BOOKS ABROAD

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From the JAN

1941

issue

Xavier Villaurrutia. Textos y pretextos. México. Casa de España en

México. 245 pages.—There comes to us with this volume a scent of the distant-seeming 1920's, whose aesthetic battles—and many of the protagonists as well—have some while since been laid away in lavender. De mortuis—Nevertheless, the dead do live in the pages of their contemporaries, where it is not always nil nisi bonum that is spoken of them. Paul Morand, and yes, even the pontificating Valéry: what memories they bring of our more youthful enthusiasms and illusions! The nights, for example, that we spent with the dubious geographic ladies of l'Europe galante. (With their vague, sad faces, they might have stepped from behind the curtains of a Laurencin print.)

In Mexico this was the generation to which the literary review, Contemporáneos, has significantly given its name. It is this generation that Señor Villaurrutia, poet, critic and man of the theatre, represents, in a winnowed collection of essays, occasional criticism for the most part, extending roughly over the decade from the mid-twenties to the mid-thirties, with a foreword dated

1940.

The author must have been an unusually sure-footed critic in that slippery era, or else he has sagaciously let time do his editing for him; one suspects that the latter is the case. It is the earlier papers in the book, such as the one on Morand (1927), that hold the lilac scent. It is interesting to compare these with the essays on Mexican painters, Rivera, Orozco and others, written around 1939. But a man who could deal with Pío Baroja as Villaurrutia did in 1925, is a critic in and out of season. What is more, he is a poetic, readable critic of the kind Baudelaire would have loved. He is, as he confesses, one to whom criticism is a creative passion; and he writes a prose that is remarkable for ite subtlety and refinement, its sonorous over- and undertones.

In addition to a group of essays on Mexican poets and other writers, including one on that "hombre de caminos," Alfonso Reyes, the author further provides us with a "Guide to North American Poets" (a criticism of the Jolas-Kra anthology of some years ago); with a delightful chat on French essayists and the essay as a form which is something he asserts it isn't; with a note on "Viajes, viajeros," which disposes rather nicely of Mr. Waldo Frank and his Virgin Spain; and with an account of Elmer Rice en México.-Samuel Putnam. Philadelphia.

Fag: X. Villaurrutia

Núm.119.

México, D.F. a 4 de febrero de 1941.

Sr.D. Xavier Villaurrutia

Mi querido Xavier:-

Le mando una notita de Books Abroad sobre su libro, y le pido noticias de nuestro libro pendiente.

Le deses mucho éxito en sus nuevas labores. Muy suyo

Alfonso Reyes.

FONDO DE CULTURA ECONOMICA

EDICION E IMPORTACION DE LIBROS Y REVISTAS

PANUCO, 63 MEXICO, D. F. MEXICO ERICSSON, 18-57-35 MEXICANA, L-21-42 Cable: DORACA

Señor Xavier Villaurrutia Presente Pedido Nº 5313

México, D. F., 28 de junio de 1941

CONTADO SIN CARGO

ART. GRAF. COM.-LECUMBERRI, 36

10 Villaurrutia- Textos y Pretextos

Obsequio, Autor

Reali, queni da Alfonso, su adhesion -I hu 4 kure de no pade asister-al almuezo que un grupa de aningo me afræck por "La Brisda".

me afre en por "La Brisda".

Y, alia a, una mulstia: Tanta Ramos como
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espiralares de autor que la conespondia por

su libre editade en la entre y Cora de lo puasamente el mines. 2 guere entel have gre me enview de Thy too 1 Pretexts " fu mi mo i gual de ejemple receits de suextes para um anign de fina. Dacies de Dans

México, D.F. a 28 de junio de 1941.

Sr.D. Xavier Villaurrutia Puebla, 247. CIUDAD.

Núm. 468.

Querido Xavier:-

En ausencia de Cosío, ignoro el número de ejemplares de sus respectivos libros que se dió a Ramos y a Samará. Ya lo investigo en todo caso. Tiene usted aquí ya diez más a su disposición.

Un abrazo de

Alfonso Reyes.

México, D.F. a 1 de octubre de 1941.

Sr.D. Xavier Villaurrutia Puebla, 247. Ciudad. Fap: Libra

Mi querido Xavier:-

Aunque he comprendido perfectamente su punto de vista, como quedó usted en conversar conmigo, no quiero dar un paso sin que usted me confirme su resolución a propósito del ensayo sobre la literatura mexicana del modernismo hasta nuestros días. Espero sus letras y le mando un abrazo

Alfonso Reyes.

México, D.F. a 11 de mayo de 1943

Sr. Lic. D. Alfonso Reyes, Pánuco # 63, C i u d a d.

Muy querido Alfonso:

Tengo en mis manos su carta del 7 de mayo en la que me pide usted autorización para - añadir mi nombre al de otros escritores, en dos - asuntos de importancia. No solo acepto, querido Alfonso, sino que me siento orgulloso de que me - haya tenido usted presente tanto para la cuestión de los "amigos de la libertad", como para la organización del Centro.

Espero verlo pronto personalmente. Reciba mientras tanto un abrazo de

Xavier Villaurrutia