

HELPING YOU TO KEEP POSTED

"Little Theatre" Movement—

(Continued from page 14.)

MANY of the more prominent writers and critics of dramatic affairs are shouldering their way into print with their particular interpretation of the meaning of the "little theatre" movement. Two or three magazines are devoted exclusively to what they term this "amateur revolt." Experiment, as opposed to commercialization and professionalism, seems to be the key-note of the revolt, as witness the announcement of the "Theatre Arts Magazine," which declares in the statement of its editorial policy that it stands "for the creation of a new theatre in America, a theatre in which art and not business will be the first consideration."

Most of the writers say that the bigness of the little theatre movement is due to the wide-spread dissatisfaction with the "regular" theatre which is governed by Broadway. As a writer in the "Unpopular Review" puts it:

"The taste of Broadway, which now dictates to our stage, is in no true sense a cosmopolitan taste, but rather a strange mixture of provincial tastes, not one of them ordinarily operating under normal conditions. So far as Broadway taste represents New York, too often it is hectic and flashy and thoughtless, the taste of the scum of the melting-pot. What is sound and stable and truly cosmopolitan in New York taste will be found rather in the concert halls than the theatres, only occasionally coming to the rescue of a play like 'Peter Pan' or 'Magic' or 'Justice.' But far more than New York, Broadway taste represents 'the provinces,' in the persons of the 500,000 transients who are to be found every day in our vast city, here for twenty-four hours, or a week, transacting business by day, perhaps, and by night determined to 'have a good time.' They are in the mood of orgy, as the scientists would say; they spend money ridiculously, they throw off normal inhibitions, they are out for a spree. To such people, a seriously interpretative drama is not the one to give pleasure and satisfaction."

The writer of the "Unpopular Review" concludes:

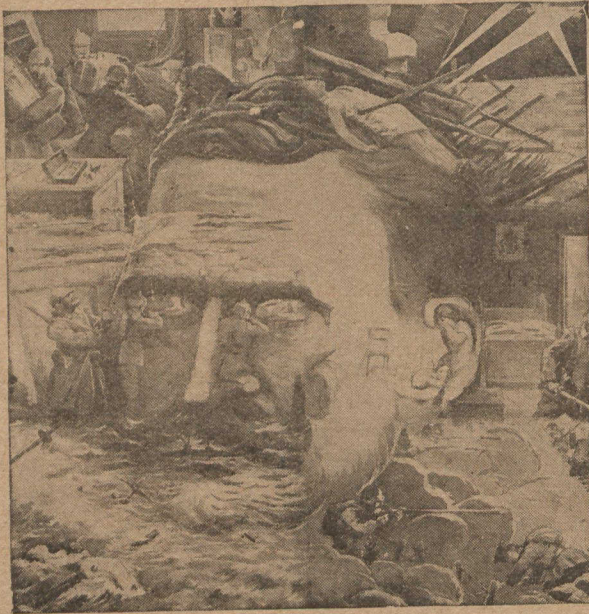
"All these amateur experiments, all this amateur effort, represents a disinterested and surprisingly spontaneous enthusiasm for the arts of the theatre, and a wide-spread and profound discontent with present conditions. The enthusiasm is contagious, the discontent only too easy to share. More and more converts will be made every day, more and more, therefore, an audience will be assembling ready to welcome larger efforts at practical production. When those efforts are large enough, the professional players (who are, of course, and must always remain, the backbone of the theatre) will be drawn in to cooperate and guide, as many of them are already doing. The 'Provinces' will sign a declaration of theatrical independence, and the work of Herne and Fitch and Moody, the work of creating an interpretative American drama, will go on again."

Facts for the Faltering—

THE cold catalog of German atrocities now documented and in the government archives of the different nations makes the most sickening page in history. Days spent upon the records preserved in southern Belgium, northern France, or in and about Paris, days spent in the ruined villages of Alsace and Lorraine, leave one nauseated—physically and mentally, writes Dr. Newell Dwight Hillis, in Current Opinion. Dr. Hillis was a member of the commission which went from America to investigate the reports and records of Hun atrocities in invaded France. "It is one long, black series of legally documented atrocities," he continues. "These atrocities also were committed not in a mood of drunkenness, nor an hour of anger, but were organized by a so-called German efficiency, and perpetrated on a deliberate, cold, precise, scientific policy of German frightfulness. It is not simply that they looted factories, carried away machinery, robbed houses, bombed every farmhouse and granary, left no plow or reaper, chopped down every pear-tree and plum-tree with every grape-vine, and poisoned all wells! The Germans slaughtered old men and matrons, mutilated captives in ways that can only be spoken

of by men in whispers; violated little girls until they were dead. Finding a calfskin nailed upon a barn-door to be dried, they nailed a babe beside it and wrote beneath the word, 'zwei'; they thrust women and children between themselves and soldiers coming up to defend their native land; bombed and looted hospitals, Red Cross buildings, violated the white flag—and the worst atrocities cannot even be named.

"During July and August I went from one ruined town to another, talking with the women and the children, comparing the photographs and the full official records made at the time with the statements of the poor, wretched survivors who lived in cellars where once there had been beautiful houses, orchards, vineyards, but now was only desolation. In Gerbeviller, standing beside their graves, I studied



This picture of Prussianism, showing what the Prussian brain produces to benefit the world makes a good commentary on what Newell Dwight Hillis has to say about what the world is fighting against.

the photograph of the bodies of fifteen old men whom the Germans lined up and shot because there were no young soldiers to kill; heard the detailed story of a woman whose son was first hung to a pear-tree in the garden, and who, when the officer and soldier had left him and were busy setting fire to the next house, cut the rope and revived the strangled youth only to find the soldiers had returned. While the officer held her hands behind her back, his assistant poured petrol on the son's head and clothes, set fire to him, and as he staggered about, a flaming torch, they shrieked with laughter. When they had burned all the houses and retreated, the next morning the prefect of Lorraine reached that Gethsemane and photographed the bodies of thirty aged men lying as they fell, the bodies of women stripped and at last slain."

Dr. Hillis gives details of how aged priests were staked to the ground and defiled until death delivered them; of young girls first violated and then mutilated to mark them as sacrifices to the loathsome lust of German brutes who had previously been segregated from their fellows for hygienic reasons.

"Take these extracts from affidavits on file with a French official," he says and then quotes:

"In retreating from Malines eight drunken soldiers were marching through the street. A little child of two years came out and a soldier skewered the child on his bayonet, and carried it away while his comrades sang.—D. 10. 45.

"Withdrawing from Hofstade, in addition to other atrocities, the Germans cut off both hands of a boy of sixteen. At the inquest affidavits were taken from twenty-five witnesses who saw the boy before he died or just afterwards. . . . Passing through Haecht, in addition to the young women whom they violated and killed, affidavits were taken and the photographs of a child three years old nailed to a door by its hands and feet.—D. 100-8."

"These records could be multiplied by thousands," says Dr. Hillis at the conclusion of his indictment of the official frightfulness of German militarism. Upon the retreat from one city alone inquests were held upon the bodies of over six hundred victims, including very aged men and women, and babes unborn, removed by the bayonet from their mothers. It is the logical result of the charge of the Kaiser to his army: "Give no quarter and take no prisoners. Let all who fall into your hands be at your mercy."

—Watch Your Furnace

BEFORE you go down cellar to fix the furnace for the night, read the following piece about coal which appeared on the editorial page of "The Saturday Evening Post." That sixth sentence: "For winning the war a shovelful of coal counts for as much as a loaf of wheat bread," ought to be done into a wall text and hung up right over the chain to the check damper.

"We need in the next twelve months a hundred million tons more coal than we produced during the last twelve months. Production may be increased by fifty million tons. The other fifty million tons must be saved.

"This is a war of industrial production, and that means coal. It is worth fabulous prices in France and Italy now. For winning the war a shovelful of coal counts for as much as a loaf of wheat bread.

"We have always burned coal extravagantly. In factories and houses defective appliances and careless stoking waste millions of tons.

"A furnace or stove without proper dampers will consume twice the coal in a strong wind, with no more heat. Dampers cost little. Look to them. If your furnace is out of repair it not only wastes the nation's coal, but wastes your money.

"In office buildings, apartments and houses our custom is to keep up a roaring fire, and then moderate the temperature by opening the windows. Reasonably careful stoking alone will save millions of tons. Look at the ashes. Through worn grates or defective combustion you may be throwing away a lot of slightly burned fuel.

"We have got to save coal and many other things. There simply is not enough to go round for the old free-and-easy peace programme and the new war programme. The people of the United States, we know, are more than ready to do all the situation demands.

"They require only intelligent, authoritative direction as to just what to do.

"The Government asked them, with specific directions, to save food; and they are doing it. The Government now asks them to save coal. They will do that. They will meet every requirement the war lays upon them."

—The Grain Growers' Advocate

ONE of the most outstanding features of the development of the west is the solidarity, strength, and political significance of the co-operative movement which flourishes amongst the grain-growers of the Prairie Provinces. Within a few years the movement has merged from an abstract ideal sensed by a few men of foresight and imagination to a concrete force which actually governs the direction of national affairs as far as they affect the people between the Great Lakes and the Rockies. Outside of the fact that practically 90 per cent. of the farmers of the west are grain-growers, with their community of interest springing from the very soil itself, much of the success of the farmers' movement in the prairies may be credited to the splendid advocacy of the farmers' interests by the Grain Growers' Guide. It has furnished also a meeting place as it were for those members of the various co-operative societies whose only point of contact with their fellows was by way of the mail routes which link them in their magnificent isolation to the world beyond their unfenced wheat-fields. And whilst the movement which it advocates has flourished the Grain Growers' Guide has enjoyed a mighty healthy growth of its own, as is well indicated by