

Escape Fiction Is Product Of Times, Thinks Author

Mme. Ericka Zastrow Thinks Modern Novel Is Swinging Back to the Romanticism of Victorian Fiction.

By Hope Eddings Miller.

THE MODERN NOVEL IS swinging back to Victorian romance in the belief of Mme. Ericka Zastrow, author of "Broken Arcs" and "The Possessed."

"The uncertain times are probably responsible for the growing popularity of the escape type of fiction," she said yesterday at the apartment of Mrs. Stephen W. Gambrell, whom she is visiting.

"A few years ago readers demanded either the risqué or the morbid narrative. Now, however, publishers are asking for optimistic, romantic novels that will serve to divert the reader rather than to analyze life. And while there will always be some authors who will give little thought to popular trends, the new writer will have a better chance if he tries the romantic narrative."

Time for "Unknowns."

Mme. Zastrow believes the beginner has an excellent chance now to break into the better markets.

"Now is the ideal time for the 'unknown' she asserted. "Editors are seeking new names, and since most manuscripts stored away for publication during the depression have been used, the markets are wide open."

She believes, also, the novice stands as good a chance if she markets her own work until she is established.

"I did not have an agent," she said, "until I had sold a number of stories. Once established, however, an author may profit by having an agent to attend to the technical phases of salesmanship. Some time ago, I talked to a group at Columbia University on this subject. In preparing my lecture I went to a well-known publishing company to find out whether or not agents receive more consideration than authors themselves. I learned preference is given to neither."

Of Russian and German ancestry, Mme. Zastrow was born in Baltimore and reared in New York. After attending the Pennsylvania Normal School, she took special courses in literature and writing at Hunter College and Columbia University. Shortly after the close of the war she lived in Germany for a year and a half, where she did secretarial work. Returning to New York, she continued this type of work and also began writing for the pulp magazines.

Later she started writing novels, and her first book, "Broken Arcs," was published by Henry Holt in 1932. Built around two young people—born in Germany—who met and fell in love in this country, the novel was based on incidents in the lives of her mother and father.

Second Book Psychological.

Her second book, "The Possessed," was a psychological narrative, set in Pennsylvania, portraying a girl who struggled to free herself from her mother's possessive influence.

"Dark Earth," which she is writing now, deals with labor troubles in the mines in 1876.

Mme. Zastrow, who in private life is Mrs. Massey, wife of the vice president of the Baltimore Salesbook Co., now resides in Baltimore with her husband and 15-year-old son.

She does not find it difficult to carry on her career in the face of the inevitable duties that confront a wife and mother.

"I simply devote certain hours every day to writing," she said, "and the remainder of my time is free for anything else I may have to do. Authorship is a job, like anything else, and regular working hours are essential to success in that field, as well as in any other. I write every morning from 8:30 until 1 o'clock, and then I am through until the next day."

Of modern novelists, Mme. Zastrow is particularly fond of Willa Cather and of Sinclair Lewis.

Lawyers Will Honor Judge Fay Bentley

The Women's Bar Association of the District of Columbia will give a dinner in honor of Judge Fay Bentley of the Juvenile Court at 6:30 o'clock tonight at the Admiral. Hon. Jesse Adkins, associate justice of the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia, and Mrs. Mary Conner Myers will be speakers on the program managed by Edwina Austin Avery.

Guests of honor include the Dean of George Washington University Law School and Mrs. Van Vleck, the Dean of National University School of Law and Mrs. Johnson, Dean Grace Hays Riley and Mr. Riley of the Washington College of Law and Superintendent of Schools and Mrs. Ballou and Mr. Sanford Bates, director of the Bureau of Prisons.

Diagonal Parts Make Coiffeurs Go Windswept

They Make Hair Follow New Line and Still Look Neat.

This wind-swept trend, which started out to be something rather trivial in the way of trends, eventually took the fashion world by its ears. First, it started in dresses, coats and suits, then went to hats and finally to shoes. And now, just as the thing should be by rights petering out, it works its way into coiffeurs.

The latest thing is the diagonal part, which is supposed to give the wearer more or less of a wind-blown look without making her actually appear as though she'd been in a high gale—blown, yet well-groomed, as it were. You don't have to be a wind-swept addict to wear this new hair-do. It's very intriguing, though somewhat startling at first view.

More miscellani about spring clothes and gadgets.

Hostess and lounging pajamas seem to be on the upturn again after several seasons of abeyance, during which the hostess and tea gowns were the accepted thing for women's new ladylike status as far as fashions were concerned. This doesn't seem to mean any lapse in the "elegance" trend, for the pajamas being shown are as gorgeous and drapery as most of the tea gowns, very full and very luxurious.

Something for which all women have longed for years (those who haven't, could have no imagination) is now on the market—mirrors with two sides. One side shows you how the daylight will affect your make-up, the other how you will look come evening. These things will prevent the make-up tragedies which occur when the lily is gilded under soft lights and the unfortunate sallies forth into daylight, scaring children as she goes.

Another item about mirrors. They are being put on the outside of compacts now, to facilitate the rapid powdering of noses and also to lend decoration.

Economist to Speak To Women Voters

Unemployment Insurance Will Be Subject.

Dr. Paul Douglas, professor of economics at the University of Chicago and member of the Consumers Advisory Board of the NRA, will be the principal speaker at a dinner meeting of the District League of Women Voters at 6:30 o'clock tomorrow night at the Admiral, 1640 Rhode Island avenue northwest. He will discuss unemployment insurance.

Other speakers will be Lelfur Jagnussen, American representative of the International Labor Office; Dr. Oscar Weigart, author of the unemployment insurance law in Germany, who has been making studies for the last year for the Helman Foundation; Miss Mary Anderson, chief of the Women's Bureau, United States Department of Labor; Miss Mary Ladame, assistant director, United States Employment Service, and Mrs. Richard Hogue, president of the league.

Mrs. Lawrence Todd, chairman of the department of women in industry for the league, will preside and read the discussion.