LITERATURE SINCE THE REFORMATION

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1. General

Humaniora Norvegica, vol. IV, Oslo, 1959, 340 pp., covers the years 1955-6. J. W. McFarlane, Ibsen and the Temper of Norwegian Literature, Oxford U.P., 208 pp. This is not a book on Ibsen, but a collection of essays on Norwegian literature since the eighteenth century. The elegance of the author's prose style as well as his unconventional views add to the book a freshness which is lacking in most other treatments of the subject. Mr McFarlane is writing for an English public and the importance of his book lies in its very conscious attempt to point out certain misrepresentations in earlier criticism. This in particular applies to his treatment of Bjørnson and Wergeland whose Norwegian fame owes so much to the greatness of their lives. Mr McFarlane, trying to consider them more objectively, concludes that their national literary stature deserves a considerable reduction. A rev. of this work is found in Vin, 157-60 (Carl Hambro). In Einar Skavlan, Norsk teater 1930-1953, Aschehoug, xv + 330 pp., Paul Gjesdahl has collected more than a hundred of Skavlan's theatre revs in Dagbladet. As introduction to the collection Gjesdahl has used an article he wrote in 1928 when Skavlan left his job as editor of Dagbladet to become director of the National Theatre. The vol. contains revs of plays by Holberg (4), Ibsen (10), Bjørnson (4), Heiberg (2), Grieg (5) and Krog (2); but also by lesser known dramatists such as Vesaas, Orvil, Borgen and Eidem. Eugenia Kielland, Evige venner, Aschehoug, 85 pp., is a collection of literary articles. Hans Midbøe, Streiflys over Ibsen og andre studier, Gyldendal, 163 pp., also contains two articles of a general nature, 'Storhetstiden i trøndersk åndslev', 91-III, and 'Små klassikere. Barn og diktning', 131-40. Leif Nedergaard, 'Fra ørn over svaneunge til isfugl', NT, xxxvi, 454-9, is an art. on bird metaphors. It contains refs to Wergeland's 'Follow the Call' and Ibsen's Wild Duck.

In the centenary of the Scandinavian Society in Rome Gyldendal
has published a new work by Professor Francis Bull, *Nordisk kunstnerliv i Rom*, 263 pp., which contains valuable contributions to the personal history of such notable writers as Henrik Ibsen. It is written *con amore*. Another publication on Norwegian artists’ lives is Mentz Schulerud, *Norsk kunstnerliv*, Cappelen, 661 pp. Of some interest to literary historians are a number of pages devoted to Bjørnson, Hamsun, Heiberg, Ibsen, Wildenvey and many other authors. Also valuable is the general account of literary cafés since they form the setting of much important Norwegian fiction. Schulerud’s book is profusely illustrated.

These last years have seen a number of fine publications sponsored by the *ynorsk* movement, ballads, folklore, philology. This year Det norske Samlaget has brought out an anthology of *ynorsk* verse from *Voluspa* in Mortensson-Egnund’s translation to modern poetry: *Norske dikt*, 552 pp. (many have objected to the use of *norsk*). It shows how, in relation to bokmål, *ynorsk* with its musical qualities and somewhat archaic appearance seems exceptionally well suited to poetic use. Also it displays in exemplary fashion the richness and outstanding quality of *ynorsk* literature.

2. SIXTEENTH TO EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES


3. NINETEENTH CENTURY

In the new ed. of Aschehoug’s standard work on Norwegian literature (Bull, Paasche, Winsnes, Houm, *Norsk litteraturhistorie*) vol. iv—written by Francis Bull and dealing with authors Collett, Vinje, Ibsen, Bjørnson, Lie—appears in two parts. Part 1 (*Norges litteratur fra februarrevolutionen til første verdenskrig*, 466 pp.), which now takes the historical development up to the death of Ibsen, does not differ substantially from the corresponding section