

In Our Readers' Opinion

It is reassuring to find an American periodical that is willing to publish an honest critique . . . Dr. Szczerbowski may be somewhat extravagant in his praise, but it does those of us who believe in honesty, even among critics, immense service to have him show up certain small critics who ought to and probably do know better . . .

REV. THOMAS F. OPIE, D.D.
GREAT BARRINGTON, MASS.

I have just finished reading the critique on "The Voice of Margaret Truman" by a Doktor Putzi Szczerbowski. I have never read anything so absurd in my life. Who in hell does the "Doktor" think he is kidding, or is he fishing for a job in Washington?

JOHN T. SACKETT
MEADVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA

Regarding your critique "The Voice of Margaret Truman" in the February MERCURY:

Jonathan Swift lives again! Congratulations.

ROSINE I. BUCHER, JOHN R. BUCHER
PITCAIRN, PENNSYLVANIA

The height of bad taste and cruelty was reached in the current issue with the supposedly clever critique on Margaret Truman's voice. I cannot imagine a more uncalled-for and offensive contribution.

I wish THE NEW AMERICAN MERCURY a short life.

MRS. J. L. MIDDLETON
CORNWALL BRIDGE, CONNECTICUT

I have been reading H. L. Mencken since 1917, believe it or not. I hope he will be well enough to have his nurse read him all that you have said and put in this issue, for I am sure it will give him a keen desire to recover.

MAY EDEN
NEW YORK CITY, N. Y.

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The whole magazine is most excellent, but — *can you possibly keep it up?* Somehow I doubt it. It's too damned good to buy. Enclosed is my year's subscription. At this rate, I wouldn't miss a copy for anything. Seldom, very seldom, do I read a magazine from cover to cover — but I sure have #1 and #2 of this one.

E. VAN NOSTRAND
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

The best thing that could happen to Mamie Stover is that she gather up her yellow hair, long legs, and high-hung breasts and jump out the nearest porthole. Before the next issue, that is.

MRS. MARIE KOCH
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

You've succeeded in doing what you apparently set out to do; shocked your reader with more revolting *dirt* than I'm accustomed to. I hope you'll soon work through this unpleasant phase and come up for clean fresh air in our wholesome American atmosphere (except in certain slums of course).

HERBERT LEE, B.A. London University, M.A.
University of California
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA

Your article, "Untold Facts in the Korean Disaster," took marvelous guts. Don't let anything stop your crusade, if you can help it! I have notified fifty friends.

L. H. ANDERSON
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Give us more such splendid and enlightening articles as Forrestal (Dec.), Stalin's Bible (Jan.), and Korean Disaster (Feb.) and add plenty of exposés of the rottenness in our present government.

MAX MATTES
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

You are to be congratulated upon having "Alan Devoe on Hunting," even though you knew that some folks were not going to like it, most especially the manufacturers and retailers of guns and shells.

I have known the grief of having birds and animals that were my pets wander off my fenced and protected sanctuary, only to be shot dead, dead, off my own land. And when I hear the *bang! bang!* from guns, instead of being able to wander freely on my own land, I have to hasten into my brick house.

MRS. ATHOS MENABONI
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

I have just finished James Monroe Madison's article and have placed him somewhere between Drew Pearson and Tommy Manville in my category of Men-who-can-be-done-without.

Being the daughter of a naval officer, I have met most of the admirals who served abroad in World War II. I know their "fat" wives and have grown up with their "tweedy" daughters. I would like to hear their comments. Too, it might be enlightening to listen to the voices from the grave — the withering remarks of Mr. Madison's illustrious namesakes!

(MISS) KATHLEEN BRIGGS
BREMERTON, WASHINGTON

In a society where chaos is regent, honest writing is rarely published and truth remains a pariah among the sanctimonious. I am happy to salute THE NEW AMERICAN MERCURY on the basis of the premises you have set forth, even if it doesn't get past the tenth issue. Perhaps fifty years from now, someone will unearth a copy dutifully entered in the back number files and say to himself: "Well, here was someone who tried."

WILLIAM ENGELHARDT
TEHUANTEPEC, MEXICO

Masterpieces of Fraud

By ANDRÉ EMMERICH

THE LATE Dr. Wilhelm Bode, the famous director of the Kaiser Friedrich Museum in Berlin, once declared that Rembrandt in his lifetime had painted seven hundred canvases, of which ten thousand are in America. Yet this same celebrated authority bought a terra-cotta bust of "Flora" for his museum, which he ascribed to Leonardo da Vinci and hailed as a great find, revealing entirely new aspects of that great genius. Sometime afterwards, however, a junior assistant at the museum discovered that the bust was a fraud when he found some strips of newspaper mixed in with the supposedly sixteenth century terra-cotta.

But this was not the first time, nor will it be the last, that even an outstanding expert was taken in by a clever forgery. In 1937, the Treasury Department

prepared a still unpublished report on the free importation of antiques into the United States. From 1906 until 1937, the importation of antiques reached the stupendous total of \$640,665,302. The Treasury Department declares that the estimated value of pictures and statuary entitled to free entry as antiques might be \$160,000,000 while "the balance of the nearly half billion dollars should be considered in the light of a statement by the outstanding English authority, Mr. Herbert Cescinsky, to the effect that 80 per cent of the antiques sold in the English market are fakes. Mr. Cescinsky's statement holds good for all foreign antiques."

An example of this is the case of the imported Corots. Already during the painter's lifetime no fewer than twenty-seven thousand paintings by him were