

Belles Lettres and Bell Ringers

By ELIZABETH ANN McMURRAY '35

WHEN Oklahomans sample the choice fruits of this fall's literary output it will be with more than casual interest. Many creative achievements which are being nationally recognized have been brought forth by natives of Oklahoma. Quite the most remarkable of the crop is John M. Oskison's *Brothers Three* (Macmillan, \$2.50). It is the story of what happened to the Odell family of the northern part of the state in the years from 1873 to the present day, sixty years which brought statehood, wealth, oil, war and depression to Oklahoma. It is a story such as any Oklahoman might tell of his family; of brothers to whom the farm meant not so much as it had meant to the father; to whom money meant a great deal; and to whom modern life brought only groping.

Critics have used every adjective from terrific to profound in describing this novel of Oklahoma by an Oklahoman. Perhaps it is terrific, but it is far more substantial, far more solid than it is terrific. The background against which *Brothers Three* is projected is the Under-Ridge farm near Vinita, where the author was born and where he lived his early life. Henry, one of the three brothers, who left home to go to college, work on a newspaper, and devote himself to writing, is possibly the author himself. The novel presents Oskison to a great reading public as the author of the finest novel ever written about Oklahoma. His realism is of medium strength, never raw. His character delineation is accurate and memorable. In his choice of incidents Mr. Oskison has shown amazing judgment, and unlike Miss Ferber in *Cimarron* he has given only things which Oklahomans know happened all the time in Oklahoma.

Don Blanding, who once lived in Lawton, Oklahoma, pleases thousands with



his poems of wanderlust and vagabondage illustrated with his own exotic drawings. This time *Memory Room* (Dodd, Mead, \$2.00) is a conglomeration of verse recalling the many experiences of an artist-actor-poet who has had an incurable case of wandering feet for the past thirteen years. The poems and illustrations are good as far as they go and for the type of art they represent. Blanding succeeds in isolating a semi-Bohemian semi-tropical abandon and injects his readers with a desire to go native, build Vagabonds' Houses, collect jade, and spend the day in blissful dreaming.

The University of Oklahoma Press announces for publication November 1 *Deserts on the March* by Paul B. Sears of the faculty of the university. From advance orders and reports of those who have read the book in manuscript it is one of the important books of the time and one of the finest things the University Press has done. Mr. Sears writes about the prospects of the coming American desert, certainly a scientific matter, with the charm and informality one finds in a familiar essay. The book which reads like a novel is national in its appeal, and comes at a time when everyone is interested in the future of American soil. Delightfully illustrated by the author *Deserts on the March*, already recommended by the Book-of-the-Month Club promises to be one of the biggest books of the year.

Kenneth Kaufman, literary editor of the *Daily Oklahoman*, who teaches in the University, writes, and follows his hobbies with equal ease, is the author of *Level Land* a book of verse scheduled to be released October 15 by the Kalideo-graph Press, Dallas.

The late Huey Pierce Long, once a student at the University of Oklahoma, completed a book *My First Days in the White House* (The Telegraph Press, Harrisburg, Pa.) a week before his assassination in the capitol of Louisiana. His book is being read with great interest as is the story of his life *Huey Long: A Candid Biography* by Forrest Davis (Dodge Publishing Co., New York) and several other books about the Kingfish. *My First Days in the White House* is bold and clever, a dream of his last great triumph as president of the United States.



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