volume is only about half of the first German volume and one-sixth of the total fragment. As it is, it hardly gets around to establishing the characters. Its real action lies beneath the surface—in the actors' states of mind and their theories and arguments in relation to each other and to their world.

Briefly, the novel is played out in Vienna in 1913. There are two main themes. One concerns the preparations for the Jubilee of the Austrian Emperor, which is designed to be a grandiose demonstration of "the Austrian way of life." The other is the cause célèbre of Moosbrugger, the sex maniac and murderer, whose fate hangs in the balance. Ulrich, the man without qualities, has against his will become honorary secretary of the campaign committee in charge of arrangements for the Jubilee. He also gets involved in the review of the Moosbrugger case. Ulrich is a neutralist by conviction, a dilettante, unattached and independent. He understands that the campaign is a farce—a vain quest for an idea, for the realization of the Good and the True and the Beautiful. And he also understands that the Moosbrugger case is another more hideous aspect of the same lack of an idea, of the same lack of standards by which to measure the Good, the True, and the Beautiful.

This is an intellectual novel; the men and women who populate it never come to life. Thus one's emotions are never identified with Ulrich; at best one is interested in his philosophical and political notions which, one gathers, are Musil's own. However, the volume is studded with intelligent, wise, and witty remarks. And no one ever said deeper things about the old Austrian-Hungarian Empire and the secret of its way of life. R. G. WALDECK

Secret World

The Brontë Story, by Margaret Lane. 368 pp. New York and Boston: Duell, Sloan and Pearce—Little, Brown and Company. $5.00

Using Mrs. Gaskell's admirable *Life of Charlotte Brontë* as her starting point, Miss Lane examines the salient Gaskell passages in the light of additional information turned up by modern research, and smoothly weaves new and old into an enthralling narrative, giving us the most complete Brontë story to date.

Mrs. Gaskell had approached her task with enthusiasm and with a preconception derived from a briefing she received from her hostess when she first met Charlotte, the literary sensation of the day. This briefing, embodied in a Gaskell letter, was only partially rectified in her "Life." It was a tissue of distortions and misrepresentations.

Instead of living at the end of nowhere, the Brontës lived in the heart of industrial England, just four miles from the manufacturing town of Keighley. Mr. Brontë conscientiously performed the duty of visiting his parishioners in the half-dozen hamlets in his cure, often accompanied by Charlotte. There were teas, calls, and visiting back and forth with the friends Charlotte made at her Roehead school. To the extent that the Brontë life was solitary, it was so because they loved reading, reflection, and the moors that stretched above the village, and because they felt superior to their neighbors. How wrong they could be in this was shown in the case of Mr. Nicholls. The girls had always made fun of their father's curates and Charlotte lampooned them in a book, but when she finally married Mr. Nicholls and visited his home in Ireland, she found to her surprise that it was a gentleman's country-seat and that his relatives were cultivated, delightful people.

Far from neglecting his children's education, Mr. Brontë found ingenious ways of stimulating their interests and he sent all the girls away to school. The magnanimity of the brilliant old man, who by his own efforts had raised himself from his humble beginnings as an Irish cotter's son and who supported himself at Cambridge by winning a scholarship and two "exhibitions," is shown in his reactions to the published biography. Instead of reproaching Mrs. Gaskell for publicly portraying him as a monster, he thanked her for her perceptive book, merely adding that there were a few trifling mistakes which he hoped she would correct in the next edition.

> I do not deny that I am somewhat eccentrik. Had I been numbered among the calm, sedate, concentric men of the world, I should never, in all probability, have had such children as mine have been. Only don't set me in my fury to burning hearthrugs, sawing off the backs of chairs, and tearing my wife's silk gowns . . . I am not in the least offended at your telling me that I have faults: I have many and, being a Daughter of Eve, I doubt not that you also have some. Let us both try to be wiser and better as Time recedes and Eternity advances.

Miss Lane is not able to throw much new light on Emily, and she rejects the apocryphal suppositions that have been variously aired. We don't know the proximate cause of her becoming a recluse, but perhaps the conditioning cause is to be found in the "little books," a great mass of minute handwritten manuscripts decipherable only by a magnifying glass, whose significance Mrs. Gaskell did not perceive. It was an American researcher, Miss F. E. Ratchford, who discovered that they are "a closely connected series of poems, novels, histories, and dramas, having a common setting and common characters," written through sixteen years. "This highly complex creation took so strong a hold on their imaginations that all four children passed their entire youth under its influence, and even in maturity remained addicted to it like a drug." This never-outgrown fictional world of their childhood, in which the Brontës identified themselves with gallantly wicked Byronic characters, unfitted them

formance of *Butterfly* to a country accustomed to its own interpretation of it for almost fifty years, the Puccini score was chosen. Mr. Fujiwara philosophically says that he "thinks it of sufficient significance that they can make American people know what Japanese customs are by dint of Puccini's refined music."

The brochures announcing the tour of the company emphasize that this is a North American good will tour. It is not the fault of the company, nor of North America, but a little ironic on the part of Puccini that in his score, following the cast of characters, is written the line: "At Nagasaki. Present day." ROCK FERRIS

THEATER

Preview of 1953-54

No matter how many theatrical seasons go through the almost regular cycle from exciting rumor to disappointing reality, with the coming of each September diehard theater addicts pay renewed heed to stirrings along Broadway. Although nobody can accurately single out the likeliest entries from among the hundred-odd productions waiting in the wings, it is impossible to resist the impulse to make predictions.

As things look this September serious drama seems scantily represented on fall lists, and it appears to be a good guess that comic banter will provide the season's best entertainment. Although there is much glitter and activity in the ateliers where our popular musicals are born, advance trumpetings don't ring as clear this year as they have in the past.

Musical comedy will no doubt be as avidly demanded and paid for as it has always been, but this year there will be fewer candidates in the extravaganza class. Nevertheless, when this is read, *Carnival in Flanders* by George Oppenheimer and Herbert Fields, with John Raitt and Dolores Gray, should be doing business at the Century. So should *Anna Russell and Her Little Show,* an intimate revue featuring Miss Russell's satires on "serious" vocalists, certainly funny enough to deserve some kind of renown. Herbert and Dorothy Fields' projected frolic at Coney Island, *By the Beautiful Sea,* holds a part with top billing for versatile Shirley Booth. Billy Rose *and* St. John Terrell may come forward with two musical settings of the Orpheus legend, the latter's with the heart-warming title *To Hell with Orpheus.* Ballerina Renée Jeanmaire is expected in *The Girl in Pink Tights,* while Rouben Mamoulian and Maxwell Anderson have concocted an affair called *The Devil's Hornpipe.*

If the musical future doesn't seem to burgeon richly with creative élan, neither does drama appear too likely to set Shubert Alley on fire. Robert Anderson's play about a boy erroneously accused of homosexuality, *Tea and Sympathy,* will open starring Deborah Kerr. *A Pin to See the Peepshow,* by F. Tennyson Jesse (Lord Tennyson's grandniece) and H. M. Harwood, is based on England's sensational Thompson-Bywaters murder. By far the most anticipated event in serious theater is Paul Gregory's production of *The Caine Mutiny Court Martial,* in which Henry Fonda will play the defendant's lawyer, Greenwald. This courtroom drama taken from the best-selling novel will be presented in a sparsely severe setting and adhere faithfully to the original text.

The 1953-54 season will unquestionably belong to comedy. Perhaps life itself of late has been so overloaded with drama for so many that it's too painful to do anything else but laugh at ourselves.

Whatever the reason, the comic horizons are pleasant. Mary Martin—back home from England—will be starring with Charles Boyer in Joshua Logan's staging of Norman Krasna's *Kind Sir;* the advance sale is, of course, enormous. Josephine Hull, beloved by practically everybody, at last seems to have a play capable of housing her comic genius. Written by master George S. Kaufman, aided by Howard Teichmann, *The Solid Gold Cadillac* mulls over what might happen if a female stockholder, with Hokinson-like vacuity, decided to attend a giant corporation's annual meeting. *The Paradise Question* is a comedy involving U.N. diplomats; John Patrick's amusing report on occupation troops in Okinawa, *The Teahouse of the August Moon,* is due in October, under the aegis of Maurice Evans. Katherine Cornell stars in a new play with comic overtones, *The Prescott Proposals;* Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne will probably appear in the long-awaited *Quadrille.*

An English long-run hit, *The Little Hut,* by Nancy Mitford and André Roussin, is on its way through the customs; Samuel Taylor's *Sabrina Fair* stars Joseph Cotten and, at last report, Margaret Sullavan in a story about a girl who has some amusing difficulties readjusting to American life after several years in Paris. George Axelrod, up-and-coming author of *The Seven Year Itch,* signs his name to *Pffft!,* subtitled *The Heart-warming Chronicle of a Happy Divorce.* Edward Chodorov turns his urbane talents to the satiric aspects of the psychoanalytic couch in *Oh, Men! Oh, Women!,* and Dorothy Parker and Arnaud d'Usseau have collaborated in a dissonant hymn to predatory widows and divorcées pining away in residence at the Plaza, in *The Ladies of the Corridor.* The names of Edna Best and Betty Field will be back on the marquee for this one.

All in all, the prospects are bright for some light-hearted nights along Broadway in the months ahead. NICOLAS MONJO