

Points of View

Graduate Work

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:

Sir:

I have read with amazement the letter in your issue of July 20 from a graduate student at the University of North Carolina in which the writer complains that in his courses in literature here he has been required to read the work of scholars and commentators on literature to the exclusion of the literature itself. Of course it is always difficult to deal on the graduate level with students who have read so few of the classics as your correspondent seems to have read when he entered the graduate school, but what I started to say is that I know no course or courses now given, or ever given, at this university answering to the description of the one in which the student read "two thousand pages about Herman Melville" and only fifty pages of the novelist himself, not to speak of similar disproportions in the cases of Edwards, Irving, Whitman, and Brown. The policy of the department is always to make the text the matter of primary importance, and to supplement it with lectures and interpretative comment only as this proves illuminating. Your correspondent's letter completely misrepresents the facts, and is simply another instance of hasty, superficial, and inaccurate "criticism" of university work with which those of us who are in that work are growing a little weary. May I suggest that a fuller apprehension of the spirit of graduate scholarship would have led your correspondent to an accurate presentation of the facts before he commenced finding fault with them?

HOWARD MUMFORD JONES.

The University of North Carolina.

Language and Speech

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:

Sir:

Will you permit me a few tardy remarks on Mr. Paul G. Conway's answer to Mr. S. A. Leonard, which appeared in your issue of May 4?

It seems to me that Mr. Conway has confused his argument. I dare say it is true that "the best of our grammars are based upon what is considered good usage as embodied in the best writers and speakers." But I do not remember that Mr. Leonard was much interested in grammars, good or bad. He was concerned with the English language in America, and maintained that it was idiomatic to say, for instance: Who is it for?

Now Mr. Conway thinks that this is wrong. But is there really a question here of right and wrong? If we approach the matter from the point of view of the "best grammars," perhaps there is; I don't know. But if we approach it from the point of view of idiomatic American English, what then?

Jespersen insists that Tégner's definition of proper language is correct: that form is best which, most easily expressed, is most easily understood, even if it is fairly easily the props out from under a Mencken, for instance, in his defense of the language of the street; for that language is not most easily understood, even if it is fairly easily expressed. But if the definition staggers a Mencken, it annihilates a "purist." Who can say without smiling that "whom is it for?" is as easily expressed as "who is it for?"

If Mr. Conway, like the English professor murdered by his wife, had a row with the ice man, would he shout: "Whom the hell do you think you're talking to?"

In our language it is not easy to think in cases; cases, for us, are curious groupings in grammars and they are nothing more. When we use pronouns, where case forms still survive, we follow two rules of thinking: use the emphatic form in emphatic positions; and, use one form at the beginning of a sentence, or before a verb, and another form after a verb, or preposition. "It's me" suits our way of thinking, and suits it perfectly. So does "Who is it for?" We have not the German facility for starting hind end foremost, and remembering case relationships for a minute and a half: when we start a question, we use *Who*; and if the case turns out to be wrong—well, we never find out until somebody tells us.

Our American and his wife learn from childhood on that it is "right" to say, "It's I." They learn it, and probably never forget it. But they never say it, because "It's me" is just as easily understood, and more easily said.

Slovenly language deserves no support; but the matters discussed by Mr. Leonard and Mr. Conway are not slovenly language:

they are expressions most easily said and most easily understood. If Tégner and Jespersen are wrong, then let us go on kicking against the pricks, and inform the next hundred million Americans that they don't know how to speak. (They will say, with the present hundred million, "Is that so!") But if they are right in their attitude towards language, let us stop chattering about grammar and discuss language and speech.

Mr. Conway's analogy—that we don't study chemistry as it is understood by the man in the street—is singularly unfortunate: he seems to forget that chemistry is not a means of communication. Or does he suppose that language isn't, either?

Last but not least: Mr. Leonard and Mr. Conway and Miss Burnham and I—and any one else—can amuse ourselves with these discussions as long as we like; but when one of our students points one of us out to another, he'll say, "That's him!"

S. A. Nock
University of Leipzig.

Milton and Miss Moore

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:

Sir:

Virginia Moore in her letter of June 8, criticizing my review of Miss Spurgeon's "Keats's Shakespeare" in your issue of May 25, seems to agree with me in one important premise: the present state of poetry is vitally bound up with our current attitude towards Shakespeare, Milton, and Keats and with our view of Keats's relation to his two great predecessors. A full treatment of this matter is given in my recent book, "The Cycle of Modern Poetry." Apparently Miss Moore read my review of Miss Spurgeon's work with such haste and prejudice that she could not help misrepresenting me in a good many points. I do not hold (heaven have mercy on the critic who would) that "The Tempest" is "mushy" and that Shakespeare's work is "merely sensuous and romantic." I do not deny that Shakespeare has "rich human ideas," though I refuse to identify them with Miss Moore's talisman, "warm humaneness." I do not deny his persistent influence on Keats. I do not claim that Keats, in maturing, "wisely substituted Milton for Shakespeare," but merely that he passed "from his absorption in Shakespearean sensuousness to a grappling with Milton."

And I believe that a grappling with Milton, today even more than a century ago, can be our best aid in penetrating through the sensuous surface to the rich human ideas of Shakespeare. For those ideas—the great central ideas of Renaissance poetry—were carried on by Milton, and he displayed them with a clear philosophic and poetic cogency beyond the reach of Shakespeare. Take, for example, the idea of "the moral order," as Miss Moore terms it. She says very finely and truly: "In Shakespeare's tragedies exceptional beings, ensnared in portentous events, by their own acts set going forces which, working by some profound necessity, purge the moral order of evil, and in the midst of wasted good, and in the presence of death, convince the reader of deathless things." But is she unaware that Romantic criticism has considerably denied the presence of "the moral order" in Shakespeare? In Shakespeare, it is debatable. In Milton, it is unmistakable: it is unmistakably real and beautiful. His symbols and images of it happen to be out of fashion just at present. But I think that if Milton had not displayed so powerfully the preoccupation of the Renaissance imagination with "the moral order," Miss Moore would not have been in a position today to see it so firmly in Shakespeare.

Moreover, Milton could help Miss Moore to free her mind from the old Romantic muddle in regard to Beauty. She asks critically: "Would Milton have put beauty before moral rectitude? Could he have seen with Shakespeare that beauty includes beauty of action, and that beauty of human action is the deepest rectitude?" Here is the answer:—Milton saw two kinds of beauty in human action. One kind is below and devoid of moral rectitude. The other kind is above and inclusive of moral rectitude. Miss Moore mixes the two kinds together in a warm batter. So did Keats when he was very, very young. I agree with Miss Moore in doubting "whether the cold, puritanical Milton touched him to the quick." But I know that the passionate Greek, Puritan, Milton, so far from being "a side-interest" to Keats, was touching him more and more into mature discriminations in regard to beauty and ethical truth.

G. R. ELLIOTT.

Amherst College.

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WE quote the following from the *Harvard Crimson*:

It is not often that the library has occasion to start a wholly new classification, but this has been made possible this year by a gift of several hundred finely printed books, made by Philip Hofer, '21. The library has for at least two decades had an active interest in modern printing, of which the Charles Eliot Norton library contained a number of important examples. To these, specimens of the productions of such noteworthy presses as the Merrymount, Kelm-scott, Ashendene, Daniel, and Dun Emer, have been added as funds permitted. Such accessions came at irregular intervals, however, and it was not until Professor Sachs gave his collection of the work of Bruce Rogers, that typography was recognized as a distinct subject for which the library ought to provide a place. Mr. Hofer's gift now makes it certain that the Harvard collection of finely printed books will be easily equal to that of any other institution. The recognition of printing as a fine art is closely connected with book illustration, and Mr. Hofer is adding important examples of the best work in this line, from the fifteenth to the twentieth centuries. In the nineteenth century, there was a brilliant period, when books were being illustrated by Kate Greenaway, Randolph Caldecott, Sir John Tenniel, and Walter Crane. The Widener collection brought to Harvard a good assemblage of Miss Greenaway's work, while Tenniel is very well represented in the Lewis Carroll collection made by Harcourt Amory, '76, and given in his memory by Mrs. Amory and their children. The other two, Crane and Caldecott, are thoroughly taken care of by the books, original drawings, and autograph letters given last autumn by A. H. Parker, '97, to form the Caroline Miller Parker collection in the Harvard Library. Mr. Parker's gift includes a fund of \$5000 to assure the permanent well-being of these treasures, and he has also recently made a number of most important additions, among which is a sketch book in which Crane drew the view of the river front where the Freshman Dormitories now stand, from the opposite shore.

TO all conscientious book-collectors, as to all conscientious churchman, the lull of mid-summer is an intense relief—it is so considerate of everyone in authority to allow this decent interval of peace when no new values in "esteemed authors" can be created overnight; when dealers' catalogues are infrequent and rather dull; and when it is possible to cultivate placidly the acquaintance of one's latest purchases. The annual volumes of the English and American "Book-Prices Current" always appear quietly on the shelves of libraries at this time, and occasionally sighs of reminiscence disturb the air, sighs that may be caused by bitterness and regret.

The past season from October, 1928, to July, 1929, cannot be regarded as one of exceptional brilliance. New York had the Jerome Kern sale, which set an entirely new scale of high prices, and suggested the complete disappearance from the world of all type designers, printing presses, and, quite incidentally, of all authors, while London had the Gosse library and several important books from smaller collections. Mr. Galsworthy and Mr. Shaw suddenly joined the list of authors whose works are, for the present, within the reach of only the wealthy; and Lewis Carroll, who should have understood better the folly of presenting inscribed copies of his books to all his friends, and Joseph Conrad were forced to retire modestly to a lower rank in the auction scale of values. The dealers' catalogues consistently maintained their usual high level of intelligence and bibliographical honesty, many of them to an extraordinary degree. In comparison with the majority of these, the Kern sale catalogues, outwardly impressive and excellently illustrated, were so completely a compilation of superlatives and hysterics of no especial bibliographical importance that they became needlessly conspicuous, and helped largely

to deepen the impression that no one, except a historian of English literature, could ever possibly feel a compelling interest in many of the books Mr. Kern possessed. Two exceedingly important and brilliant bibliographies appeared, Mr. Michael Sadlier's "Trollope," and Professor Frederick A. Pottle's "The Literary Career of James Boswell, Esq.," both of them done from the unusual standpoint of presenting bibliography as a means of interpretation, not as a matter wholly of collations and unrelated transcriptions. Mr. C. G. Littell's "A Rod for the Back of the Binder," although intended as an advertisement, presented in unusually clear and lucid form so much information about binding impossible to find elsewhere with such convenience that it deserves to be mentioned.

Throughout the year the tendency to regard book-collecting as a new kind of investment has grown rather than decreased. It is impossible, of course, to foresee the results of such practice, or to tell exactly how it will affect the habits of collectors who buy for their own enjoyment, but it is fairly obvious already that many authors whose appeal is not primarily to retired business men in search of a hobby, have passed beyond the reach of those persons most truly interested in them. If any of the present inflation serves to direct attention towards George Eliot and Lord Beaconsfield, or towards Sarah Orne Jewett and Frank R. Stockton, it may be just as well—everyone will have to be collected before long in order to answer the demand, and the final judgment upon literature will scarcely be passed by investors who hope to make fortunes by means of rare books. It is always possible to think of the Cochran, Folger, Morgan, and Huntington gifts, and be more than thankful.

G. M. T.

THE most recent auctions at Sotheby's have conformed to the usual standards of high prices. At the Mann sale, a fine, clean copy of the Kilmarnock Burns, "Poems Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect," 1786, bound in contemporary calf, brought £2,450 (in the Huth sale in November, 1911, it had been purchased for £730); the Edinburgh Burns, 1787, brought £107, while the first Dublin edition of the same year sold for £66. It is interesting to note that an uncut copy of Boswell's "Life of Johnson," with "The Principal Corrections and Additions to the First Edition of Mr. Boswell's Life of Dr. Johnson," 1793, uncut and unopened, sold for £630 (\$3,062). Sir Walter Scott did unusually well as "Guy Mannering," 1815, uncut and in the original boards, brought £260, and "Ivanhoe," £98. Thackeray's "Vanity Fair," in the original 19-20 numbers and wrappers, realized £370. During the week preceding the Mann sale, the private papers of the Lords Secilius and Charles Baltimore, first and second proprietors of the Province of Maryland, were bought by Quaritch for £3,500, against several American agents.

Messrs. W. and G. Foyle, Ltd., of London, have announced the publication in an edition of 750 copies, of "Modern First Editions, Points, and Values," by Gilbert H. Fabes, the manager of Foyle's Rare Book Department, and author of "The Autobiography of a Book." According to the publishers, Mr. Fabes has "chosen over one hundred important modern first editions which may be found with two or more points of issue," and has separated these first editions into first, second, and later issues. Such a book ought to form a valuable complement to the two works on American first editions recently done in this country by Mr. Merle Johnson.

G. M. T.

WE take the following from an article by Claude F. Luke which appeared in a recent issue of *John O' London's Weekly*: For both sorts of booklovers an orgy awaits him who is privileged to browse among the many beautiful productions that have issued with a fair regularity for the past thirty-three years from the

Ashendene Press. This is one of the few remaining private presses in England, and is remarkable, perhaps, for the fact that, unlike many so-called private presses, it adheres to the unwritten definition which lays down that a private press shall execute only the work that is inspired by the tastes of the owner, and shall not print to the order of an outside individual.

"For thirty-three years the Ashendene Press has observed this law, producing only the books beloved of the printer; books which, quite apart from their contents, would be vastly satisfying to the eye. By handling only the world's greatest classics, however, the Press has wedded the art of the writer with the craft of the printer in upwards of forty volumes of exquisite beauty and finish.

"Mr. C. H. St. J. Hornby, the owner of the Press, is a lively rebuke to the many of us who permit the hobbies of youth to be overwhelmed by the growing demands of manhood and a career. On his own confession Mr. Hornby was born with a desire to use his hands, and after exhausting the normal outlets of extreme youth, he chanced one day to visit the private press run by that poet-craftsman, William Morris, and there discovered the hobby that was to remain with him through life.

"At that time he was innocent of the nice

problems of printing, and of the involved technique of type and press; he knew merely that he would not be happy until he owned a press like Morris's on which to spend every spare minute in casting beauty between covers.

"He joined the firm of W. H. Smith and Son—he has been a partner in this famous firm now for many years—and there soon made opportunities of friendship with the compositors, who were only too glad to show the eager young man the elements of their craft.

"The time grew ripe for the founding of his own press, and he here discovered a fact that will surprise many people: that to own a private press is not necessarily a rich man's prerogative, and that, in fact, it may be done in a small way on rather less than the cost of running a small car. Mr. Hornby's first hand-press and fount cost him £40 second-hand, and this he erected at his home at Ashendene in Hertfordshire. His first achievement was the printing of a diary kept by his grandfather, Joseph Hornby, during a visit to France in 1815, and this journal, printed in Caslon pica type, appeared in an issue of thirty-four copies in 1895, a year before the death of William Morris.

"Mr. Hornby refers to this first book as 'a shocking effort.' Certainly it is the ugly duckling when compared with the other

children of his press; nevertheless, though its press work showed the novice hand, yet the journal revealed something of the art that was to make his later productions the lovely things they are.

"For the next four years the young craftsman must have been busy indeed, for in his spare time he produced single-handed no fewer than eleven volumes. They included 'Three Poems of Milton,' 'The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám,' the Book of Ecclesiastes, the Prologue to the 'Canterbury Tales,' and Francis Bacon's 'Of Building and Gardens.' Not the least romantic product of his press in these days was the order of service at his marriage to Miss Cicely Barclay, whose name appears thereafter in conjunction with his own on the colophon of his books.

"In 1899 the Press was moved to Shelley House, on the Chelsea Embankment, the present home of its owner and family, and about this time Mr. Hornby spent a matter of £200 on a new fount of type specially cut to his own pattern; he chose a Great Primer type modelled on that used by Sweynheym and Pannartz in 1465.

With this addition his ambitions soared, and from 1902 onwards he produced, among others, magnificent editions of Dante, The Song of Songs, More's Utopia, Le Morte d'Arthur, Robert Bridges's Poems,

Refugees in Chelsea, by Henry James, Boccaccio's Decameron, Spenser's Faerie Queene, and Four Tales by Oscar Wilde. The last-named was specially printed for his daughter, Rosamund Hornby, on her tenth birthday.

"The latest work of the Press has been Don Quixote in two superb volumes. To print and bind the 225 copies on paper and twenty on vellum has absorbed the no mean sum of £5,000; small wonder that the issue price of the book is £25. Mr. Hornby, indeed, believes that no private printer should hope for financial profit from his hobby; that he himself has about covered his expenses is something of an accident. Curiously enough there is always more demand for his expensive productions than he can supply, and there is every indication that the market for these beautifully printed and high priced volumes is steadily increasing.

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The price was then 11. . . . It closed last week at 15½. . . . an increase of almost 40 per cent. [Yes, thank you. *The Inner Sanctum* took its own tip and bought 400 shares.]

By passing on such reckless advice your correspondents were violating their own canons of conservatism in matters fiscal, but they just couldn't resist the temptation to let their readers in On A Good Thing. . . . Now that their heterodox hunch has been amply vindicated they find it hard not to gloat.

Although such financial recommendations, like publishers' blurbs, must be taken at the readers' own peril, without guarantees, annexations, or indemnities, *The Inner Sanctum*, contemplating the sales chart before it, and examining the country's forestry resources and paper supply, must now report that the best-seller momentum shows no sign of letting up. More than a million copies of *All Quiet on the Western Front* have already been sold in all languages [cries of "And a good thing, too!"] . . . the new firm of Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith is riding on the crest of *The Wave*. . . . and at the sign of the three sowers on West Fifty-seventh Street, at least four best-sellers are going full blast.

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NO word from O'Reilly, that obdurate mouse. We had hoped against hope until this moment that he would put in a surreptitious appearance, and had left delectable morsels scattered about the Phœnician's office in an effort to beguile him into the Nest. Now we are ensconced in the glass-enclosed cubby-hole that serves the Phœnician as a safe retreat in which to read *Sateveposts*, and *Red Books*, and *Hearst's Internationals*, where rows of orderly books by the best authors lend sobriety to his excursions into magazine literature, and gay-colored illustrations clipped from here, there, and everywhere enliven the spaces of wall not covered by family photographs. The Phœnician is an orderly soul. In fact, he loves order too well. No paper ever lies exposed on his desk; it is always filed neatly away in some receptacle known only to himself. His is a mind with an enormous power of concentration; discussion can swirl and eddy about it and yet it knows nothing of it. What with his orderliness and his concentration nerve-racking things happen to the *Saturday Review*; books sent in for review vanish mysteriously, articles and poems submitted for judgment are nowhere to be found. The editors wax vociferous in their puzzlement, summon secretaries and office boy, institute search and burst into lamentations, and six months later with the blandest of countenances and most innocent of consciences the Phœnician announces, "By the way, I finally got through that stack of manuscripts I put in a folder some time ago, and I think this (holding out the much-sought article) is worthy of your attention." Yet there is no other like him. Like his bird, may he persist forever. . . .

This is rank treason. We have been put here to fill his columns with literary gossip, and we doubly betray him. To make amends we shall regale you with the assurance that according to the very latest intelligence from England Milton's elm is still in existence. So is the tradesman of Chalfont St. Giles, who objects to it on the score that it may collapse over his shop. . . .

Lord Charnwood, whose life of *Abraham Lincoln* was a best seller in the day when Henry Holt issued it, and is now a standard biography, is engaged upon the collection of material for a life of *George Washington*. Lord Charnwood is a younger brother of the noted actor, *Sir Frank Benson*, which reminds us that *Dean Inge* claims descent from *King Edward III*. Twenty-one generations it took from King to Dean. . . .

While we are on the subject of Englishmen we must not forget to state that Scribners announce that *Winston Churchill*, the final volume of whose "The World Crisis" they published not long ago, is coming to America in August, and that Coward-McCann report that *Siegfried Sassoon's* "Memoirs of a Fox-Hunting Man," which they issued last winter, has won the Hawthornden Prize. That makes two for Mr. Sassoon. He was awarded the *James Tait Black Memorial Prize* earlier in the year. In fact, it makes all, for these are the only literary prizes offered annually in England. . . .

The Chocorua Press has announced its intention to publish a series of bibliographies under the title of "The Chocorua Bibliographies." Any one who has done, or intends to do, any bibliographical work, is invited to communicate with the Chocorua Press, 301 West 24th Street, New York City. . . .

And, baseball fans, stop, look, listen! An extensive collection of data about baseball, formed by the late *Bradshaw Hall Sewales* of Washington, D. C., has been given by his widow to the New York Public Library. Alas, it will take almost a year to sift it, and before it will be available to lovers of the national game. But when it is, oh, boy! Then you can live through all the thrills of the past again. Excitement remembered in tranquillity. . . .

But we wander from literature. Farrar & Rinehart, already sufficiently launched on publishing to have their own letter-head, ads in the *Publishers' Weekly*, and an excellently functioning publicity department, write us that some truly remarkable *Bryan* data is coming into the hands of C. Hartley Grattan, who is finishing "The Peerless Leader, William Jennings Bryan," which

Paxton Hibben left incomplete at his death last year. We remember spending a half hour with Captain Hibben when he was in the midst of his work last summer, and being greatly interested by what he told us of the Commoner. . . .

The same firm is to issue *Lizette Woodworth Reese's* "A Victorian Village" in September. We've been privileged to see advance sheets of the book, and can assure you that they contain most pleasing glimpses of a past less remote in time than in aspect. But, oh, how the world does move! As we read of a village just outside of Baltimore on the edge of the Civil War period we felt as though it belonged to an age that antedated our own by at least two centuries. . . .

Talking of publishers, as we were when we said that Farrar & Rinehart were on the way to issuing books, Harcourt, Brace & Company celebrated the tenth anniversary of their incorporation on July twenty-ninth. There's a record for you! Starting late in 1919, by the end of 1921 they had to their credit *John Maynard Keynes's* "Economic Consequences of the Peace," *Sinclair Lewis's* "Main Street," *Lytton Strachey's* "Queen Victoria," *Dorothy Canfield's* "The Brimming Cup," *Virginia Woolf's* "Monday or Tuesday," and *Christopher Morley's* "Modern Essays," not to speak of other excellent if less widely popular works. Since then, of course, they have had such books as *Werner's* "Barnum," *E. M. Forster's* "A Passage to India," *Keyserling's* "The Travel Diary of a Philosopher," *De Kruif's* "Microbe Hunters," *Katherine Mayo's* "Mother India," and *W. B. Seabrook's* "The Magic Island." Now we are waiting for "A Layman Looks at the Doctors," which we are assured is charged with dynamite. Who wrote it? We don't know; neither do the publishers. But the sources through which it came, and which are preserving its anonymity, are impeccable. . . .

This is certainly the age of the child. Even the staid Oxford University Press, sponsor of some of the most valuable works of scholarship available, announces a department of juvenile publications. Included in its list will be poetry, fantasy, popular science, Bible stories, animal stories, and folk songs. The paper on which the announcement comes whets our appetite, for trailing enticingly down either side of the Oxford Press imprint is a row of books with attractive titles. . . .

As for children's books in general, wait till you see what the *Saturday Review* is going to do with and for them in November. Umm-umm. . . .

We are in receipt of Number I, Volume 1, of *The Rustler, a Roundup of Verse*, to which youthful writers are urgently requested to contribute. It's published in La Farge, Wisconsin, in a town located in the heart of the scenic Kickapoo River Valley (never since we rode through the Kicking Horse Pass in the Canadian Rockies has any name struck us so delightfully), and its editors take pleasure in quoting a full-page advertising rate of \$20 and smaller space in proportion. Incidentally, in this first number it has corralled prose in almost equal measure with verse, and from the super-scription on the first page purposes regularly to do so. . . .

The Literary World is the name of a new literary news-magazine to be started in the near future by *Everett Lloyd*, San Antonio editor and publisher. Its offices will be at 1114 West Gramercy Place, San Antonio, Texas, and it will specialize in articles about authors, literary news, reviews, illustrations of the homes of authors, and stories of their recreations and hobbies. Come on, ye literary periodicals. The more the merrier. . . .

Mr. Lloyd, editor of the above mentioned magazine-to-be, is engaged on a study of the life and times of *Judge Roy Bean*, to be entitled "The Saga of Roy Bean." He is desirous of getting in communication with former Texans in New York and elsewhere who recall any of the myths that have grown up around this figure. Roy Bean was a self-constituted justice of the peace, gambler, and saloon-keeper. . . .

Until next time.

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