

THE CHECK LIST

★★★★★ indicate a book of exceptional and lasting merit. ★★★★ a distinguished and valuable work. ★★★ a readable and engaging volume. ★★ a fair performance. ★ an unimpressive book, but with some minor characteristic of value. The absence of stars may be taken to mean the absence of merit.

BIOGRAPHY

★★ BRANDEIS, by Alfred Lief. \$3.00. *Telegraph Press*. A sympathetic biography of the senior Liberal justice of the United States Supreme Court, in which the traditions of the horse-and-buggy days play a very small part. Recommended reading for all forward-looking New Dealers.

★★ HAIG, by Duff Cooper. \$4.00. *Doubleday, Doran*. The Field Marshal of Great Britain during the World War committed a number of egregious mistakes in the military arena, but they are not emphasized here. The result is a sympathetic biography written by an Empire-loving statesman, based in the main on Haig's hitherto unpublished diaries and letters.

★★ PROPHET OF AMERICA, by Newton Dillaway. \$3.00. *Little, Brown*. An earnest and plausible effort to interpret Ralph Waldo Emerson's philosophy in terms of today's problems, with a vociferous denial that the Concord sage was an "easy optimist."

★★ GOMEZ, TYRANT OF THE ANDES, by Thomas Rourke. \$3.50. *Morrow*. Dreadful cruelty in Venezuela, on the Spanish Main. The Tyrant brought his country out of debt, and left it abundantly solvent. He is the only Latin-American statesman who ever outsmarted the Yankee and British concessionaires. Yet his people appear to have been much relieved when old age took him off.

★ MOHAMMED, by Essad Bey. \$2.50. *Longmans, Green*. Simple and homely story of the mystical camel driver who changed the stream of history. As to how much is fact and how much fable, you must take your choice, in company with the most profound savants, for Mohammed ibn Abdallah, ibn Abdelmottalib, ibn Hashim, the Koreishite, is imperfectly documented.

POETRY

★★★★★ COLLECTED POEMS OF FORD MADDOX FORD. \$3.00. *Oxford Press*. An American printing — and high time, too — of the verse of one known chiefly for his prose, but who has written more exact, more individual, and altogether more readable poetry than most of the popular verse-makers of his generation.

★★★ IDEAS OF ORDER, by Wallace Stevens. \$2.00. *Knopf*. A popular reprint of an expensive limited edition previously reviewed, published a year ago, and containing, with the addition of a few new poems, a scant sixty pages.

★★★ THE BAD PARENT'S GARDEN OF VERSE, by Ogden Nash. \$2.00. *Simon & Schuster*. With all his old dexterity and a new straightforward simplicity, Nash shows he still is not only the funniest but the most winning of his class. The Faunteroyish illustrations by Reginald Birch are incongruously, even gorgeously, appropriate.

★★ CALLING WESTERN UNION, by Genevieve Taggard. \$2.00. *Harpers*. A curious mixture of emotions and effects; not a fusion but a confusion of angry protest, high-pitched passion, and genuine poetry by one who once composed pure lyrics.

★★ TIME IN THE ROCK, by Conrad Aiken. \$2.50. *Scribners*. About a hundred more — or are they the same? — preludes which Aiken has been writing and evidently cannot stop improvising: dream-like, hypnotic, garrulous, grandiose, tired, tiresome, sometimes mad, and always richly musical.

★★ THE ASSASSINS, by Frederic Prokosch. \$2.00. *Harpers*. Strangely dislocated, strongly influenced (mostly by Perse and Eliot), but persuasive in its tropical use of language and potent in its imaginative reach.

★★ POEMS OF PEOPLE, by Edgar Lee Masters. \$2.50. *Appleton-Century*. Poems about Catullus, Washington, Boone, De Soto, Andrew Jackson, Perry, and fictional characters in many meters, mostly orthodox. Although the form is more regular and the range wider than *Spoon River Anthology*, the author seems unable to recapture the concision and suggestiveness of his one great work.

★★ ENGLISH SONNETS. Edited by A. T. Quiller-Couch. \$2.00. *Crowell*. A reprint, with a new introduction and some additions, of a collection prepared almost forty years ago, notable for its good taste, certainty, and complete lack of pioneering.

★ HILL GARDEN, by Margaret Widdemer. \$2.00. *Farrar & Rinehart*. Pretty pretty, sometimes pretty funny, but mostly pretty awful.

GREEN GROWS THE LAUREL, by Hazel L. Zimmerman. \$2.00. *Putnam's*. WIND FROM THE HILLS, by Clara Endicott Sears. \$1.50. *Putnam's*. Two revealing examples of how poetry should not be written. Miss Zimmerman is the head of a Western investment house for women, and Miss Sears is a collector whose motto, she says, is "Keep a furnished mind!"

THE TREE OF TIME, by Gertrude Huntington McGiffert. \$2.00. *Putnam's*. A thick volume (250 pages) of thin verse.

HISTORY

★★★ THE WAR IN OUTLINE, by Liddell Hart. \$2.00. *Random House*. Ax-grinders will take issue with Captain Hart's synopsis of the First Armageddon: he will be accused variously of patriotism, treason, pedantry, carelessness, erudition, ignorance. But the job of condensing the War into 285 pages is formidable enough to warrant certain errors. In the main, the Captain has synopsized skillfully.