

simple and of solid green.

The bloodroots are closely followed by jack-in-the-pulpit. She is a "tomboy" as exemplified by her name and looks radiant and aggressive in an entire suit of green with cool green accessories.

There is a thorn in at least every bush, and on the other side of the tree trunk against which I am leaning is the always uninvited poison ivy. She comes like a demon, seeming ruder this year than last. She is bent upon unpleasantness for those unfortunate enough to come into contact with her. Insanely jealous of the charm and beauty she can never possess, she de-

lights in making people suffer. "Ivy" is climbing over the tree trunk and crawling along the ground. She cannot sit or stand quietly during this delightful performance so graciously given by spring. Her three-fingered hands greedily grab the ground.

The show is ending. The spring models are framed inside draperies of fingery, overhanging branches. They daintly stand, slightly swaying either in keeping time with the slowly fading music or with the caressing breeze. Dusk is gradually descending like a curtain. The docile blossoms nod their heads in grateful appreciation of their success.

## Informal Interview

BETTY JEAN WIRTH

While eating dinner at the Indianapolis Athletic Club the other evening, we noticed an old gentleman dining alone next to us. His loneliness was so apparent that we invited him over to our table. We were quite surprised to find that we had a celebrity in our midst when he joined us. The old gentleman was Meredith Nicholson, American essayist and novelist.

Mr. Nicholson moved to our table with great muscular difficulty and as he sat down said, "You know I'm crippled." While Rog talked to him about current affairs, I had a chance to study the old gentleman. Mr. Nicholson was well up in years and to me was the picture of a kindly old gentleman. His hair was snow-white and his eyes a faded blue. He was excessively nervous and smoked one cigarette after another. The one question I asked him about his literary career was "How did you start to write?"

Mr. Nicholson said, "When I was a boy in Crawfordsville, I and a companion decided we'd never get any place if we didn't learn shorthand. Shorthand led me to newspaper work, for I covered lectures and political addresses for different papers. While working on newspapers, I wrote essays and books on the side." Then he asked me, "Have you read any of my works?"

I replied that I was acquainted with some of his novels, "The House of a Thousand Candles" and "A Hoosier Chronicle," but not his essays.

Meredith Nicholson interrupted, saying, "I don't want to be remembered for my novels, for I don't feel that they are my best work. I would rather be remembered for my essays, for I feel they express much more my writing ability." During our discourse he repeated the same thought again and again and again, "You

know they just published a new edition of "The House of a Thousand Candles" last month." Mr. Nicholson's memory has lost its keenness and has left him with just a few deep-planted thoughts that keep coming back into his mind.

While recalling his past, he told of his friendship with Riley. He was very upset about a woman writing for the Star who evidently had called Riley a drunkard, for Mr. Nicholson said, "Riley was not a drunkard, for I knew the man all the time he was living. He had no home life and lived with his different friends the greater part of his life. Anyone of them could vouch for his character." He recalled many incidents about Riley which seemed to kindle the flame of days gone by.

Knowing that he had been an ambassador to several South American countries,

I asked him, "How did you like South America?"

"I would be in better health and better financial condition if I had never been an ambassador," he said. "Their life is a lazy one because of the bad climate." After this he resorted to saying, "Do you know they put out a new edition of "The House of a Thousand Candles?" "

As I recall the old gentleman, it seems impossible that a person of his past ability should be lost with old age. His loneliness reaches out and touches one's heart when he says, "Do come back and see me again, for I'm just a lonely old man waiting for St. Peter or the other fellow." Moving his chair away from the table, he rose, saying, "My children always call me every evening at this time, so I must return to my room."

## Herr Muller

MARY FRITSCHÉ

*(This sketch is based on a short story, "The Lord of Marutea," by James Norman Hall. The setting is one of the islands of French Polynesia. Forrest, a man employed by a German motion picture company, comes to make a picture of island life and finds Marutea ruled by Herr Muller, the German island trader who has established himself there.)*

Representing an absolute revolt against paternal domination and against a German society bounded by convention, the character of Otto Muller is revealed through his own statement of his youth, his treatment of Forrest and of the natives of Marutea, and is antilimacti-

cally shown by the destruction of the grand piano in the concert hall. The conflict within Otto Muller arises from a delusion, the chief medium of self-deception being his music. Episodic action and a cumulative effect are devices leading to the interpretation and to the understanding of the character of Otto Muller.

From the lips of Muller himself comes the story of his youth. The fourth of eight sons, he was destined for an army career. While his father supervised the future of his children with ironclad determination, he allowed Otto to develop his musical ability as an accomplishment, not a career. At eighteen Otto was "commanded" to return from Munich that he