

The march of time is the real hero, and death and decay the heroines in the saga of the Rowlandsons. Time and change are the puppet masters who pull the strings of the inevitable destiny pursuing this royal American family, to pry it loose from the security of Cliff Tor, its Hudson haven, and set its members free in a hostile world which each conquers in his own way. The Rowlandson Corporation is another important figure, its setting the Jersey meadows, where it survives the panic of 1907 and the roaring 'twenties, only then to crash with so many others. Stephen Mather, of peasant Hungarian stock, married to a Rowlandson, keenly foresaw its danger and paid dearly for trying to avert it.

The narrative — dominated by the character termed the Old One, a die-hard of eighty-eight as the story opens — comes in dots and flashes, journalistic jottings: a diary of dates and events. The writing is more cinematic than dramatic. It's heady stuff, with an undercurrent of mockery which bespeaks youth and disenchantment both. At times, the writing is as crude and unheeding and violent as the decade it mirrors — and as arresting — like the jerky movements of the dance in Saroyan's "Great American Goof" ballet but without the fantasy. Mr. Longstreet, with something of a juggler's expertness, keeps his personality symbols on the move.

The reader foresees the pattern, but still he must go on, even when he mistrusts some piece of melodrama or some too "straight" character or when the flippancy annoys him. He grows to like and understand most of the Rowlandson clan, though he may not quite believe in them. What they lack in verisimilitude they make up for by being representative. One remembers frequently Philip Barry's injunction: "With the rich and mighty always a little patience"! The tempo of the story quickens with the mounting chaos of the times. The bewilderment evident in most sensitive novelists today is very much in evidence here.

Decade's virtue as a novel lies in the stabs of remembrance it evokes, in the intensity with which it reconstructs a past only just (but we somehow know certainly) finished.

E. V. A.

STATESMEN OF THE LOST CAUSE (*Jefferson Davis and His Cabinet*), by BURTON J. HENDRICK (Little, Brown, \$3.75).

Historians of the Confederacy often sprinkle their narratives with "ifs," to lend drama and pathos to an otherwise heroic but sad period in American history. Mr. Hendrick has this same weakness or, rather, virtue, for he is expert in pointing up the crises at which Confederate victory was imminent.

The Book Forum

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"Here is the economic setting for understanding 'The Grapes of Wrath'." —CHARLES A. BEARD

FACTORIES IN THE FIELD

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Calif. Commissioner of Immigration and Housing

THE NATION says:

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LOUIS ADAMIC says:

Written before "The Grapes of Wrath" was published this book "does what Steinbeck did not—could not—do in a novel. It draws an analytical, factual picture of the migratory farm labor situation in California... and gives the Steinbeck-stirred indignation intellectual direction toward intelligent action."—*Saturday Review of Literature*.

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*Finland Sings Today Her
Heroic Songs of Freedom —*

THE TALES OF ENSIGN STÅL

By **JOHAN LUDVIG RNEBERG**

*Translated from the Swedish by
CHARLES WHARTON STORK*

JOHAN LUDVIG RNEBERG has been acclaimed by Sir Edmund Gosse as the greatest patriotic poet of all times. He was a child of four when Finland was conquered by Russia in the war of 1808-09. As a youth he heard stories of the desperate fighting and he worked these stories into a cycle of poems which he put in the mouth of an old veteran, Ensign Stål. The tales describe in noble verse the selfless devotion of poor peasants to their land and their heroic resistance against overwhelming odds. It is hardly too much to say that these poems, published in the middle of the nineteenth century, have been the greatest single factor in creating the free Finland which rose out of the World War.

Price \$2.00

**THE AMERICAN-SCANDINAVIAN
FOUNDATION**

116 East 64th Street

New York, N. Y.

If Beauregard had pursued the routed federal army into Washington after the first battle of Bull Run; if the Confederacy had shipped her cotton crop abroad in 1861 and 1862 to create much-needed cash credits in England and France; if the French and English governments had released from their shipyards all the ironclads ordered by the Confederate navy; if the governors of North Carolina and Georgia had not been such strong constitutionalists and at the same time carried States' rights to such an extreme — these and a host of other possibilities are analyzed in this engrossing study of the statesmanship and diplomacy of the Confederacy, through the brief biographies of her leaders.

In his preface, Mr. Hendrick says that the secret of Southern failure lay in civil rather than military affairs and that the civil leaders were drawn from the new rich, the upcountrymen, rather than the tidewater aristocrats. To support his contention he presents a brilliant series of portraits: Jeff Davis in his austerity and arrogance; Alex Stephens, Vice President of the Confederacy, an idealist who was instrumental in wrecking the hopes of the South; Judah P. Benjamin, Secretary of State and an astute legalist; Mason and Slidell (famous in Northern history for nearly bringing about a war with England), who nearly succeeded in getting English and French recognition of the Confederacy as an independent nation. In addition to the leaders, a host of significant but relatively unknown figures are brought to life, including Henry Hotze, the able press agent of the Confederacy in London; Baron Erlanger, a French banker who swindled the Confederacy out of several millions in greatly needed cash; and Stephen R. Mallory, Confederate Secretary of Navy, who alone in Davis' cabinet kept his job throughout the war.

Personalities in Mr. Hendrick's narrative sometimes obscure the issues, as in the treatment of the cotton surplus of 1860 in England and France. As a rule, however, they add infinite color to otherwise dry statistics — for example, the analysis of Memminger's mind before the discussion of his policies as Secretary of the Treasury. Although Mr. Hendrick's prejudices seem to lie a little with the Yankees, he has written a history which should appeal to the most unreconstructed rebel left in South Carolina; for he treats the leaders of the lost cause with sympathy, understanding, and admiration for their courage in the face of overwhelming odds.

JOHN J. SLOCUM

THE OTHER GERMANY. by ERIKA and KLAUS MANN (Modern Age, \$2.75).

THE CRADLE BUILDER. by WALTER SCHOENSTEDT (Farrar & Rinehart, \$2.50).

When Erika and Klaus Mann began speaking on

lecture platforms in this country, they were at first embarrassed by a peculiarly American custom: their audiences expected them to answer questions from the floor. After a while they got used to these cross-examinations, even came to like them. Now they have written *The Other Germany* in reply to so many of their listeners who feel that present-day Germany is a sort of colossal riddle to which there must be some secret key.

To say that the German nation is really very little different from any other nation is reasonable — but the Manns have found that this isn't a satisfying answer. Nor do facts and statistics entirely satisfy. Only in terms of the human and personal, through incident and interpretation, can Americans be convinced of "the other Germany," the reasonable, un-Nazi, anti-Nazi nation that does still exist. And so this book is filled with people and their stories. The small shopkeeper squeezed out of business in Vienna seems indeed very little different from his American counterpart. The teacher, the student, the servant girl, the man of good will but faint heart become only too recognizable.

In making their plea for the German people and against its rulers, however, the Manns ask more than American tolerance. Although they do not urge our participation in what they feel is a just war against Hitler, they think we should take part in an eventual peace settlement. They are confident that peace will bring a democratic Europe, united in a federation of free states. There is something very moving in their confidence and hope. They who belonged to the skeptical youth of the Republic look to a future republic with passionate faith. Whether or not you can share their trust in what the powers will finally do with their unfortunate fatherland, it is impossible to read their testament without excitement and sympathy.

One of the silent thousands of exiles, who have neither writing nor lectures to turn to, is the subject of Walter Schoenstedt's sensitive novel, *The Cradle Builder*. For all its overtones of international politics, the story is essentially that of a boy in love, alternately hesitant and eager about life in a new country. Like the Manns, Mr. Schoenstedt has a singular power of touching the American reader.

MARY L. ELTING

I BEGIN AGAIN. by ALICE BRETZ (Whittlesey, \$1.75).

HAVE YOU LOST GOD? by WINFRED RHOADES (Lippincott, \$1.00).

These two little books have something remarkably uncommon in common, a recovery of faith and a confident belief in the renewal of life through living.

Mrs. Bretz, when not yet at the middle span of a