interest to many MLA members. The Committee on American Civilization (Tremaine McDowell, *ch.*, Henry Nash Smith, *sec.*—both MLA members from Minnesota) has sponsored two conferences, one on "Urbanism" (Princeton, 1948), the other on "Religion in American Life" (Newberry Library, 1950), and plans another this year, probably on the changes in the systems of belief in the U.S. since 1919. The Committee's philosophy of American studies was published in *AQ* (Fall 1950), and an interdisciplinary bibliography of basic readings for such studies is nearing completion. Among the four current enterprises of the Committee on Far Eastern Studies is a list of published translations from Chinese into English, French, and German; and the section on "Literature" (6,549 entries) is completed and awaiting publication. The Committee on the Humanities in the Occupied Areas (of which Taylor Starck, MLA, is a member) sponsored the recent publication by another of its members, Eugene N. Anderson's *The Humanities in the German and Austrian Universities* (ACLS, Fall 1950). The Committee on the Language Program (J Milton Cowan, *ch.*, Norman A. McQuown, *sec.*—both MLA members) is currently concerned with the problems of producing materials for teaching English to adult speakers of other first languages, e.g., Spanish, Korean, Burmese, Indonesian, Vietnamese, Turkish, Persian. The Committee on Musicology plans a 1951 conference on "Music in American Civilization." The Committee on Renaissance Studies (Louis B. Wright, *ch.*, George B. Parks, *sec.*—both MLA members) sponsors a newsletter (edited by Frederick W. Sternfeld, MLA) and regional conferences—of which the following are already scheduled for 1951: April 14, Northwestern Univ.; April 21, Univ. of Pa.; April 27, 28, Brown Univ. William Berrien and Henri Peyre (both MLA) are members of the Committee on the UNESCO Program. Harcourt Brown (MLA) is chairman of the newly created (Summer 1950) Committee on the Humanistic Aspects of Science. Ernest J. Simmons and René Wellek (both MLA) are members of the Joint (with the Social Science Research Council) Committee on Slavic Studies, which exercises supervisory responsibility for the *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, a weekly publication now two years old. The ACLS Pacific Coast Committee for the Humanities (William A. Nitze, *ch.*, Hugh G. Dick, *sec.*—both MLA members) will soon start its sixth year of useful existence. It sponsors the *Pacific Spectator* (supported also by 27 institutions in the region and by about 3,000 subscribers), makes grants in aid of research (4 in English literature during 1950), holds conferences, and has a visiting writers program. The ACLS Southern Humanities Conference (*ch.*, Sturgis Leavitt, MLA) has issued two bulletins—*Humanistic Scholarship in the South* (1949) and *History of the Southern Humanities Conference* (Jan. 1951), and will soon publish another on "Opinions of Executives in Business and Government Toward the Humanities in General and Modern Languages in Particular." This lively group has five other surveys in progress, sponsors regional conferences, and performs occasionally such praiseworthy functions as distributing 1,000 reprints of the *PMLA* McKerrow and Silver articles on the publication of research.

AMERICAN SCHOLARSHIP. This was the title of an editorial in the Oct. 6 issue of the *London Times Literary Supplement*—an editorial which was in part a review of a book sponsored by an MLA Group, *The Reinterpretation of Victorian Literature* (Princeton Univ. Press, 1950). "There is little doubt," said the editorial,

Better Writing

HERE IS ONE, but one, certain way to reduce the cost of printing, and that is to sell more copies of what you print. This needs no demonstration; it is in the axiom class. Similarly there is only one way to sell more copies, and that is to write so that more people can understand what you have to say and are attracted by the way you say it. This applies even to specialized books. The marginal sales achieved by clarity and order may not numerically be great but they have their effect. A book which costs \$3.38 per copy in an edition of 500 will cost \$1.97 in an edition of 1,000—if all are sold.

This matter of improving the writing of scholarship is approached too often on tiptoe or hurried by. It must be faced. At a recent session on scholarly communication there was more time devoted to television than to books. One graduate dean and one commercial publisher made concrete appeals for better writing. Discreet pauses followed; then the discussion hastened on to other matters.

The reason for this discretion must be a feeling that better writing is not achieved but is inherited, through one's genes; you have it or you don't. This is contrary to available testimony. Better writing is self-discipline and a willingness to take pains. Was it not Pascal who apologized for writing a long letter by saying he did not have time to write a shorter? Better scholarly writing is a willingness to do it all over again, striking out redundancies, making two sentences out of one, pausing at each multicellular expression to see if a plain word will not do instead. Those who will not take the time to do these things belong to the "adumbrate" school of writing. The books produced by the members of this flourishing academy do not circulate widely. Perhaps they gain distinction from scarcity. Certainly they achieve higher printing cost.

Better writing is not the ornament of scholarship; it is an element essential to the reduction of printing expense.

HENRY M. SILVER

Staff Adviser on Publications, American Council of Learned Societies

“that the quality of the best, as well as the quantity of the whole, has set a new standard. . . . One criticism, often heard here, of American scholarly books on literary subjects is, however, justifiable. To put it bluntly, they are often unreadable. By this we mean a total lack of consideration for the reader, a failure to communicate the spirit, as opposed to the substance, of the subject. . . . Scholars are so fearful lest they be held to be contaminated by the spirit of *belles-lettres* that they write solely for their fellow-professionals—a habit likely to lower learning in public esteem. . . . If American scholars would not despise what is no more than writing a clear, lively English style, in which wit is not regarded as a sign of insincerity, their mastery in the field of literary studies would be vastly more evident.”

CET. NON PAR. Says the artist in Johnson's *Rasselas*: “If men were all virtuous, I should with great alacrity teach them all to fly. But what would be the security of the good, if the bad could at pleasure invade them from the sky?”

WELCOME MAT OUT. We are now beginning to fill the *December* number of *PMLA*. Members are invited to submit their better efforts, and the invitation is extended with particular cordiality to those now preparing papers in the fields of French or German. There has been a conspicuous falling-off in the German contributions. When he became Editor a few years ago, your Secretary received few papers in American literature; now he receives a good many. He then received a number of papers in German literature; now there are but few offered. He often wonders about these fluctuations, which he will try to call to the attention of members periodically. Another example: we are currently receiving the usually high percentage of papers in English literature, but comparatively few in the 16th and 17th-century fields.

CRITICISM. Although rarely irritable after our breakfast coffee, we confess to occasional annoyance with those members who object to stone quarries because they are not showy buildings. Until the more “literary” quarterlies are ready to publish also the raw materials out of which illuminating criticism and sympathetic biographies and entertaining comment are built, let us be thankful for *PMLA* and the other “learned” journals which continue to make the *best* of these things possible. Criticism which adds to understanding without disregarding facts is of course very welcome in *PMLA*, but so are the articles which provide such criticism with its safeguards. What we need next is a “New Scholarship” in which critics and scholars respect each other's contributions to what, after all, is a common endeavor.

OBITER. It is probably obvious but let us say it explicitly: Occasional editorializing in the section “For Members Only” is not an expression of “official” policy unless so stated.

DEEP IN THE HEART. Since 1883 the MLA has met once in Louisiana (1939), once in Missouri (1933), once in Tennessee (1890). It has never met—nor did its former Central Division ever meet—in Arkansas, Mississippi, Oklahoma, or Texas. Our members in that vast area feel isolated and penalized, and we feel that we have few members there—the familiar vicious circle. At our New Orleans meeting, however, the South-Central MLA was organized, and its first annual convention was held in 1940 at Shreveport, with six states represented and a registration totalling 212. The present membership is approximately 800. During the war years, 1942-45, when no meetings were feasible, the *South-Central Bulletin* served to hold the Association together. Membership (including subscription to the *Bulletin*) still costs only \$1 a year, and we urge all modern language teachers in the South-Central area to join and participate, even if it means not joining the national MLA, which is a completely separate society. But the Proceedings of the S-CMLA are regularly published in the February *PMLA* both as a token of our continued interest and as a means of informing scholars in other regions of the activities in this one. We attended the 1949 S-CMLA meeting, at Little Rock, and so we know at first hand the fine work being done by Dean Roger McCutcheon, Jewel Wurtzbaugh, Charles B. Qualia, Robert M. Lumiansky, Robert T. Clark, Leonard Beach, Alan McKillop, and many others. The MLA salutes the S-CMLA and wishes it well.

Announcing

CONFERENCES OF SCHOLARS

at the 1951 Meeting

THE Program Committee will make available at the 1951 Annual Meeting a number of small conference rooms for scholarly discussion of announced topics. These rooms will be allocated to interested members of the Association under the following conditions:

1. A petition signed by seven or more members, stating the topic and aim of the conference, and *designating a discussion leader*, must be sent to reach the Secretary of the Association not later than October 1.
2. Legitimate petitions will be honored in the order of their receipt and up to the limit of available accommodations. The normal conference period will be one hour and a half. Requests for specific periods should include several periods in the order of preference.
3. The conference rooms to be made available will accommodate no more than twenty-five or thirty-five persons, and it will be the responsibility of the discussion leader to refuse admission to additional persons.
4. The topic, place, and leader of the conference will be named in the printed Program. If the conference is being held by invitation only, this fact will also be stated. Otherwise, it will be the responsibility of the discussion leader to handle requests for admission; the Program will explain that interested persons should write to him, and that he will grant requests for admission up to the limit of accommodations.
5. Only sharply defined topics, supported by explanations of the purposes of the conference, will be honored.
6. Conference rooms will be allocated with the understanding that the object of the meetings is not the reading of papers. On the other hand, the mimeographing and advance circulation of papers or reports will be within the spirit of the arrangement.
7. Brief reports on the conferences, if submitted promptly to the Secretary of the Association, will be published in the annual Proceedings; but no reports are required.
8. Official recognition of each conference is for one year only. If a group wishes to renew its discussion in 1952, it may again petition for accommodation.

MHRA. Annual dues have been increased to \$2.10 and life subscription to \$28. Vol. 21 (for 1940) of the *Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature* is now ready (price to members: \$1.25; to others: \$2.55). Vol. 22 (for 1941) is expected to appear in June. Vol. 11 of the *Year's Work in Modern Languages*, containing a review of the work done 1940-49 in French, German, Spanish, Italian, and six other languages, is scheduled to appear this month (price to members: \$4.55; to others: \$5.60). Write to the American Secretary, H. W. Bentley, Univ. of Utah, Salt Lake City 1.

AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION. Its Committee on Foreign Language Teaching consists of Henry Grattan Doyle (*Ch.*), R. H. Fife, Stephen A. Freeman, C. C. Fries, E. D. Grizzell, Hayward Keniston, Melva Lind, and H. T. Manuel. Dean Grizzell is chairman of the Committee on Inter-American Schools Service, and Dean Doyle is chairman of its subcommittee on financial aid to schools in Latin America.

HONOR. The Crawshay Prize (£100), conferred by the Council of the British Academy for an outstanding work in the field of English literature, was awarded in 1949 to Rosemond Tuve (now on PMLA's Editorial Committee) for her *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery: Renaissance Poetic and 20th-Century Critics* (Univ. of Chicago Press).

NEXT. The 1951 Meeting is scheduled to be held in Detroit, Michigan, on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, December 27-29. Any member of the Association may offer a paper to be read in either a Departmental Section or a Discussion Group meeting this year. Papers or notices of papers should be sent directly to the Chairman of the group or section concerned; his name and address may be found in the 1950 Proceedings, at the very end of the account of the particular group's program. The latest possible date at which proposals for the 1951 program can be received is October 1, but notice well in advance of this date is highly desirable, as programs are usually made up before the deadline; copy for the complete *Program* must reach the printers on October 15.

TITLES IN ARTICLES. The problem of whether or not to use titles in referring to persons living or dead is a vexing one to both scholarly authors and editors (who must worry about achieving some consistency in a given number of a journal). The Editor of *PMLA* has provisionally adopted the following rules: (1) Omit such titles as Miss, Mrs., Mr., Dr., or Professor in references to any *deceased* persons (*never* "Mr. Shakespeare" or "Professor Kittredge," but either "Scott" or "Sir Walter"). (2) Use titles in references to any living persons *unless* they are a) prominent authors under discussion or b) scholars cited as authorities, but (3) use titles in *direct controversy* with other scholars or in reviews, in order to avoid seeming abrupt. Do readers think that a "double standard" is advisable in applying 2b? That is, should we write "Sherburn and Miss Nicolson" or "Sherburn and Nicolson?"

POSTAGE TO CANADA. Letters from the U.S. to Canada are 3 cents, airmail 6 cents, but postcards are 2 cents. We bring this up, not only because we ourselves sometimes forget, but also because twice each year (the Ballot and the inquiry about Research in Progress) our Canadian members write in considerable indignation to inform us that U.S. stamps on *reply postcards* are no good in Canada. They are wrong; a reply postcard, bearing a 2-cent U.S. stamp, can be mailed from Canada. Ask your postmaster.

ON DIT. "Abolish the critic at section meetings! Such 'canned' performances, usually involving a paper on the paper, contribute little, make discussion impossible, and eventually will necessitate a paper on the paper on the paper, and may even result in hearing a paper on a paper which might have been but was not written." . . . "Let's have some meetings nearer the central part of the country." . . . "Have the next annual meeting as far in the West as is feasible." . . . "Change the time of meetings to late summer or early fall—the Christmas holiday is a most inconvenient time for those who have great distances to come." [This

For Members Only—Continued

suggestion from Seattle.—Ed.] . . . “Is there any way of organizing the job-hunting activities that go on at the Annual Meetings? And what about more opportunities like the free showing of *Henry V* at the Washington meeting?” . . . “Would MLA consider a placement service for its members?” . . . “Why not publish biographies of the candidates for the Executive Council?” . . . “This array of names [on the 1950 Ballot], meaning nearly nothing to my limited knowledge outside the field of English, emphasizes what I have felt since the apparent beginning of a radical change in MLA policy—that candidates should have announced ‘platforms,’ or in some other way the membership should have a chance to vote on basic issues and not be reduced to a choice of half-recognized personalities.” . . .

GRANTS. The Research Committee of the American Philosophical Society in December granted \$500 to Eva-Maria Jung (Georgetown) for work on a biography of Vittoria Colonna, \$375 to Clarke Olney (Georgia) for work on a biography of Benjamin Robert Haydon.

OUT OF PRINT. *The Relations of Literature and Science: a Selected Bibliography, 1930-1949*, first offered for sale at the Stanford meeting (Sept. 1949), went out of print in July 1950. Fred A. Dudley was good enough to inform us: “Your notice in ‘For Members Only’ was a real help in the distribution. . . . The project liquidated itself.”

McKERROW—SILVER. Some copies of their articles on problems of scholarly publishing (reprinted from *PMLA*, April 1950), bound with 12 pages of other useful material, are still available to members who will send us 6 cents in stamps; and we can supply copies in quantity at 5 cents each, postage free.

LATIN COMMENTARIES. A compilation of descriptive and critical lists of Latin translations from ancient Greek, and of Latin commentaries (up to 1600 A.D.) on ancient Greek and Latin authors (up to 600 A.D.), is in active progress as an international, cooperative scholarly project. Approved in May 1945 by the ACLS Committee on Renaissance Studies, the project has since been officially approved by the Medieval Academy (1946), the MLA (1947), the British Academy (1947), the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei (1947), the Academie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres (1948), and the International Union of Academies (1950). More than 100 American and Canadian scholars are currently at work on the compilation, and a number of European scholars are also involved. For fuller information write to the Secretary of the project, Paul Oskar Kristeller, 1161 Amsterdam Ave., New York 27, N.Y.

INANNOTATION. We sometimes wonder if many other students share our irritation with those editors who profusely annotate all the passages we already understand but skip over, without so much as a comment, those that really puzzle us. When we had more humility, these lacunae helped to increase it. Now, after more than 20 years of research, we suspect an evil conspiracy, and we counsel younger scholars not to be intimidated. To future editors we recommend frequent use of some of the noblest words Dr. Johnson ever wrote: “What this means I do not know.” And we advise emulation of the spirit of Helen Waddell, who, in the fourth edition of her *Medieval Latin Lyrics*, answered those who had deplored her omission of many of the great medieval hymns: they “are not here,” she said simply, “because I cannot translate them.” This is the kind of humility we crave to see *explicit* in more editors. Example: we have yet to read a really helpful note on the second line of Milton’s famous sonnet on his blindness. (Perhaps the editors of the projected *Milton Variorum* will supply this.) One can’t write good notes on scientific principles or in the spirit of a compiler; unfortunately, one has to know what he is writing about. In our somewhat unhappy opinion, a really good annotator writes only to save a reader needless trouble, remembers that this reader may be quite as intelligent as *he* is, makes no parade of learning, combines conciseness with intelligibility, and, when in doubt—or when just plain stumped—always says so.

FOR YOU? *The English Romantic Poets: a Review of Research* by Bernbaum, Chew, Raysor, Thorpe, Weaver, and Wellek was published by the MLA late last September and more than 500 copies have already been sold. Price: \$2.85. Order directly from the MLA Treasurer.

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