

animals, of which many of the taxonomic values are matters of opinion, and has projected this classification backward in time. In fact, one of the great faults of most systematic work is the tendency to emphasize differences rather than resemblances, but the whole history of zoological classification is sufficient proof, if proof were needed, that the results are not as clear, nor the divisions as sharp, as the author asserts.



To attempt to enumerate and controvert what the reviewer regards as incorrect would take a book in itself, but a few samples may well be given in justification of the foregoing criticism. To attribute "a knowledge of many of the laws of physics" to trap-door spiders is quite as absurd as to make the same statement about trees. Surely trees have overcome innumerable mechanical difficulties, and in a variety of ways, during their evolution, but I would hesitate to say that they had engineering skill or a knowledge of physical laws.

Chapter III entitled "Man and Apes," based apparently on John Fiske's emphasis on the evolutionary value of prolonged infancy in human history, is only five pages long, but it nevertheless manages to convey some startling assertions and pseudo-deductions, based on the fact, if it is a fact, that human babies like to hold something in their hands and have a natural preference for hard, and especially for rough, objects. This, we are told, is never the case in monkeys and proclaims the babies to be fundamentally different from monkeys. Apes and monkeys are confused, and the conclusion is reached, a conclusion that has no basis in logic—that "it is probably safe to assume that these two reactions of young babies lie at the bottom of all material human progress." One confesses to a certain dizziness after rereading this chapter.

We are told further that rocks contain all of the chemical elements of plants and animals. They do, to be sure, but surely clearness demands some mention of the nature of photosynthesis in this connection lest the reader visualize plant roots sucking up carbonates or assimilating diamonds or coal. I would disagree with the author's concept of species, and I am not at all convinced that "all animals must therefore be interpreted in terms of a single cell." Whatever the truth, this "axiom" entirely ignores a large amount of recent writing which tends to show that cell aggregates constitute systems that behave quite differently from their constituent cells. This whole group of slightly varying ideas—some philosophical, some scientific, and some merely foolish, may, for present purposes, be lumped under the term of Emergent Evolution.

The greater part of the forests of the world are not found in the North Temperate zone except on the Mercator projection, but in the Equatorial zone: Cephalopods are known from the lower Cambrian which antedates the date (Ordovician) given for their appearance by a great many millions of years. If major groups of animals are non-competitive why the dismal forebodings of entomologists regarding the fate of the human race at the hands of insects, or leaving humans out of account, why spend the taxpayers' money to support a Bureau of Entomology. The cloud blanket, dim light and uniform temperatures of Cambrian time are purely imaginary. There are no facts which establish any one of these three. The statement might have come from the pentateuchal Genesis rather than from Zoögenesis. Because a bull dog and a greyhound differ it is concluded that all races of man descended from a single ancestor which did not resemble any of his descendants.



Clark seems to have a childlike faith in the irreversibility of evolution, which principle he wrongly attributes to Osborn instead of to Dollo, and which principle has no meaning unless the greatest care is exercised in defining exactly what is meant, whether structure or function, either or neither. It is perfectly clear to the vast majority of zoologists and anthropologists, despite the reiteration of a contrary belief by Osborn, that man's ancestors have passed through a brachiating stage.

These samples and a host of similar ones that could be given create the illusion that the author of the Alice books may have dictated "The New Evolution" from the spirit world. And as for the fundamentalist, there must be great rejoicing in his camp at the spectacle of an employee of the U. S. National Museum, apparently shoving poor old Dar-

win a bit deeper into the bottomless pit. To the discerning I recommend Huxley's celebrated reply to Bishop Wilberforce.

A Universe for Two

ENFANTS TERRIBLES. By JEAN COCTEAU. New York: Brewer & Warren. 1930. \$2.50.

Reviewed by THEODORE PURDY, JR.

A MANTLE of fame,—or at least of notoriety,—descended early upon the shoulders of Jean Cocteau. The fairies who undoubtedly presided at his birth gave him brilliance, valuable worldly connections, great versatility, the ability to keep not merely abreast but in advance of fashion, and (better than a capacity to please) the desire to astonish and shock. It is a good many years now since he first began to be talked about, but there seems to be no end to the supply of Cocteau anecdotes, Cocteau rumors (how often he has been dying in hospitals or madhouses!), and general gossip (mostly scandalous) about the man who has been more than any one else responsible for what the really up-to-date Parisian has thought, read, seen, and said these past few seasons.

In a material way the list of his achievements is not perhaps very imposing. Others have founded night-clubs like the "Boeuf," written esoteric plays for the art theatres, like "Orphee," or solid novels like "Thomas l'Imposteur," been converted to catholic ways by Jacques Maritain, and even descended safely, as he now has, to writing curtain-raisers for the Comédie-Française and wearing the cuffs of his jackets unbuttoned and turned back. But no one has held his pose more consistently or effectively in spite of an unintermittent stream of attacks from every source throughout this time, until today his reward in the sure glory of caricature in the daily papers and on the stage has come to him. Cocteau began as the sensation of a few smart houses; today, —ultimate recompense!—his name is known even to the Proustian lavabo women of Paris who will tell without urging excellent stories of "Monsieur Jean."

Unlike most of his work, his novels have never been experimental or precious. The third of them is "Les Enfants Terribles," which Mr. Samuel Putnam has translated. A difficult book to describe, it is in sum the story of a high-strung, orphaned brother and sister, fatally attached to each other from childhood and unable to exist save in a jointly created dream world in which outsiders have no place. Their tragedy turns on the jealousy of the sister when the advent of a stranger threatens this private universe. The brother, discovering that her falsehood has cost him his happiness, attempts to escape from her dominance by suicide. Whether the book is a study of incest, or the psychology of personality, or heredity, or merely a modern fairy story with a tragic and somewhat questionable moral is a matter purposely left vague, and always subject to the reader's decision.

The art of Cocteau's method lies in this maintenance of a dream atmosphere of childhood throughout the story. A similar tale, told of more definite, adult human beings would be grotesque and unbelievable, but Elizabeth and Paul belong to a world as immaterial as their own imagined one, and consequently their history has something of the highly vivid but pathological quality of an invalid's memories. In addition, however, "Enfants Terribles" is exceedingly well written, with a graphic presentation of the psychology of a pair of nervous, solitary, over-intelligent children which can only be founded on the author's own experience. The many eccentricities, both actual and attached to him by reputation, which Cocteau will no doubt one day outgrow, have little or no part in this remarkable book. Those who have condemned him as a poseur will find pose and personality indistinguishable this time, and must recognize a Cocteau less diverting but surely better equipped for the future.

"Already," says the *Manchester Guardian*, "after less than a month's digging on the site of Camulodunum, close to modern Colchester, valuable results have been obtained, throwing light on the life of the Celtic inhabitants just before the Roman conquest. Camulodunum was the capital of Cunobelin, Shakespeare's Cymbeline, the king of a tribe called the Trinovantes, and he reigned roughly during the forty years before the arrival of the Romans in A. D. 44."

Studies in the Macabre

CHRISTINE AND OTHER STORIES. By JULIAN GREEN. Translated by Courtney Bruerton. New York: Harper & Bros. 1930. \$2.50.

Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT

"CHRISTINE" contains four stories by Julian Green, the author of "The Closed Garden" and "The Dark Journey." Two are very short, scarcely more than sketches, two are long *contes*. They show the author in a new manner, if not a new mood; they have not the tight, careful plotting of the novels, but they have the same atmosphere of oppression and terror, which is increased, in these stories, by the introduction of the supernatural.

One of the shorter stories takes place on ship-board; the other three each deal with a solitary boy, who has for a great part of the time no young companions, living in a household of unsympathetic elders. Both these settings hold great possibilities of pity and terror; the second situation, in especial, is ready to give the reader that extra turn of the screw that Henry James wrote about. And the power of the situation is increased by a multitude of details, each one with its own suggestion of brooding mystery. There is the epitaph of the aunt, in "The Pilgrim on the Earth," with its haunting verse from the Bible: "She lieth under the shady trees in the secrecy of the reed." There is the incident in "The Keys of Death" where the boy, playing on the carpet with a little cousin, shows her the little archers in the design and the pictured animals they are hunting: "They're not shooting at the animals," said she . . . "They're not looking at the animals; they're looking at us." It may be that these sentences, taken out of their context, will seem trivial; but no one who has read the stories will be able to recall them without the total effect of breathless anxiety that the author achieves by a cumulation of such details. There is, as there so often is in Dickens, a sense of horror out of all proportion to any tangible cause, a villain far more terrible than his actual power should make him.

This ability to evoke a dread of something a little more than earthly, while it is the greatest possible demonstration of the author's power, almost inevitably involves him in a dilemma at the conclusion. It is in any such case a matter of the utmost nicety to tell neither too much nor too little; if the dénouement is too explicit, the wonder is gone, but if it is too vague, the reader is left wondering but disappointed. To illustrate: in "The Keys of Death" the boy has resolved to kill a member of the household; he has committed murder in his heart, and he accepts the fact; he thinks of himself as a murderer. There is no surprise, only awe, when voices speak to him, telling him how to commit his crime. He is prevented by his cousin, a girl of psychic powers, who falls inexplicably ill, has a vision of death as a gigantic archer, standing in a pine-tree and towering above it, and diverts his arrows to herself. "He has drawn death to Ferrière" she says, and he will not depart empty-handed. That the boy has indeed drawn death there one believes, but the present death of the first part, the pervasive, inescapable influence, whispering the means of murder to the soul, is far beyond a fairy tale giant in a tree. On the other hand, in "Leviathan" one is told too little; the end is a refusal to explain at all.

Perhaps to justify such an atmosphere of mystery as Mr. Green has created it is necessary to explore the byways of the mind. Certainly the story in which the conclusion is most satisfactory does so. It is "The Pilgrim on the Earth," and is the story of an abnormal mind. As in Maupassant's "Le Horla," there are two possible explanations, lunacy or the intervention of a supernatural being. But whereas in "Le Horla" the force that drove the hero to suicide was, if not an illusion, a maleficent spirit, in "The Pilgrim on the Earth" the presence that leads the hero to destruction of his possessions and to suicide is represented as benevolent. That is, "Le Horla" only puts the question, "Was the hero mad, or was he demon-ridden?" But "The Pilgrim on the Earth" asks, "Was he mad, or are all of us who cling to life mad? Was his mind diseased, or was it like the mind of God?" All the overpowering mystery which Mr. Green has at command is justified by that question.

These stories are in a sense less finished, less mathematically perfect than Mr. Green's novels, but many readers will find them more fascinating.

Rapier Thrust

RHODODENDRON PIE. By MARGERY SHARP.
New York: D. Appleton & Company. 1930.
\$2.50.

Reviewed by ELMER DAVIS

HERE is an old story, retold so charmingly that you forget a hundred bad novels that contrasted snobbish sophisticates with heart-of-gold bourgeois, and think only of this one which is a continual delight. The Laventies lived in Sussex, on the crippled Mrs. Laventie's money, and never said, or did, or felt, the obvious or even the natural thing. They were smart and intellectual, and they knew it, and rubbed it in on the neighbors. Now a good many authors, trying to present clever disagreeable people, have managed to make them disagreeable without succeeding in making them clever. Miss Sharp does both; with admirable sureness, a lightly playing wit, and a keen preception, she shows you the merit as well as the fault in the Laventies; and the faults as well as the merits of the Gayfords who lived next door, and read Kipling, and believed in the Church and the Empire.

The Laventies made such a point of being unlike other people that when Elizabeth, the eldest child, demanded heliotropes instead of cherries in her birthday pie, she got them. Thereafter she had them on every birthday; and Dick had cowslips and Ann had rhododendrons. Ann grew up, a Laventie in all outward seeming; but gradually she faced the horrid truth that she would rather have apples in her pie. She finally got them with the assistance of her mother, who broke a silence about her family's doings that had lasted for years to tell them what she thought of them. That is the only bit of preaching in the book, and there is so much truth in it that one can stand the sermon—especially as Miss Sharp, by an unexpected bit of irony in the last line of the book, manages to keep her scales evenly balanced.

This is, no doubt, a "light" novel—the kind of light novel that critics are always asking for, and to which the public is usually so indifferent when on rare occasions it actually arrives. But it is the keen lightness of a Damascus blade; read it for fun and you will find yourself digesting some uncomfortable doses of truth, whether you be sophisticate or anti-sophisticate.

Prisoners of War

CAPTURED! By FERDINAND HUSZTI HORVATH.
New York: Dodd, Mead & Company. 1930.
\$2.50.

THE TUNNELLERS OF HOLZMINDEN. By H. G. DURNFORD. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1930. \$2.50.

Reviewed by EMERSON TAYLOR

CAPTURED! is a grand tale of battle, adventure, love, hardship, impish gaiety, and passion. The author, a distinguished artist serving in the war as a subaltern officer of a famous Austro-Hungarian regiment on the Eastern front, sets down the staccato record of his campaigns and subsequent captivity in a Russia on the eve of revolution with a brightly tempered acceptance of war's conditions as he found them which is most refreshing. Too many books about the great struggle have been written by neurotics, horror-mongers, and propagandists. Here is one written by a simple soldier who fights as well as he knows how, undergoes hardships without whining, and lightens the rigors of confinement in a Russian prison camp with romantic love affairs and daring attempts at escape into neutral Sweden—all of which are deservedly crowned with success. The scenes of a soldier's life are vivid in color, rich in frank detail, unsparing in their occasional grimness, invariably picturesque. Their background is the vast and varied open warfare of the Galician and Carpathian front, or the turbulent, nightmare Russia of 1917.

Mr. Durnford's "Tunnellers of Holzminden" is a cool, detailed account of how a group of British officers, captured in battle, dug their way out of one of the best known German military prisons. The reader's interest is awakened and held by the obvious and uncolored authenticity of the narrative; his deep admiration goes out, unasked, to the captives' pluck and resourcefulness. Absorbing from cover to cover because of its vivid account of a military prisoner's daily round, the book is perhaps especially notable as reflecting the finely successful effort of British officers in durance to sustain their honor and morale intact

in the face of the bitter humiliations and petty oppressions invented by a crafty and bulldozing jailer. Here is a tale of high courage, first published in 1920 when the events of Holzminden were still fresh in the author's recollection, and now enriched with some additional pages. The illustrations are most interesting.



Twenty-five Acres of Trees

(A New York Mood)

I WAS walking one hot summer day with a man prominent in the paper world, through Cathedral Woods, on Monhegan Island. We sat down on a rock . . . acres of strange happy carpeting lay all about us . . . little spruce cones and needles and moss . . . tiny islands of blue up in the sky . . . low sunshine from the west like stained glass windows on the trunks of the trees.

My friend said, "We have to cut down for every Sunday morning fifty-two times a year, twenty-five acres of trees like this, that have been growing for twenty years, to make one single issue of The New York Sunday Times."

I began my Sunday—my last Sunday morning in the usual orthodox way. After taking my regular setting up exercise and feeling quite trim I went to my door, braced myself, hoisted up from the floor my share of the twenty-five acres of trees. Then I came back, sat down in a chair, put it on the floor, and looked at it distantly. I began reading the headlines upside down.

"I might as well," I thought. "What is this twenty-five acres of trees getting out of it? What is it all for? What is anything for?"

The twenty-five acres of trees haunted me.

I was just having my unreasonable New York mood, of course.

Perhaps other people who read The ——— have this same New York mood too—this combination-hate-and-fascination toward machines—these vast speechless lunges at Nature—at this whole rolling planet New York makes to get what it wants.

Of course in a way we ought not to worry. The planet is going to come to after it, probably. Nature, too, is going to fix itself over afterward.

But what troubles me about our huge New York worldgrab machine is the way it is getting to be personal—the way it is getting its grip not only on Nature but on human nature—human nature right here in New York.

What our modern mass-production machine in it's great swoops of colossal innocence is doing to trees, I see it doing—doing every day, on a much more astounding scale, to people.

In the same way that the New York Times chews up twenty-five acres of trees into advertisements, book reviews, editorials, news from Yonkers, Hong-kong, Paris, Patagonia, and Babe Ruth, miles of rows of faces of pretty flappers—our industrial machine today is largely engaged in making wood-pulp of people. Anybody who notices faces can see it.

I go out into that great swoon of light—the Great Gay Way we tragically call it. All one has to do is to look a hundredth of an inch below the surface in the people to see what the Factory Machines, the Store Machines they are being put through soul and body, do to them. I let myself down through a manhole in the street, into the subways—those great flooded sewer-pipes of people and watch them—watch miles and miles of them reading The ———, reading The ———, day after day in the subway I see it—the same feeble drool of excitement being spooned out—deliberately spooned out to the same (mile after mile) whiz of vacant faces.

I used to blame the editors. I don't now. When one thinks of it—thinks of the way millions of men and women are being mowed down, dehumanized, put soul and body through machines until at last (anybody can see how it is for himself) they are worked over into what can only be called at best some new, strange, dull, soppy pulp of humanity, one can feel as jealous and as resentful about it as one likes, but how can one blame the editors of The ——— and of The ———? What is there an editor can do with people like this, when the Factory Machines and the Store Machines, our great Humanity-Reduction Plants get through wood-enizing them?

Or what can an author do, or a composer or theatre do, with people like this when their time of recreation comes,—when their factories let us have what is left? One might as well publish newspapers, write literature, compose music to Upson boards.

There are some of us, of course, who like to think that we have comparatively escaped from machines and while we are chased and know we are chased by our own motor cars, hunted down by telephones, ferreted out by radios, we do manage to have somehow, enough of ourselves left over to read the New York Sunday Times—even the book reviews.

But even the Sunday Times—a beautiful spread out twenty-five acre Sabbath with the Sunday Times, does have after all its spiritual limitations, when one thinks of the trees that have gone into it.

On the floor by my side it is lying this minute. I am sitting and thinking on the top of my roof in New York. The Sherry-Netherland tipping itself up at the sky . . . a hundred thousand neighbors within the honk of a horn. I think what it would be like to have the presence this morning in New York (instead of twenty-five acres of Ochs) of twenty-five acres of pines—a long happy strip of woods fifty feet deep on both sides up and down Fifth Avenue from Washington Square to the Plaza—men, women, and children in their Sunday clothes flocking through them . . . all to be razed to the ground before the evening chimes in Rockefeller's church . . . swiveled up into gigantic slivers, chewed up by the Machine with that special fierce biting kind of saliva it has (which you taste for days) into a kind of wood-slush—trembled into great pans, dried off into advertisements, into cablegrams, into editorials, into eight pages of sporting news, sixteen feature articles—into all these great stretches reaching away, of prehensile chairs, soaps, pianos, vast Cotton, vast Wood and Steel and little silk worms pawing on our purses. . . . Twenty-five acres of trees that have been keeping at it all day, all night, all summer, all winter, and have taken twenty years to grow!

I go back in my mind to Cathedral Woods on The Island. I remember, as I start to take up my Times what the trees are like . . . so still! . . . You listen to the ocean all around you there singing softly on its shores half a mile away. Very few people, even tourists and trippers, can ever walk through Cathedral Woods without coming out changed in spirit, rested in body by it, touched by the sense of stored-up wonder, the quiet presences, the vastness, the loveliness, the loneliness, and stillness meeting there.

Going into twenty-five acres of Cathedral Woods is like getting caught in the middle of the day looking at the stars at night. George Bellows, Rockwell Kent, Robert Henri, and Eric Hudson, Frederick Waugh, Truman Fassett, Paul Dougherty, Chauncey Ryder, and Nicholas Roerich have painted the silence there. . . . I look at my Sunday Times on the floor by my side. I look at the trees. I keep thinking. . . . God and Mr. Ochs forgive me!

The days pass by. Civilization rolls on over us as if nothing made very much difference. Daily the thing I see the machines are doing to the trees—doing to the ground, to air, to water, to sky—sucking the ozone out of the air, emptying the fish out of the ocean, smudging the very light out of the sky, stripping off the outsides, hollowing out the insides of this frail, meager little planet—I see them doing still more to the people on it, to people I know—to crowds of people I daily see. Their blank faces go hastening by. They seem to be walking absently, vaguely as in some kind of hurry-dream—walking hither, walking thither, walking nowhere, anywhere—and why anywhere? . . . up and down the street.

GERALD STANLEY LEE.

The "libraires" of France, who are not librarians, but booksellers, recently held their annual congress at Lyons, and among other subjects took up the important question of the price of books. Apropos of this discussion the London Observer says: "The French yellowback, which nowadays is hardly ever yellow, but is still in paper covers, is the cheapest book in Europe, for it is only three times its pre-war price—which even then was not expensive—and it should be five times to keep pace with the fall of the franc. The buyer gets less for his money, however, for a novel of to-day rarely runs to more than 220 pages."