

Gospel," "The Passion Drama," "Christ as Redeemer and Savior," "Afterwards," and "Christ Universal." Many of the selections are excellent, and these alone make the volume worthwhile. But the work would have been enormously better if greater thought had been given to the editing. What possible reason can there be for including the jingles of Geraldine Farrar, Katherine Lee Bates, and Howard S. Bliss alongside the work of Tennyson, T. S. Eliot and Robert Browning? And why include anything by William E. Barton, Manuel Komroff, and Anderson M. Scruggs?

THE QUEEN'S AWARDS, 1946, edited by Ellery Queen. \$2.75. *Little, Brown*. This is a collection of the prize-winning stories from the first annual story contest of *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*. It includes a wide variety of some of the best short crime fiction now being produced. First prize went to Manly Wade Wellman for "Star for a Warrior," a tale of crime on an Indian reservation, and of a young Indian detective. Among the second prize winners were William Faulkner, with his surging, powerful style; T. S. Stribling, Pulitzer prize winner who has turned his attention of late, and most engagingly, to matters criminal; and Helen McCloy, whose "Chinoiserie," a rich story of violence and intrigue in the Peking of 1860, with a colonel of the Oussurian Cossacks, as detective, is a literary piece of considerable merit. Some of the other contributors are such old hands as Philip MacDonald, Manning Coles, Michael Innes, and Craig Rice. There are, of course, weak spots in the assortment, but several of the stories are quite good, and at least two (those by Faulkner and McCloy) are first rate from any viewpoint, criminal or no.

SELECTED WRITINGS OF GERTRUDE STEIN, edited with an introduction by Carl Van Vechten. \$3.50. *Random House*. Mr. Van Vechten has selected "at least a sample of practically every period and every manner in Gertrude Stein's career from the earliest to the latest." The anthology apparently is a fair one, for it has the blessings of Miss Stein herself, who wrote a "message" for it shortly before her death. Though a considerable portion of what she wrote was a form of literary fraud or, at the least, brash non-

sense, she did influence many writers (particularly Sherwood Anderson and Ernest Hemingway). The influence was generally a deplorable one, since it made some writers think that unintelligibility was an especially commendable species of profundity. Mr. Van Vechten's introduction is poorly written and coy in manner. His last line is this: "Dear Gertrude, may I do a little carressing myself and say truthfully A Collection is a Collection is a Collection?"

## MUSIC

HAYDN, *A Good Life*, by David Ewen. \$2.75. *Holt*. This biography of Papa Haydn is based upon a sound knowledge of his life and music. It is addressed to older children, and by some strange tradition this gives the biographer the right to fictionalize what the composer said in his most intimate moments. For example, when Haydn, a married man, renounced the love of the widow Mrs. Schroeter, this is what happened, according to Mr. Ewen: "Taking his hands in hers she clasped them tightly. 'I understand, Joseph. Believe me, I understand.' 'I knew you would — because you are so much like me.'" Is such shoddiness really necessary in juvenile biography? A fairly detailed chronology is appended.

THE MUSIC OF TCHAIKOVSKY, edited by Gerald Abraham. \$3.75. *Norton*. The music of Tchaikovsky has rarely been given the honor of severe criticism: it has generally been dismissed with a condescending sneer. Only lately has a more mature attitude begun to appear in a few of the more intelligent critical columns. The facts about the Russian have always been pretty clear: he wrote a considerable amount of maudlin tunes, some of them in appallingly poor taste. But he also wrote much music of very considerable merit in both the larger and smaller forms. His chamber music has been dreadfully neglected, though several of his contributions in this department are of the first order. In this book, compiled by a distinguished English critic, several authorities take up the various aspects of Tchaikovsky's work — his symphonies, his opera, his concerti, his ballets, his songs, his incidental music and his religious music. All the chapters are very ably done.

# THE OPEN FORUM

## MR. SCHWELLENBACH COMMENTS

SIR: Your letter . . . directing my attention to Vivien B. Keatley's article, "America's Displaced Persons," in the October issue of *THE AMERICAN MERCURY* is deeply appreciated. Mrs. Keatley's excellent article portrays vividly the seriousness of a problem which has been of concern to me for many years, the plight of the migrant farm worker. The *AMERICAN MERCURY* staff is to be commended highly for bringing the existence of such conditions to the attention of the general public.

It will be of interest to you and to the editors of your magazine to know that in May of this year, Major General Graves B. Erskine, USMC, Administrator of the Retraining and Reemployment Administration in this Department, established a Federal Interagency Committee on Migrant Labor to study the problems of migrant workers and also to suggest possible action toward improving working and living conditions. . . .

The functions of this Committee, as stipulated in the Administrative Order setting it up, are "to review existing legal authority and administrative machinery of the various Government agencies to determine how living and labor standards of migrant workers in industry, transportation and agriculture can be developed and improved" and "to submit appropriate recommendations as to . . . corrective action."

The membership of this Committee is composed of representatives of the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Labor, the Federal Security Agency and the Railroad Retirement Board. Qualified consultants from various other public and private agencies are assisting the Committee on its work.

At the present time, the Committee is in the process of preparing its complete report and recommendations on all phases of the migrant labor problem. Just as soon as it is available in final form, I will see that you receive a copy.

I am also referring your letter to General Erskine. I am certain that he will agree with me that your magazine has performed a valuable public service.

L. B. SCHWELLENBACH  
*Secretary of Labor*

*Washington, D. C.*

## KONE AND DEVOE

SIR: In your November issue are two articles that appeal strongly to the thinking reader; namely, "Progress in Science" by Eugene H. Kone and "Down to Earth" by Alan Devoe. The first article expands our conception of the universe, and the second emphasizes the unity or "wholeness of nature," as the author puts it.

Our mental concepts must expand as science progresses; our minds must be continually in the making. With each discovery there must come a readjustment of our ideas, our mental concepts, our beliefs, and our theories. With the continuous accumulation of scientific data — new truths are being revealed, new aspects of old truths thrust upon us, new mental horizons established, and new visions created.

We must anticipate further readjustments. While the fundamental verities do not change, our interpretations of relationships are being modified from time to time. To the extent that we are receptive to these discoveries and attempt to adjust our mental concepts to them, do we make progress. . . .

ROBERT C. BARNETT

*Jefferson City, Mo.*

## PROPAGANDA IN RUSSIA

SIR: Regarding Neal Stanford's article "Anti-American Propaganda In Russia" in the November 1946 *MERCURY* I find I have a bit to say.

In view of statements reputed to be reliable to the effect that Stalin's fundamental purpose is first, last and all the time, a war on capitalism, no one need be surprised at the tenor of Soviet propaganda. Since the U. S. is the chief obstacle to "world revolution" it is only natural that we should be the prime target.

At this time it might be well to recall the words of Lincoln to the effect that a nation half slave and half free cannot long endure. In my estimation, that phrase should now read: *A world half slave and half free cannot long endure.* So long as there is totalitarian government in the world there can be no permanent peace.

LY L. MILLER

*Salem, Ore.*