

here's your Baedeker, prompt copy, almanac, dictionary, and thesaurus. And, if you have got the notion that Mr. Lewis is a has-been, that's where you are wrong. The old maestro can still write rings around 90 per cent of the younger fictionists. A novel mellow and entertaining, as well as informative.

WILD GEESE CALLING, by Stewart Edward White. \$2.75. *Doubleday*. Another historical piece, about Alaska in the 'Nineties, this time. Mr. White has written 47 books and may overtake Heinz before he is through. If you are ignorant of Mr. White's books, you are sure ignorant — or very young. This novel has plenty of gun play and the shivers of the frozen North. If you pretend you don't care for that sort of foolishness, why are you always looking through the papers to discover at what neighborhood movie house a good western might be showing?

FOLLOW THE DRINKING GOURD, by Frances Gaither. \$2.50. *Macmillan*. This novel is so good that one can only wish — without expecting — that it will have a wide audience. It is about the Negroes and whites in ante-bellum days in the Black Bottom Land of Alabama, — not in the Old Massacrinoline-marigold-and-jasmine school of romance about the South, but honest, authentic and memorable.

SCATTERGOOD BAINES RETURNS, by Clarence Budington Kelland. \$2. *Harpers*. This character, beloved by millions of readers, is in the great tradition of American literature — the tradition of Ben Franklin and Mark Twain. This is a new collection of stories in which the Vermont shopkeeper is the chief cook and bottle-washer. That's all Scattergood's fans need to know, and they are a discerning crowd of people.

MR. SKEFFINGTON, by Elizabeth. \$2.50. *Doubleday*. Magnificent story of what happened to a woman at fifty who suddenly

realized that she was no longer the great beauty she once was.

THE TWENTY-FIFTH HOUR, by Herbert Best. \$2.50. *Random House*. A novel in the best early H. G. Wells tradition about life in the future. Totalitarian wars have wiped out nearly all vestiges of civilization, except a former British army captain, his mistress and his command of soldiers. There is a plague, too, and survivors on a desert island. It is also crammed with "gravy," i.e., with the way of a man with a maid and vice versa.

221B, STUDIES IN SHERLOCK HOLMES, edited by Vincent Starrett. \$2.50. *Macmillan*. The Baker Street Irregulars contribute an illuminating volume of Holmesiana. Such subjects are discussed as *The Care and Feeding of Sherlock Holmes, Was Sherlock Holmes an American?, The Other Boarder*. A must for followers of the greatest detective.

NON-FICTION

WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO EUROPE, by Geoffrey T. Garratt. \$2.75. *Bobbs-Merrill*. This member of the Cassandra Club in London (whose members tear the hides off Chamberlain in a refined British sort of way) and excellent foreign correspondent and commentator for the Manchester *Guardian*, tells us just who are running things in England and just what kind of rackets they run. He advises Americans to keep out of the war; but he thinks we ought to give England moral support. A valuable book.

FAMILY CRISIS, by Sherlock Bronson Glass. \$2.50. *Reynal & Hitchcock*. Our nomination for the best non-fiction book of the year, so far, except Carl Snyder's "*Capital: the Creator*." This autobiographical fragment by a man who is now professor of English at the University of Nebraska, supplements, in a strangely human way, Snyder's chief contention: that a capitalist is not necessarily an ogre. Nine hundred and ninety-nine times out of a thousand, in this country, he is a fel-

low who has saved up some money and wants to run a business where he won't have to take any guff from the boss. Professor Glass's father had that idea: he became a capitalist. He bought himself a laundry where he could hire people to work for him. And what a mess he ran into! He, his wife and all their kids had to work about eighteen hours a day and still they had labor troubles, fires, and "politician trouble." Glass *père* got his family into such a hole by being a capitalist that one can only reflect that there must be a reward in heaven for birds like him, since he has a son alive who can recite this family history with charm and affectionate humor, as well as honesty. This is a beautiful book. If you aren't one of those rich people and you are about middle age, this is something you have been through. If you *are* one of those rich people, even if you are Julius Spencer Morgan or Nelson Rockefeller, you have got an idea of what Glass *père* went through, and this book will be finely heart-warming to you. It is a thin but marvellous slice of the saga of American life.

THE GUILLOTINE AT WORK, by P. G. Maximoff. \$3.50. *Alexander Berkman Fund, Chicago*. The most ambitious attempt in English to tell the world about the fate of political prisoners in the Soviet Union; thoroughly documented and an invaluable source book for students of the Russian Revolution. The author contends that Marxism inevitably leads to the sort of odious police state which developed in Russia.

STALIN, CZAR OF ALL THE RUSSIAS, by Eugene Lyons. \$2.50. *Lippincott*. A straightforward account of the Soviet dictator's career, from the peasant-cobbler's hut to the Kremlin. The author has stripped the story to its dramatic essentials, with a minimum of encumbering theory, and succeeds in making an extraordinary figure credible.

STALIN'S KAMPF, edited by M. R. Werner. \$2.50. *Howell, Soskin*. From the speeches and writings of Stalin, Mr. Werner

has selected and assembled passages which give a more or less organized record of the dictator's views in his own words. Among contemporary statesmen, Stalin is probably the most inarticulate. His style is dully wooden. But it is as living history rather than literature that Mr. Werner offers this first-rate piece of research and editing.

THREE PORTRAITS, by Emil Ludwig, \$1.50. *Alliance Book Corporation*. Brief biographical essays on Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin which add exactly nothing to the sum-total of our knowledge of these dictators. Breezy superficialities are offered with an air of profundity — in short, Emil Ludwig at his worst. The sketch of Stalin, for anyone who is at all familiar with the Caucasian's career, sounds like a diligent compilation of half-truths, bad guesses and propagandist legends.

TWELVE AGAINST ALCOHOL, by Herbert Ludwig Nossen, M.D. \$2.50. *Harrison-Hilton*. Exceedingly frank case histories, told by twelve patients in the first person, of the conquest of dipsomania. The primary purpose of the book is medical, but the twelve stories are interesting, a few of them stirring, as sheer human documents.

THE STORY OF ART, The Lives and Times of the Great Masters, by Regina Shoolman and Charles Slatkin. *Halcyon House*. Another of the oversized, lavish, beautifully printed collections of color reproductions — 120 of them in this instance, with the text predominating. Simply written for that average American.

BEYOND THE CLINICAL FRONTIERS, by Edward A. Strecker, M.D. \$2.00. *Norton*. Based on his Salmon Lectures before the New York Academy of Medicine, this little volume by an eminent psychiatrist presents a fascinating study of crowd behavior. His findings are especially pertinent to the current mob-run world.

THE OPEN FORUM

STORM OVER THE CARIBBEAN

SIR: In his article, *No More West Indies*, in your March issue, Mr. Tom S. Hyland levels his guns at the Make Europe Pay War Debts Committee, and at our national Chairman, Senator Ernest Lundeen. He completely obscures the fundamental national defense issue which serves to make the acquisition of European-owned islands in American waters a simple and an easy method for Europe to square up in some measure on the billions in war debts which have been saddled on the American taxpayers.

In his diatribe concerning West Indies "poorhouses" your author makes no mention of Bermuda. He could hardly consider Bermuda poverty-stricken. Senator Lundeen, who visited Puerto Rico a year ago, tells us Mr. Hyland's analysis of conditions there is at variance with current facts. Shortly after your article appeared, Senator Robert R. Reynolds, one of the many to join our movement, introduced into the *Congressional Record* statistics which give an entirely different picture of the economic situation in many of the West Indies than that presented by Mr. Hyland. In justice to our Committee and in the interests of accuracy, I believe it is only right that you direct your readers' attention to the *Congressional Record* of March 4 and 13, pages 3508-3512 and 4320-4324.

Outstanding naval and military authorities have published dramatic reasons for doing substantially what our Committee urges. Major George Fielding Eliot, for example, has pointed out that our defense in this area rests on Puerto Rico, and contrasted the holes in our Atlantic island outpost system with the very good island outpost system we now have in the Pacific, which serves both offensive and defensive purposes. Moreover, I refer interested readers to the leading article

in the February issue of the semi-official *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, wherein Lieutenant-Commander Isaiah Olch, USN, devotes eleven pages to *A Résumé of National Interests in the Caribbean Area*. Will your author attempt to refute such statements as the following?

"The importance of our position in the Caribbean area and along the South and Latin-American coasts can not be over-impressed upon anyone interested in the future safety of the United States. The former naval base at St. Thomas has been abandoned while in that same key area of the Northeastern section of the Caribbean we have failed to develop any extensive naval facilities in Puerto Rican waters. . . . Perhaps the time will come for us to withdraw from European and Far Eastern spheres in the face of concerted action by foreign powers before we realize that the heritage left to us in the form of a fundamental and progressive development of interest in the Caribbean and in South America has been lost. . . ."

The *MERCURY* will be performing a public service in the interest of accuracy, in bringing the above authoritative military and naval defense opinions to the attention of its readers.

PRESCOTT DENNETT,
*Treasurer, Make Europe Pay
War Debts Committee.*

*Washington,
D. C.*

SIR: Since when did the change of sovereignty of Puerto Rico deprive the island of its coffee industry? Puerto Rican coffee has always been sold in Europe — and not altogether in Spain as your article says — before and after the occupation.