

lying—no, underlying is not the right word, integrated is better—social comprehension that lends the novel one element of its dual importance. The pungent idiom of the mountains is recreated with almost faultless perfection, but there is more here than courting, fiddling, skylarking, or play parties. Empty bellies engender enfeebled minds and spur on loony schemes, and Old Hell is a living demonstration of this fact. Ten-cent-store girls buy sweepstakes tickets and enjoy a brief, feverish dream of wealth, hosts of Negroes are mulcted by the “policy” racket, thousands of housewives buy Crisco they don’t need trying to win one of five hundred or so handsome cash prizes by merely adding twenty-five words or less to the following sentence....
 and be sure to enclose a Crisco wrapper. Like Old Hell, they seek that bright, impalpable Eldorado.

JACK CONROY.

A Heroine of Modern Science

MADAME CURIE, by Eve Curie. Translated by Vincent Sheean. Doubleday, Doran & Co. \$3.50.

INTEGRITY, courage, endurance. These are the qualities of mind and character which, like the emanations of her beloved radium, suffused the life of Madame Marie Curie-Sklodovski, daughter of Polish patriots and one of the great scientists of all time.

In her biography, so ably translated by the author of *Personal History*, Eve Curie, wisely abiding by her own limitations, has preferred the deeply moving, human record to the more public, but of necessity less popular scientific one. Too worshipful, perhaps, and at times—especially on the subject of her famous mother’s experience with the incredible American ballyhoo—naïve to the point of geniality, Miss Curie has nevertheless given us a story which for charm, vividness of intimate detail, and sheer poignancy in suffering and achievement should be an inspiration to thousands. Especially, let us hope, to those “classes unfavored by fortune,” whose unjust exclusion from the labors and honors of science seemed to Madame Curie one of the cruelest and most criminal wastes of our society.

Hardship and terror, as symbolized by czarist Russia, dominated the childhood and youth of the passionate girl whose family was well regarded by the Polish intellectuals of Warsaw. Brilliant, versatile, full of the energy which stops at nothing, the young Marie combined intense study with constant resistance to the czarist bureaucrats: these early years laid the foundation of her life-long hatred of tyranny, a hatred which was to make her a legend of heroism in war-torn France. It is possible to see the ravages of this bitter time in the little story which Miss Curie tells of her mother’s attitude toward

scientists who took a partisan stand during, and after, the World War. Rightly angered by those German savants who signed the “Manifesto of the Ninety-Three” justifying imperial Germany’s war aims, Madame Curie was later to denounce, as a form of intellectual “betrayal,” the public approval of the struggling Soviet government by a group of Russian scientists. This distrust of revolution has an ironic undertone in the fact that during the time (1912-13) Madame Curie was negotiating with her adored Poland for a Radium Institute at Warsaw, there was living in nearby Cracow the man who more than any other single person was preparing for the overthrow of the hated czar, V. I. Lenin.

But Madame Curie’s real life was in her laboratory, and this is the life of whose extraordinary depth and richness her daughter tells us. Paris, with its terrible struggles, its years of unalloyed work, its defeats, slow recognition, and final burst of triumph and glory in company with her great husband—this is the heart of the book. We are grateful to Miss Curie for the many unique private letters which show her mother’s boundless tenacity of purpose, the vast compassion and vigilance that enabled Marie not only to illuminate the human affairs of those about her, but also to dominate, with exceptional ability and precision, the myriad details of research and technique whose sole end was the isolation of the fabulous new element, radium. It is heartbreaking to read of the cruel death which so swiftly overtook Pierre, and to hear the bereaved wife repeating, with cold set face, his favorite words: “Whatever happens, even if one has to go on like a body without a soul, one must work just the same....”

Madame Curie obeyed, and the record of her subsequent achievements has the character of an epic: an epic of flaming devotion to scientific truth and to the ideals of a genuinely great society. Before her death, serenely

indifferent to commercial chicane, to a deliberately renounced wealth, and to the symbols of fame, she had been awarded over a hundred honorary academic and scientific titles. “I am among those,” she had said in Madrid in 1933, “who think that science has great beauty.... If I see anything around me, it is precisely that spirit of adventure, which seems indestructible....” As indestructible as the radium for which she lived, and which was to bring greater life to others.

HAROLD WARD.

From Gothic to Gropper

SIX CENTURIES OF FINE PRINTS, by Carl Zigrosser. Covici-Friede, \$5.

PRI NT-MAKING, like a lot of other things, began with the Renaissance. So, with a minimum of introduction which consists largely of necessary technical explanations, Carl Zigrosser begins his story with a chapter headed “The End of Gothic” and carries it along in a scholarly but very readable manner through “The Renaissance” (Dürer, Breughel), “The Seventeenth Century” (Watteau, Hogarth), “The Nineteenth Century” (Goya, Daumier, Delacroix), right up to Max Weber, Rockwell Kent, Lynd Ward, Gropper, and others of our own “Twentieth Century.” The last chapter is an excellent anti-climax entitled “A Note on Oriental Art,” wherein we find, of course, that the Chinese were making prints six centuries before the European artists of the first chapter. The print-making of China, along with that of Japan, is briefly summarized in this essay from its beginning to the present war.

All this takes only 195 clean, well-margined pages; the 488 illustrations are not scattered through the text but are grouped together and comprise the last half of the book (a good idea, too). The result is a handsome and comprehensive handbook and a necessary volume in any art library—even a very meager one.

When Mr. Zigrosser or any dealer or collector or anyone else speaks of “fine prints,” he means, of course, woodcuts, engravings, etchings, and lithographs. The newest of these processes—lithography—was invented over a hundred years ago, when the graphic arts were still in something less than their swaddling clothes. The tremendous technical development of printing, especially that of the last thirty years, has had little effect on the printed fine art of today. It is still confined to the woodcut, the etching (which some time ago completely supplanted the difficult and limiting engraving), and the stone lithograph. There is something sad and something not a little screwy in the idea of the socially conscious modern artist delivering his important message (and it is plenty important) to a tiny art-gallery world by handicraft methods hundreds of years old. There are obvious reasons why this state of affairs exists, but there are



Peter Verdi

also an increasing number of reasons why it should not—also obvious.

Why haven't modern printing processes been used by the fine artist of today for original productions as well as for reproductions? Photo-lithography and photo-gelatin printing (both developments of the simple lithograph), when the artist gauges his work to the capacity and limitation of the mediums, offer great possibilities for inexpensive fine prints. Half-tone photo-engraving, because of its visible screen, may always be beyond the realm of the fine print, but a modern photo-engraver's camera can do wonders with the simple line-cut. How many non-commercial artists are familiar with water-color printing? Or even the limited but striking effects afforded by the silk-screen (or stencil) processes? All of these methods offer the use of color—and in the light of the recent tremendous sales of reproduced paintings, color is probably necessary in any print directed at a mass audience.

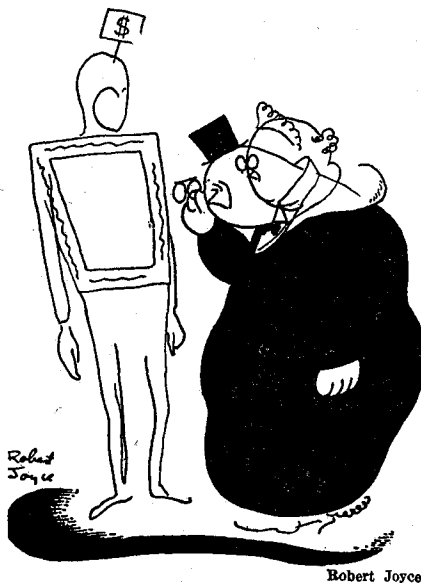
True, to make really exhaustive use of most of these processes requires belief in, and some organization of, a mass market for fine art. Wide-scale promotion requires money, but money has never been difficult to find to promote a reasonably sure thing. The printing companies should be willing to coöperate—possibly even to the point of direct subsidy. The market unquestionably exists. Cézanne reproductions have been selling in the ten-cent stores for a long time. The necessary initiative, however, must come from the artist who will seriously investigate and adapt his art to the facilities that the technicians have dumped in his lap. Only when the print is taken off the hand press and placed on the high-speed rotary will it become what it has often been called—"the democratic art."

CROCKETT JOHNSON.

The Reconciliation of Hostile Ideas

FOUR WAYS OF PHILOSOPHY, by Irwin Edman. Henry Holt & Co. \$1.50.

THE passion of the philosophers for mutual contradiction and mutual extermination has always been a bit shocking to the layman, who easily gets the impression that this is their sole concern and occupation, and often wonders why they do not get together as scientists do, particularly natural scientists, on some basis of agreement. There have been various explanations of the disparity of the schools. Hegel, for example, held that the history of philosophy is a complicated process culminating in his own system, which embodied the doctrines of all previous systems as partial truths. In contrast to Hegel are the unhistorical historians of philosophy who think they have suddenly hit upon the total truth, and that all previous systems are simply false and perfidious. Professor Edman, in the present book, adopts still another view.



While he denies progress in philosophy, and inclines to naturalism, he also finds a great deal of truth in rationalism, mysticism, and "social criticism," and believes that each of these philosophies involves, and depends upon, the others. But it is not always clear whether the truth he discovers in these hostile schools is objective or merely subjective, that is, whether it reflects the objective world or only human aspiration. "That the talk of philosophers should differ," he explains, "is for exactly the same reason that the speech of poets differs. For philosophy has mistaken its function in arrogating to itself the notion that it is either a transcript of reality or a specific program of life. It is but a lyric. . . ." This passage seems to confine philosophy to subjective truth, but there are many passages of an opposite import.

Another thing that is not at all clear is the alleged interdependence of the schools and their partial reconciliation. The kind of argument the author uses can be illustrated by the following: since all the schools must accept sensation as an unproved and ineffable datum (1), all the schools must recognize a certain truth in mysticism. Again: since the mystic rejects the world he must recognize a certain truth in "social criticism." To this a number of objections must be made. In the first place, sensations are not "ineffable" nor do all mystics reject the world and certainly few of them are social critics. Moreover, the mystic's central claim that reality is One and that he can become one with this One certainly contradicts the positions of the other schools as stated by Professor Edman. Throughout this discussion there seems to be a confusion between philosophical theories such as mysticism and rationalism and the matter-of-fact employment of sense-data and reason. The fact that the mystic reasons and the rationalist makes use of sensations does not prove, however subtly the argument may be developed, that mysticism and rationalism are partially compatible or interdependent.

There are, of course, many fine insights in the book which one can often admire without fully accepting, but it would be difficult to

render them briefly, since they depend far more on delicate turns of phrase than on novelty of thought. For the same reason, many dubious contentions must be left uncriticized. There is one passage, however, which even this short review cannot ignore, for it shows a complete collapse of that tolerance and liberalism which Professor Edman usually displays, even to a fault. "So far as means are concerned," he says, "a revolutionary government behaves very much like a fascist one. Liquidation and blood purge are nice distinctions, but they are Russian and German terms for the same thing." Can Professor Edman really see no difference between the sudden assassination of Von Schleicher and his wife and the public trial and confession of Zinoviev and Kamenev attended by lawyers and foreign correspondents, many of whom were convinced that crimes had been proved which mean death in any country? Can he believe himself justified in assuming without any discussion whatever that the evidence accumulated in the course of months of patient research and many regional trials was worthless, that the confessions were impersonations by actors or gramophone records or something else equally fantastic? Professor Edman labors hard to show us the truth inherent in the conflicting systems of philosophy—even in the wildest mysticism, but he condemns the legal system of the Soviet Union without a word of explanation. The liberal and fairminded tone of the book as a whole would suggest, however, that this passage was rather a stereotype borrowed from others than a considered thought of the author.

V. J. MCGILL.

Brief Reviews

SERENADE, by James M. Cain. Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.50.

Cain's second novel is about a young opera singer, John Howard Sharp, who loses his voice twice. Both times he loses it in the presence of an orchestra conductor who is the only man who can bring out the latent homosexuality in the singer. Around that is built the tragedy of Sharp and Juana, the "dumb little *muchacha*" he falls in love with in Mexico. The two leave Mexico for Hollywood and New York. When Juana learns about Hawes, the conductor, she coolly murders him to save Sharp. Of course, nobody is saved, and the story ends with Sharp at Juana's funeral in the little Mexican church where first he slept with her.

Bad proportions keep *Serenade* from being the interesting study it could have been. The homosexual angle, we feel, would be far-fetched even for Freud or Havelock Ellis, and Juana's spree at Hawes's expense leans toward melodrama. On the credit side, however, there is the fine musical feeling throughout, excellent portraits of Hawes, Captain Connors, who would have been a Lionel Barrymore sea-captain at the hands of a less-skilled craftsman, and the producers in Hollywood. It has speed to spare and does not carry a burden of unnecessary detail.

R. H. R.

NATIONAL LAWYERS' GUILD QUARTERLY. December 1937. Vol. 1, No. 1. 50c.

Last spring, the National Lawyers' Guild was formed to "function as an effective social force in the service of the people to the end that human rights shall be regarded as more sacred than property rights." The first issue of the Guild's *Quarterly* reflects this constructive program. A departure from