

and sentimentality. The product at times is literary indigestion.

BIOGRAPHY

THE CASE OF EZRA POUND, by Charles Norman. \$1.50. *Bodley Press*. This little book probably contains most of the important facts about the sad case of Ezra Pound, a poet of tremendous gifts but also a good deal of a fool in the realms of economics and politics. He broadcast for Mussolini during the war, and the United States government inaugurated treason proceedings against him, but on the advice of a board of doctors the Federal court found him of "unsound mind" and he is at present in St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington, D. C. Mr. Norman reviews Pound's life and work intelligently and he also incorporates remarks by E. E. Cummings, William Carlos Williams, Louis Zukofsky, F. O. Matthiessen and Conrad Aiken.

THE YOUNG HENRY ADAMS, by Ernest Samuels. \$4.50. *Harvard*. Here is a painstaking study of Adams' college years, the period as secretary to an ambassador father, the grand tour, the semesters as youthful professor of history at Harvard. We encounter him in the vicissitudes of the Civil War, lending his prestige and accomplishments to an important political journal, and helping to give impetus to the reform movements of the 1860s and 1870s. Mr. Samuels would have us see Henry Adams as a brilliant young idealist, one of the unrecognized leaders of his age, a master of the art of politics. Whatever the merits of this estimate, Adams rarely emerges as a human being in the book. Instead, he appears to be a rather stuffy young man, with few flashes of humor and simplicity to rescue him from being a bore.

LAND OF MILK AND HONEY, by W. L. White. \$3.00. *Harper*. The biography of a young Soviet citizen who departed, with no regrets, from the Russian zone of Europe at the war's end, and managed to remain in the West despite the bullying of NKVD

agents outside the USSR. Although "Vasil Kotov" — the man's name was changed by Mr. White, for the usual reasons — was not a person of any eminence in the land he left behind, the story he has to tell is well worth listening to, if only because of the forceful demonstration that the impact of totalitarianism is felt even by the youngest and obscurest of Stalin's subjects: his father, mother and sister were all caught up in the network of forced labor camps, and even his young love affairs were warped and twisted by the ideological demands of the Communist Party. A neat job of biography.

"YELLOW KID" WEIL, *The Autobiography of America's Master Swindler*, as told to W. T. Brannon. \$3.75. *Ziff-Davis*. This book is less an autobiography than an elongated feature story, atrociously written and organized. But the material is so intrinsically funny that Mr. Brannon's prose ceases to irritate after a while. The success of Mr. Weil's elaborate schemes for fleecing men in search of easy money — ranging from his sale of a money-making machine to his collections for phoney information on horse races — appears to indicate that crime, in his day at least, could be made to pay. A worthwhile bit of Americana.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

THE LAW OF THE SOVIET STATE, by Andrei Y. Vyshinsky. \$15.00. *Macmillan*. This ponderous tome was originally completed by Vyshinsky in 1938, just at about the time he was polishing off an assortment of Trotskyists, fascists, counter-revolutionaries and like enemies of humanity in the famous Moscow Purge Trials. Since then the work has become the standard Soviet text on the subject in all Russian universities and law schools, but this is the first time it has been presented in an English translation. For the most part, the book is a turgid, unreadable exegesis of the procedure supposedly followed under the Stalin Constitution, and of the privileges supposedly accorded those men and women fortunate enough to have

been born into a Marxist society. There is also a detailed examination of the deficiencies of legal processes in the West, and a good deal of more-or-less irrelevant rhetoric in dispraise of Stalin's various enemies.

PROFILE OF EUROPE, by Sam Welles. \$3.50. *Harper*. A sort of postwar edition of *Inside Europe*, which does not suffer by comparison with the original though it is less comprehensive. Mr. Welles, a foreign correspondent for *Time* magazine, writes from the perspective of a private-enterprise liberal; but he writes with sympathetic understanding of the semi-socialist governments of Western Europe, which, he believes, will be able to preserve their free institutions and (if there is no war) attain a fair degree of prosperity with the help of ERP. For the Soviet régime, to which half of this volume is devoted, he has, to put it mildly, rather less respect. Because of the devastation of the war, and also because of the natural inefficiency of totalitarianism, he does not think that the USSR can become industrially powerful until some time in the 1960s.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

LISTEN, LITTLE MAN! by Wilhelm Reich, with illustrations by William Steig. \$3.00. *Orgone Institute Press*. This slender volume appears to be Wilhelm Reich's answer to the moral uplifters who have, for twenty-odd years, been persecuting him for his extreme views on love and sex. The author's mood wavers between satire and outraged indignation, so that it is never quite certain just how seriously he means to be taken. It is clear enough, however, that he has a low opinion of the "little man," whom he regards as an emotionally frigid boor, consumed by self-hatred and tending to self-destruction. William Steig's drawings, which come perilously close to parodying the text at times, add a lot to the book. An interesting document.

GREEN MOUNTAIN FARM, by Elliott Merrick. \$3.50. *Macmillan*. Elliott Merrick

has done what so many of his contemporaries vehemently promise themselves they will do at some far distant date; he has retired to a farm in New England and found the problem of existence far less complicated and infinitely more peaceful than he had ever imagined. This book has resulted from his love affair with Vermont, and he has written a lyric tribute to the simple life in which he literally revels. What his farm lacks in modern conveniences, it more than makes up in the opportunity it affords for using one's own hands and common sense, for welcome solitude and the resulting thought, for the observation of the wonders of the seasons. Here is a piece of work that charms; it is eulogistic, yet tastefully restrained; it is humorous, but finds its humor at no one's expense; it might be said to contain a moral, but it is far from didactic.

THE SCIENCES

A WAY OF LIFE, by Sir William Osler. \$1.50. *The Remington-Putnam Book Company*. This is a reprint of a celebrated lecture delivered by the famous Canadian-American physician to Yale students some fifty years ago. It is a plea for non-worrying, for cultivating "the habit of a life of Day-Tight Compartments," of concentrating on the good of each day, for "The future is today — there is no tomorrow." Coming from a quack such counsel can be quackery, but coming from a man of Sir William's scientific spirit and broad culture, it achieves real loftiness, and is inspiring in the truest sense. There is a brief introduction by Dr. John R. Oliver, another scientist who graced the Johns Hopkins University.

YOUR DIET FOR LONGER LIFE, by James A. Tobey, Dr. P.H. \$3.50. *Funk*. Dr. Tobey is an old and valued contributor to the *MERCURY*, and his clear and simple style of writing about medical and public health matters is well known. Here, in a small volume, he tells virtually all that is definitely known (in succinct form, of course) about the right way to reduce, the protecting foods,