

for money and fame. He marries a wealthy woman and with her money hires the impecunious Snyders, whose talent he has envied from childhood. He becomes without too much effort the most fashionable painter of his time. Throughout the book he behaves with a revolting excess of prudence: he rejects the woman he loves because she is the mistress of his noble patron; acts as an agent for Spain, from which his own country is wrenching a slow and bloodily-fought independence, and can't relax enough to love his rich wife until after she is dead. He ends up with honors and money and a Spanish title (the coat of arms a horn and roses), but unsatisfied and foggily unhappy. As Mr. Wallach writes him, he was ahead of his time in that his qualities—caution, a desire for wealth, personal ambition—were to be the favorite virtues of capitalism when it flowered more fully.

The most interesting part of the book is the background, which Mr. Wallach handles with great vigor, an awareness of history, and, despite a floridity of style, a surprising compactness. He communicates colors, feelings, smells, costumes, manners very well. His scenes depicting the Spanish nobility clinging with painstaking shrewdness to straws while empires slip away are fine, and he gives an interesting picture of the art business—I combine the terms advisedly—of the day. He says some very important things about the artist held captive by commercialism, comment which is certainly valid for our day. However, in his effort to prove Bordley's theory, or possibly merely in his enthusiasm for it, Mr. Wallach has twisted his characters into some odd positions. The principal victim is the unfortunate Snyders. Throughout Snyders is portrayed as a great artist and a man of integrity. It seems to me, however, that he sells his birthright rather cheaply. He goes to work in Peter-Paul's studio in order to get money to marry the girl he loves and, although he is soon rich and remains childless, he stays there for a quarter of a century, painting masterpieces for which another man gets the credit. His revolt is almost completely internal, and I for one found that it weakened the entire book and Mr. Wallach's theory.

Anyway, the book is interesting, and, despite occasional runaways into the beautiful, Mr. Wallach handles language exceedingly well.

MARGERY BARRETT.

Books Received

INSIDE USA, by John Gunther. Harper. \$5. This enormous book—it is 979 pages long—is in the tradition of Mr. Gunther's other work, and exhibits the same reportorial virtues and the same flaws in thought. It is a lively account of the infinitely diverse characteristics of people and institutions in each of the forty-eight states, qualified by an attempt to show what they all have in common—what makes them Americans, in other words. But once the reader has finished with the entertaining folklore and folksay, the exposes of machine politics, and the honest recording of racial intolerance and discrimination, he will look in vain for deeper understanding of the socio-economic roots of these phenomena. Mr. Gunther is a man of good will. This is something for a man in public life. But it is not enough for an analysis of the American scene, when so much goes on backstage.

THE PORTABLE JOHNSON AND BOSWELL, edited and with an introduction by Louis Kronenberger. Viking. \$2. For those interested in the tory mind at its best, this is an extremely well edited anthology. It contains the liveliest parts of Boswell's *Life of Johnson* and *Tour to the Hebrides*, as well as Johnson's *Lives of Savage and Pope* and the famous *Preface to Shakespeare* which contains the inimitable phrase, "The Poet, of whose works I have undertaken the revision. . . ."

GREEK PLAYS IN MODERN TRANSLATION, edited with an introduction by Dudley Fitts. Dial. \$5. The translations herein are intended not merely to present the Greeks in an idiom familiar to modern ears, but to make them readable at all, after the mayhem practiced upon them by Gilbert Murray and the Loeb Library. Eleven plays are presented in versions by Richmond Lattimore, Francis Ferguson, George Thomson, Frederic Prokosch, David Grene, William Butler Yeats, Edith Hamilton, Dudley Fitts and Robert Fitzgerald. Strongly recommended as an antidote to the sufferer from the stuffy versions of yesteryear.

THE GOVERNMENTS OF FOREIGN POWERS, by Philip W. Buck and John W. Masland. Holt. \$3.25. A superficial survey of the governments of England, France, the USSR, Italy, Germany, Japan and China. There are such keen observations as "it must be admitted that the actions of governments, at present, profoundly affect the lives of every citizen." The authors show little respect for students who want and need more than expositions that are finished before they are hardly begun. One learns nothing of the economic foundations on which states and their behavior rest.

THE ORIGINS AND BACKGROUND OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR, by C. Groves Haines and Ross J. S. Hoffman. Oxford University Press. \$4. This is a revised and enlarged edition of a book that has not improved even with revisions and enlargements. The treat-

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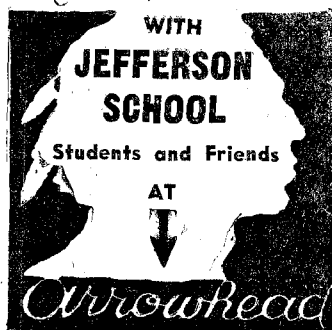
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ment of the Loyalist cause in the Spanish
Civil War is shoddy although there is some
recognition of the farce of "non-interven-
tion." The book is devoid almost completely
of economic motivations, of rivalries in the
imperialist orbit and how these paved the
way for the politics of the inter-war years.

SOVIET DEMOCRACY, by Harry F. Ward.
Published by Soviet Russia Today, 114 East
32nd Street, New York 3. 15¢. One of
America's distinguished figures writes a
beautiful pamphlet on the creativeness of
Soviet life. He explains the principles and
procedures in Soviet democracy, its economic
base, and what the test of genuine democracy
is. This is "must" reading for all concerned
with improved American-Soviet relations;
it is indispensable for those who have been
victimized by the myths and nonsense sold
them as objective reporting.

FILMS

"TWINS," at the Stanley, is a light,
satirical comedy somewhat in
the Hollywood manner, but with the
freshness of real, non-glamor people.
Two sisters, Luba and Lisa, have their
lives completely disrupted when one
of them finds a pair of lost infant twins
and the other insists upon adopting
them, a deed which starts a wave of
baby-adopting in the community.
There is frenzy when the babies are
lost for a while, and the old farcical
device of mistaken identity is used
broadly. But nobody takes any of it
seriously, and performers and audi-
ence share in the gaiety.

Mikhail Zarov is responsible for
most of the laughs as Comrade Yerop-
kin, an egotistic middle-aged wolf who
pursues Luba, but connives to get the
twins out of the way. Reminiscent in
looks and manner of the late W. C.
Fields, he is recognizably human all
the way, and creates hilarious slapstick
scenes as he caricatures a minor offi-
cial who uses his office to graft rations
and win girl friends. He struts pom-
pously, cringes abjectly when his sins
catch up with him, and pokes amiable
fun at a character as familiar here as
in the Soviet Union.

The continuity is amateurish and
sketchy, but Director Konstantin
Yudin has made the most of each in-
dividual comedy scene and the result
is pleasing because of the simplicity and
the elemental quality of the comedy.
As in most Soviet films, the characters
seem to be not actors, but people—
and in this case, people having a great
deal of extremely good-natured fun.

Ludmilla Tselikovskaya as Luba

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