

Works Progress Administration. I am heretical enough to believe that our renewed interest in the American past has been one way of marking time. I like that interest; I prefer it to the America that once giggled over *Jurgen* and *Main Street*, to expatriate America, to the

America of the lost generation, to the Coolidge obscenities. But they had something to go by — money in the bank, stocks going up, power purring over the radio and out of the Golden Glow. But we? We stand at high noon in a drizzle; and all our prophets seem terribly tired.

THE CHECK LIST

(Continued from front advertising section)

FICTION

THE THIBAULTS, by Roger Martin Du Gard. \$3.00. *Viking*. A rich family chronicle by the winner of last year's Nobel Prize. Remarkable for its characterization, though hardly less outstanding for the vivid picture it gives of a slice of French bourgeois life. For those who like novels solid and satisfying.

DOCTOR ADDAMS, by Irving Fineman. \$2.50. *Random House*. An account, in fiction form, of medical split-personalities — the doctors who work for scientific research institutions, and at the same time try to live human lives of their own. Sex comes in for most of the discussion; it's frank but not objectionable. A really powerful work.

THE YOUNG COSIMA, by Henry Handel Richardson. \$2.50. *Norton*. Another proof that truth is stranger than fiction. If the author lacked historical justification for this story of Cosima Liszt-Wagner, she would be accused of concocting something hopelessly unreal. It's all true, though, and admirable foundation for a novel.

THE MIDDLE PASSAGE, by Roland Barker and William Doerflinger. \$2.50. *Macmillan*. A novel, based on fact, of the slave raids in Africa and the slave ships plying between the Guinea Coast and North America at the beginning of the past century. Extremely readable.

OVER THE MOUNTAIN, by Ruthven Todd. \$2.50. *Knopf*. A combination allegory-melodrama which will appeal to fanciers of curious books. The main character is enabled to see the world with new eyes, and his comments are beautifully caustic. At the same time he indulges in hair-raising heroics. An odd omelet.

SPRING JOURNEY, by Geneva Stephenson. \$2.20. *Macmillan*. Crowded narrative, bearing a strong resemblance to the classic *Broad Highway*, of eighteenth century England. Such immortals as Dr. Johnson and Fielding appear, besides fictional characters whose adventures enable the author to exhibit the life of the time.

HERE COMES A CANDLE, by Storm Jameson. \$2.50. *Macmillan*. A careful novel from a skilful hand, tying together the lives of the various inhabitants of a run-down London mansion-turned-lodging-house. The author restricts herself to the surface of her characters' lives, and you never feel that her heart is in this particular work. As always, though, her technique is excellent.

THE WILD PALMS, by William Faulkner. \$2.50. *Random House*. The story of a young doctor caught in a belated passion, and the story of a convict whom the floodwaters of the Mississippi confront with the unwelcome physical fact of woman, tormenting him to seek speedy return to the monastic security of prison. The two themes alternate in fugue pattern, resolving in the memory of experience for one, and the safety of the prison-cradle for the other. Here is no glib tale of an epoch, but the interplay of the irreducible antitheses of life, attraction and repulsion. A book far above the flood of fiction.

BIOGRAPHY

DIEGO RIVERA: His Life and Times, by Bertram D. Wolfe. \$6.00. *Knopf*. The third book of a trilogy on the life and work of Rivera. No book about the artist could be dull, he is himself so colorful and has led so rich a life. Mr. Wolfe, however, gives us more than a lively biography of the man; he supplies analyses of representative Rivera works, as well as some valuable material on the background and trends of modern painting. Beautifully bound and printed, the book contains effective reproductions of Rivera's oils, sketches, and murals, and a list of Rivera paintings on public view.

ALL IN THE DAY'S WORK, by Ida M. Tarbell. \$3.50. *Macmillan*. The most important memoir by one of the redoubtable muckrakers since Steffens' *Autobiography* — and Miss Tarbell's most important book since *The History of the Standard Oil Company* (1904). Miss Tarbell did not follow up her masterpiece and other writers carried on her

fight against boss and corporation rule, until their magazines were physically destroyed and they themselves dispersed. Miss Tarbell's mounting conservatism did not save her from equal loss of influence — just why, is clearly though unconsciously explained. Those who see a need for bridging the gap the World War created between the past and the present, will find this balanced, self-critical story helpful and challenging.

MISS BAX OF THE EMBASSY, by Emily Bax. \$3.00. *Houghton Mifflin*. Memoirs of an English girl who was stenographer at the American Embassy in London during the reigns there of Joseph H. Choate, Whitelaw Reid, and Walter H. Page. Filled with the kind of gossip one might expect, mainly about the social and personal side of embassy life and the troubles caused by socially ambitious women.

FREMONT, by Allan Nevins. \$5.00. *Appleton-Century*. "A career that was never quite tragic, never quite heroic, but always in limbo between the two — always in the classical sense tragicomic" — such is the story of Fremont, explorer, geographer, soldier, and first Republican standard-bearer. More important than the man himself was the period, as exciting a chapter as any in the history of America. Painstaking scholarship, plus an unerring sense for the dramatic, make this a brilliant piece of historical writing.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A GERMAN REBEL, by Toni Sender. \$3.00. *Vanguard*. An ambitious girl who became one of the leaders of the Social Democrats tells her story matter-of-factly, and gives some personal lights on well-known personalities of pre-Hitler Germany. While she provides no sensational new insight into the development of Germany, the book is worth reading as a human document.

I WANTED TO BE AN ACTRESS, by Katharine Cornell. As told to Ruth Woodbury Sedgwick. \$3.00. *Random House*. An account of Miss Cornell's career to date,