

**A GAME AT LOVE;
AND OTHER PLAYS.
[NEW YORK-1906]**

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A Game at Love; And Other Plays. [New York-1906] by George Sylvester Viereck

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GEORGE SYLVESTER VIERECK

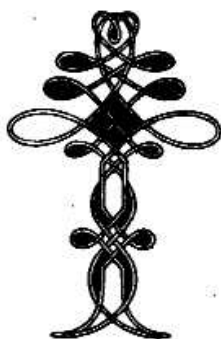
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AND OTHER PLAYS

BY

GEORGE SYLVESTER VIERECK



NEW YORK
BRENTANO'S
1906

MVR

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PREFACE

THESE plays are unplayable. They were not, at least, written with an eye to the stage. The last I have called a *Morality*, a name that could hardly, with propriety, be applied to the others. They point out no moral, they teach no lesson, and the reader may feel assured that the obvious interpretation is in no case the author's own. Certain truths, as I have seen them, are here set down, but I decline to be held responsible for anything that my characters may say or do.

I have taken the climacteric moments of imaginary novels and have embodied them in dramatic sketches. This method constitutes a rebellion against that species of psychological fiction which, in six hundred pages, succeeds in telling us nothing. For as intellectual intercourse between nations becomes more intimate, and the body of literature of each country is augmented by that of the others, it will inevitably become a requirement that the individual work of art shall be diminished in bulk. Homer could write a poem in twenty-four books with impunity. Not so the modern artist. Nor is there any legitimate reason why we should take up twice twenty-four hours of a reader's time with a story that could be told no less effectively in ten minutes.

I have laid some stress upon the fact that men and women communicate with each other not by articulate speech alone, but by a quiver of the eye-

PREFACE

lid or a curl of the lip. And I have left nothing unexpressed that seemed to contribute to a desired effect, even at the risk of offending such as would close the mouth of the Muse with that muzzle which, if applied at all, should be confined to that many-headed monster—the press. The expressions, Man-Animal and Woman-Animal, may jar on sensitive souls, who rather than confront a problem of erotics would follow the time-honoured policy of the ostrich; but I know of no combination of words equally decisive and indicative of my meaning.

It may be charged against the dialogue that it is at times unnatural, and that no one of normal sanity would ever dream of speaking the language of the persons in these plays. This may be true or not. Certain it is, that such is the language they *should* have used, and wherever their vocabulary did not suffice, it was the good fortune of the present writer to be able to assist them.

GEORGE SYLVESTER VIERECK

I
A GAME AT LOVE

CHARACTERS

CLARENCE (*forty*)

IRENE (*between thirty and forty*)

EVA (*somewhat younger*)