

The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the choice of books should be addressed to MRS. BECKER c/o *The Saturday Review*. As for reasons of space ninety percent of the inquiries cannot be answered in print, a stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed for reply.

B. R., New York, asks for information on present political conditions in Germany. Two books have just come from the press; they should be read together. Edgar Ansel Mowrer's "Germany Puts the Clock Back" (Morrow) is none the worse for being journalism; it is being issued simultaneously in Germany, England, and America. The author, chief of the *Chicago Daily News* Bureau in Berlin, tells the story of Germany's revolt against its own republic in nervous, striking sentences, alive with interest. What he says will be endorsed by many on the field, but it will be news to many in other lands. Oswald Garrison Villard's "The German Phoenix" (Smith & Haas) goes much deeper—or rather, starting much further back, it takes off for a broader jump. For a thoughtful, sympathetic, and often saddened report of things as they are, nothing beats it. Less picturesque than Mr. Mowrer's book, it is more comprehensive. The former supplements and explains the newspapers; the latter illuminates contemporary history. It will be especially useful to the student to see where these two books agree and on what points they differ.

Another Good Samaritan, R. F. Flintermann, Detroit, Mich., has sent directions for "Senior Wrangler," so the inquirer from Oakland, California, is doubly supplied; the elaborate instructions are typed that someone else "may get as much pleasure out of the game as I know others have." P. C. C., Cheshire, Conn., asks me to pass on to B. De V., Lincoln, Mass., the name of "The Garden Guide," published by De La Mare and Co, saying he has used it for three years and various friends swear by and on it. It may be noted that the famous De la Mare garden books have been incorporated with those of Dodd, Mead & Co. E. C. K., Kansas City, Mo., has long been looking for a good large-type edition of "El Periquillo Sarniento," by El Pensador Mexicano (J. J. Fernandez Lizardi), which he of course desires in Spanish; he wonders if our "superior of avenues of information" can supply the address of a Spanish, Mexican, or South American publisher of a good edition of this work, which he can find only in one edition, small-type and paper-bound, published in Spain. Do I see help coming along one of these superior avenues?

Irma S. Rombauer, moved by the strong praise of her cook book in these columns, sent in by my *Trevlac*, Indiana, correspondent, sends me a copy to see for myself, and I can testify that Benj. Wallace Douglass, Hickory Hill, Indiana, who collects cook books has made no mistake in putting this into a high place in his outfit; it is the cream of thirty years of cooking as an avocation, an anthology of favorite recipes set down in a spirit of appreciation of good food. Meanwhile, noting my romantic feeling for a good cook book—for romance will not perish while cook books, seed catalogues, and books of building plans continue to come out—someone has sent me a most unusual and valuable work, "The National Cook Book," by Sheila Hibben (Harper). This

is the only cook book I have seen that deserves to rank as a serious contribution to our social history—though serious is the last word to use for a work whose directions are brisk and whose introduction is sparkling. "As the months of compiling this volume have gone by," says the author, "and I have sent and received hampers of correspondence with people interested in food all over the United States, I have let my spirits rise. I have felt as if I were writing not only a geography of this country, but a social study of its inhabitants, for I have been in communication with people who really believe that how we do things, as much as what we do, is significant—people who still hold that a thing, even an apple pie, must have style to be important." Pie? Style? I'll say so. For style in an apple pie means not only looks and taste but that indefinable tang of perfection to be found in certain sections of the Great American Pie Belt. In summer, made out of Early Transparents or Gravensteins, pie is lyric; even in the winter a good Greening can lift the heart. Pie begins on p. 362 and twenty-three states contribute to it; this gives you an idea how Mrs. Hibben goes to work. The meats, the soups, and especially the fish, are enough to make exiles homesick. Yes, it is truly national, and it may keep some dishes from belonging to a "passing America."

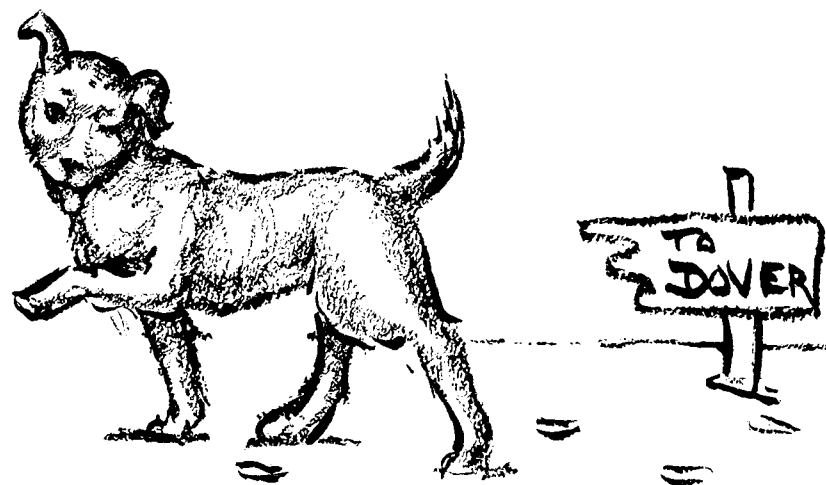
"What is the basis," asks H. W. C., Tucson, Arizona, "for Thomas Mann's extensive knowledge of tuberculosis? Did he have it himself, did one of his family ever have it, or has he ever practised medicine? His acquaintance with it is so authentic as to make us wonder."

IN 1812 the wife of Thomas Mann was attacked by catarrh of the tip of the lung. "Then, and again in the next year but one," he himself says, "she was obliged to stop for several months in the Alps. In May and June of 1912 I spent three weeks with her in Davos, and accumulated—the word but ill describes the passivity of my state—the fantastic impressions out of which the Horselberg idea shaped itself into a short tale." It was to have been a brief "satyr play"; the fascination of death, the triumph of extreme disorder over a life founded upon order and consecrated to it—these were to be reduced in scale and dignity by a humorous treatment." It seemed to him at first as if this would suffice. It always seems to him, he says, as if a book will be easy to bring about, and it never is. "Every working idea of mine presents itself to me in a harmless, simple, practicable light, involving no great effort in the execution." But this simple and harmless book had him "in its power for twelve years," and it was not until 1924 that he brought it finally to completion, a triumph of obstinacy. In these twelve years he had brought to an amazing masterliness the idea of epic prose composition as "a thought-texture woven of different themes, as a musically related complex"—an idea with which he had played in "Tod in Venedig," and one with which contemporary fiction has dallied more than with

any other method of literary composition. It is necessary only to examine André Gide's "The Counterfeiters," or Aldous Huxley's "Point Counter Point," in the light of some knowledge of musical architecture, or to recall that James Joyce was a deeply informed musician long before he wrote "Ulysses," to mark the interrelation of the arts in this generation of composers and novelists.

Thomas Mann did not make his first acquaintance with lung disease at Davos; his second sister, Carla, whose suicide in 1912 was one of the crucial tragedies of his life, had been ill in childhood with inflammation of the lungs. But the three

ing alike but with different meanings. "The Secretary's Guide to Correct Modern Usage," by C. Sylvester Mawson (Crowell), gives succinct advice on spelling, hyphens and divisions, capitals, punctuation, abbreviations, figures and numerals, as well as type-sizes, italics and their use, spacing and indentation, the preparation of manuscripts, and the essentials of correspondence. It is arranged for instant reference. For the second book, "Words Confused and Misused," by Maurice H. Wesen (Crowell), is a useful little desk-book, all the more practical because it does not disdain to deal with mistakes often before corrected.



weeks, off and on, in the sanitarium in the Alps sufficed for a documentation to whose accuracy other "lungers" than those in Arizona have testified." It may have been because of that very "passivity" of which he speaks that his observation was so sound, searching and comprehensive. It is my own opinion that such "passivity" is the only sound basis for observation, and that a novelist never really gets life by going strenuously after it with a notebook.

C. L. S., Wallingford, Conn., asks for a recent book, not necessarily fiction, for reading aloud at the meetings of an organization now working for the people of the Southern highlands. The non-fiction clause makes it possible to include a book every such group should read: "Machine Age in the Hills," by Malcolm Ross (Macmillan). It may hold up the work of the meeting now and again, while these poignant chapters quietly and without special pleading tell their story of how the machine age has "changed hill virtues into industrial vices." It does not leave things there; it looks ahead and shows a chance for the American people to act for assuaging the despair of the hills. But it makes its case by producing cases, and each of them is as telling as a novel.

If a novel is needed, an entertaining one that brings in all manner of picturesque elemental local superstitions is "Three Brothers and Seven Daddies," by Harry Harrison Kroll (Long & Smith). This takes place somewhere in the Southern highlands; if I knew my geography better I could tell where the mountains are whose cheerfully named peaks afford the book's title.

K. A. F., Minneapolis, Minn., needs books—not more than two—for a stenographer's desk, especially one that outlines the correct use of words sound-

THE question most often asked this department has never been answered in print. In one form or another it amounts to this: "How on earth do you manage to do so many things and keep your head?"

Asked this face to face, I am wont to reply by quoting my life's motto: "Leg over leg, as the dog went to Dover." This may call for a little explanation. The dog, confronted with the necessity of walking from London to Dover, a considerable distance, was at first daunted, till it dawned on him that by placing one leg in front of the other and repeating the process, he could in time arrive almost anywhere. Quoting this motto in the studio of Cateau de Leeuw, who made the brilliant illustrations for her sister Adele's Javanese story "Rika" (Macmillan), she was moved to make me the accompanying picture, now my priceless possession. No model being on hand, she says he is more heraldic than he needed to be, but what he may lack in anatomy he makes up in spirit. You can see in his eye that he has been caught at the moment when the great liberating thought struck him. His paw is posed for the *pas qui coute*.

I have been told that he is crying Eureka. This is clearly an error. He is making the all-sufficient statement *Cur Non?* Himself a motto, he has a motto for himself. The two will take one over long rough roads with a mind at ease and an eye cocked for the landscape.

An original copy of William Blake's "Songs of Innocence," with color plates, one of which is the only example in the world, has been presented to the British Museum. The donor is Miss E. J. Carey, and it was given to her great-grandfather by Blake himself.

THE MEMOIRS OF SATAN

The Private Life of the Devil

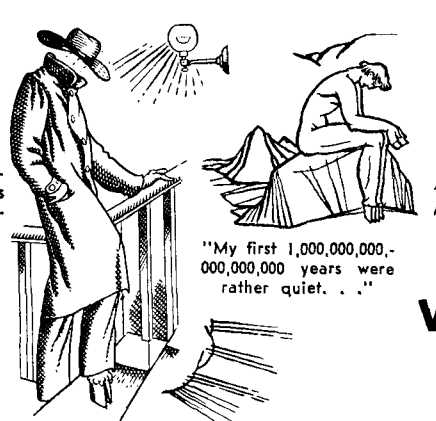


"Helen was an amusing and likeable little beast."

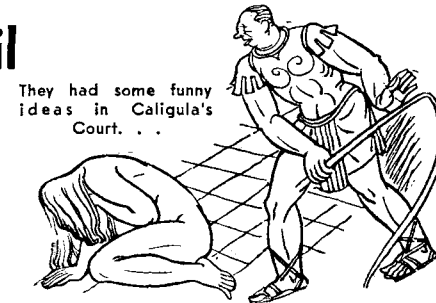


"Eve . . . one of the nicest girls I've ever known. . ."

The odd old gentleman who was writing his life-story.



"My first 1,000,000,000,000,000,000 years were rather quiet. . ."



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. . . could have taken lessons from the ruthless murderer who turned the quiet little French hotel into a terror-ridden shambles, in the year's most satisfying thriller—

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. . . would be baffled by the sinister and blood-curdling mystery of the little French hotel—of the horror that pursued lovely Sue Tally—of the death that struck from darkness.

THE WHITE COCKATOO

by Mignon G. Eberhart

Winner of the Scotland Yard Prize

6th Printing . . \$2 CRIME CLUB, Inc.

The New Books Fiction

(Continued from page 453)

but for the background—the house. Miss Ashton has the gift of designing scenes and costumes charmingly and significantly; the little pageant of the changes from Georgian stateliness through early Victorian romanticism and mid-Victorian solidity to the disintegration of the present, is admirably put on. It seems a pity that a good half of the book is laid this side of 1900, when the glamor of unfamiliarity, which is the greatest appeal of the book, is necessarily not so strong. But even here the author's skill makes the most possible out of her material. This is never an important book, but always a readable one.

MULLINER NIGHTS. By P. G. WODEHOUSE. Doubleday, Doran. 1933. \$2.

"A merry heart doeth good like a medicine, Proverbs, 17, 22," murmured the Reverend Augustine as a benediction at the end of this collection of Mr. Mulliner's reports of the strange adventures of his large assortment of nephews. That is why there cannot be too much Wodehouse. He is the best of good medicines. This volume contains nine short stories, all of them well up to Mr. Wodehouse's high standard. If you have read them, or some of them, in their magazine publication it doesn't matter a bit as it is one of his remarkable qualities that his work can stand rereading. Even if the plot is fresh in mind, there is sure to be some unexpected phrase, some subtle touch, that comes to the reader as a freshly happy surprise, something not fully savored in a first reading. Indeed, Mr. Wodehouse perhaps suffers a little from the fate of the humorist who runs into broad farce upon occasion, in that one is apt to underestimate the delicacy and smoothness of his writing in the fine finish of its style. He is a master in the construction of the short story, but perhaps his most amazing gift is his ability to ring the changes upon essentially similar comic situations in such fashion that each one presents something new in an infinite variety.

Education

SET THE CHILDREN FREE. By FRITZ WITTELS, M.D. Translated by EDEN and CEDAR PAUL. Norton. 1933. \$2.75.

The promoters of this book claim that it is "for normal parents of normal children" and that it can answer, from the point of view of psychoanalysis, "every normal question" of the modern parent regarding the impulses of children, why they tell lies, how to prevent feelings of inferiority, what to tell children about sex, the uses and abuses of punishment, and the values of the new education. Psychoanalysts who wish to reach the average individual would do well to recall the many months of personal analysis preliminary to their own understanding and emotional acceptance of the principles they set forth. Though there is much of worth in Dr. Wittels's book, especially his constant stressing of the need of children for encouragement and wise affection, the lay parent will probably find in it many unprofitable threats to self-confidence (such as the insistence that the smallest acts may have lasting deleterious effect on the development of the child). Possibly such a parent will even be horrified, for Dr. Wittels does not translate his psychoanalytical words and concepts, startling in their ambiguity, into those in common use. He has, as well, taken "extreme cases in illustration of his thesis, for nothing but dramatic effects can impress a modern reader who has a surfeit of sensationalism in his daily paper." Just as one never imagines oneself committing the lurid acts described in the newspaper, so in all probability will the intrepid normal parent who perseveres to the end of this book, preserve his equilibrium by the decision that it can have no possible application to himself. By its very sensationalism, it will fail of its purpose. Moreover, do not most parents need encouragement as much as children? The sense of guilt, with its paralyzing effect on constructive action, is too easily aroused by such books as this one, and unfortunately cannot be dissipated for each individual so disturbed by clarifying discussions of the principles as they actually apply to him.

THE MIDDLE GENERATION. By J. D. BERESFORD. Dutton. 1933. \$2.50.

With "The Middle Generation" Mr. Beresford has now completed the second stage in his trilogy. Behind him lies "The Old People," a tidy level plain, where

no wind stirred and few birds sang; before him is another unsmiling stretch of country which will presumably be called "The Young People," or something of that kind. Might the reviewer, in his role of unsolicited adviser, beg Mr. Beresford to think again before he attempts that third stage? The family geography of 1910-1930 is already known to us; its fruits have all been devoured by other writers; and it is depressing to think that a novelist of Mr. Beresford's undoubted gifts may come to grief along its barren roads.

"The Old People" had little to recommend it but technical perseverance—there was not much life in it, that is to say, but it was neatly put together. What has happened to the Hillington family since we bade it a tepid farewell there? Old Miles and his wife are out of the picture now; Babs, the daughter, has run off with a farmer; Bob is a rising barrister, with a taste for high society—he is to marry a peer's daughter before the novel ends; Owen, the hero, is a young electrical engineer, apprenticed to a bourgeois uncle. But Owen is only a hero by courtesy. For a while, as an ardent and bewildered young lover, he makes a serious claim on us; but thereafter the mild protagonist is Time, and the story moves under no greater compulsion than that of bringing the Hillingtons to the threshold of yet another book. Owen's one moment of vitality—his touching affair with a shopgirl—is also Mr. Beresford's one moment of real storytelling. The subsequent pages of the novel are filled with a melancholy refrain: *they fugaces*—the years are slipping away; the brougham must give place to the automobile, Victoria must die, morals and manners and politics must change, Hillingtons must have children. What are Owen's spiritual conflicts but the merest incidents in this threadbare parade? What is his lifeless second marriage but an excuse for keeping the trilogy alive?

But the Mr. Beresford who entertains us between pages 49 and 130 of "The Middle Generation" is a novelist to be reckoned with. There is a simple and permanent beauty in the young Nellie Wood, a straightforward vigor in Owen's lust; surely the novelist who can get so directly at our emotions need not waste his time with the Hillington fortunes. Already their doom is pronounced: for even the Forsytes were tainted with autumn, and Miss Bentley seems to have used up what little energy there was left in the family saga. Nothing remains for Galsworthy's successors but a wintry rehearsal of the decay of English glory, of the undaunted fertility of English males—two facts which stale with repetition. Before he presents us with a third book, I wish Mr. Beresford would ask himself whether its story has not already been told.

DESIRE: SPANISH VERSION. By EVELYN EATON. Morrow. 1933. \$2.

So that no one may be misled by the title of this book, it is perhaps well to state at once that "Desire: Spanish Version" does not have as its theme that desire in Spain is different from desire in Labrador or Costa Rica or Tierra del Fuego or any other habitable land. The title happens to be the title of a movie. The movie was the occasion of the meeting of the hero and heroine of the book, and has something to do also with their reunion. That is the sole connection of the title with the story.

The story is concerned with a violinist and a pretty Polish girl. It is by turns romantic and sordid, and occasionally a little bawdy. The violinist and the girl meet at the Paradore movie studios outside Paris and have an affair. This affair, as presented by the author, is somewhat colored by the surroundings, and is not very pretty.

The most interesting aspect of the book is the picture it gives—quite incidentally—of the activities of a big modern talkie studio. The glimpses we get of what goes on behind the scenes are vivid and seem to be true. We are interested by the complicated mechanics of taking the scenes and the parts played by all the people required to make a strip of film a few feet long. This is surely one of the triumphs of coordination among machines and people.

But as to the novel as a whole, we can scarcely say it is very interesting. The episodes are the standard ones for bohemian novels since Du Maurier. Our chief objection is that they are not very well handled. The author jumps from one to another without sufficient connecting links, and her style is—well, jittery.

SUBLUNARY. By L. E. MARTIN. Dutton. 1933. \$2.50.

Miss Martin, a newcomer among British novelists, is to be welcomed as one whose first book is somewhat out of the ordinary.

Its surface texture is excellent; it is often felicitous in phrase, colorful in its descriptive passages, and smoothly fluent. In construction it sprawls a little, as it covers two generations, with a glimpse at a third, but it is sufficiently held together, as a unit, by the central character around whom it is built. In its thought, in conception as a view of life, it can hardly be called immature, but it is a curiously limited, narrowly feminine envisagement and, as such, seriously astigmatic. Essentially, it is a study of sex hostilities by a woman who does not adequately understand them, though she has moments of penetrating insight, and the book is of value and unusual interest as a sort of case history. Incidentally, the title remains cryptic, unless it is to be referred to Dryden's observation that "All things sublunary are subject to change."

Miscellaneous

THE ORIENT IN AMERICAN TRANSCENDENTALISM. By Arthur Christy. Columbia University Press. \$4.

A DICTIONARY OF SPANISH TERMS IN ENGLISH. By Harold W. Bentley. Columbia University Press. \$3.53.

INFANTS AND CHILDREN. By Frederic H. Bartlett. Farrar & Rinehart. \$1.50 net.

EVANGELINE ADAMS GUIDE FOR 1933. Dodd, Mead. \$2.

THE ATTITUDE OF THE JEWISH STUDENT IN THE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES TOWARD HIS RELIGION. By Marvin Nathan. Bloch.

NATURE BY NIGHT. By Arthur L. Thompson. Ballou. \$3.50.

UNDERSTANDING INVESTMENT. By Allston Cragg. Dodd, Mead. \$2.

THE FUTURE OF EAST AND WEST. By Sir Frederick Whyte. London: Sidgwick & Jackson.

AWAKE. By Susan Prior. Ballou. \$1.50.

PSYCHO-ANALYSIS OF THE NEUROSES. By Helene Deutsch, M.D. London: Hogarth Press. \$4.

DIODES DISCOVERS US. By John Terence McGovern. Dial. \$3.

PROBATION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE. By Sheldon Glueck. Macmillan. \$3.

PERMANENTLY CURING DEPRESSIONS. By M. H. Raymond. Baker & Taylor. \$2.

BUNKLESS PSYCHOLOGY. By Herbert Hungerford. Washington, D. C.: Green Lamp.

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILD. Part I. General Considerations. Century. \$3.

VOODOOS AND OBEAHS. By Joseph J. Williams. Dial. \$3.

DUFAY TO SWEELINCK. By Edna Rickolson Sollitt. Washburn. \$2.

THE TYPEWRITER IN THE PRIMARY AND INTERMEDIATE GRADES. By Ralph Haefner. Macmillan.

YUNINI'S STORY OF THE TRAIL OF TEARS. By Ada Loomis Barry. London: Fudge.

LE MOT JUSTE. By J. G. Anderson. Dutton. \$4.50.

FESTIVALS AND SONGS OF ANCIENT CHINA. By Marcel Granet. Translated by E. D. Edwards. Dutton. \$4.90.

INEVITABLE WAR. By Lieut. Col. Richard Stockton. New York: The Pereth Co.

PSYCHOLOGY OF SEX. By Havelock Ellis. Long & Smith.

LOHENGGRIN. Retold by Angela Diller. Schirmer. 75 cents net.

PROGRESSIVE SOCIAL ACTION. By Edward T. Devine. Macmillan. \$1.75.

OUR WONDERLAND OF BUREAUCRACY. By James M. Beck. Macmillan. \$3.

Pamphlets

GANDHIISM VERSUS SOCIALISM. By Richard B. Gregg. Day. 25 cents.

A SHORT STORY AND A POEM. By Larinkyoti. Mester Groves, Mo. Mark Twain Society. 50 cents.

WASHINGTON'S MAP OF MOUNT VERNON. University of Chicago Press. 25 cents.

Poetry

TOWER WIDOW. By Mary Owen Lewis. Mackay. \$1.50.

EVERYMAN'S SONG. By Jonathan Doolittle. 3 vols. Jersey City. Waat.

THE CHASE POEMS. By Hasye Cooperman. Living Art. Bayard Press.

THE PARIS PSALTER AND METERS OF BOETHIUS. Edited by George Philip Krapp. Columbia University Press. \$4.

THE LONG HILLS. By Frederic Brush. Philadelphia: Swain. \$2.

EVEN SO COME. By Arthur D. Ropes. Boston: Humphries. \$2.

THREADS FROM THE WOOF OF LIFE. By Helen S. Arthur. Stratford.

THE GOLDEN MEASURE. By Ernestine Sellier. New York: Paebbar.

THE ENDURING FLAME. New York: Paebbar.

MASQUERADE. By Kathleen Sutton. New York: Paebbar.

THE CHOIR PRACTICE. By Ellen M. Carroll. New York: Paebbar.

TRANSVALUATIONS. By J. Redwood Anderson. Oxford University Press. \$2.

SACRED SNOW. By Ethel McKenzie. Philadelphia: Roland Swain. \$2.

THE DIVINE COMEDY OF DANTE ALIGHIERI. Carlyle-Wicksteed Translation. Modern Library. 95 cents.

Travel

ARGENTINE TANGO. By PHILIP GUEDALLA. Harpers. 1933. \$3.

The light literature which Mr. Guedalla offers on the subject of South America is very light, indeed, and put with much coquetry.

In a somewhat labored foreword, a Stevensonian pirate, one-eyed, iron hook for a hand, parrot croaking about pieces of eight, and all, hails our author as the latter moves down the quay to join his ship and lugubriously warns him to *Beware of Adjectives*. The sections into which Mr. Guedalla's jottings on Brazil and the Argentine are divided, bear the names—for reasons not apparent in the context—of tango steps. And throughout his observations on the neighboring continent, his main preoccupation appears to be less the subject in hand than his own archness.

Mr. Guedalla went to Brazil and the Argentine to deliver some lectures at the universities and as a sort of elder brother, it would appear, to a party of young English university men going on a somewhat similar mission. He remakes the discoveries made by all North American exchange-professors and the more intelligent sort of travellers for the past generation or so.

His truisms are all very well in their way, or would be, were their comparative banality not heightened in statement by the author's determined sprightliness. They are interspersed by various trivialities of a lecturer's experiences in an unfamiliar land—the South American habit of pinning the title of "Doctor" to every visitor whom the natives wish to honor; the newspaper photographers' flashlights which took away his breath; the brass spittoon to which one of the visiting Cantabridgians accidentally gave a resounding kick just as he was about to be presented solemnly to the Rector of a university; all amusing enough, and suitable for a letter to the folks at home, or even in a book of this sort, if simply and directly put, but inappropriate as the subject of such self-conscious elaboration and euphemistic artifice.

Mr. Guedalla, needless to say, writes with style. The mere technique of these exceedingly superficial impressions is that of the literary virtuoso whose "Wellington," "The Second Empire," "Masters of Men," and half dozen other books have given him a reputation for brilliance. There are flashes of wit here and there, of delicate malice, atmospheric bits delicately and delightfully turned out. But Mr. Guedalla isn't, after all, writing a letter home or merely passing the time of day with some of his undergraduate fellow-travellers. He is venturing—the more so after his complaint that hitherto "the Muses have somehow failed to hold the mirror up to South America"—to present to the general public some more or less pertinent generalizations on a continent and of its greater nations. His manner is engaging, but its content is distressingly thin.

Brief Mention

A useful item in the rapidly growing series of books on Technocracy is Allen Raymond's *What Is Technocracy* (Harper, \$1.50), reprinted from the *Herald Tribune* and intended as an unauthorized but readable summary of what it is all supposed to be about. * * * The now famous movie, *Girls in Uniform*, was based on a German play *Gestern und Heute*, by Christa Winsloe, which was later adapted in English by Barbara Burnham and is now published by Little, Brown & Co. (\$2). * * * Benjamin Constant's famous novelette *Adolph*, supposed to be a veiled autobiography of the period of his stormy love affair with Madame de Stael, has just been printed in a translation by W. Lalor Barrett (Dial Press, \$2). * * * For those who like birds and animals the articles from the last edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* have been reprinted in a single volume with all illustrations (*Mammals and Birds*), Encyclopedia Press. * * * Very different naturally is the *Adventures in a Man's World*, by Courtney Borden (Macmillan, \$2), really excellent anecdotes of hunting and fishing. * * * Let us note here a series of brief books which the Macmillan Company is importing, published originally by the Cambridge University Press and selling for \$1 each. There are two volumes of the *Cambridge Miscellany of Poetry*, brief lives of St. Bernard and St. Francis, George Sturt's *A Small Boy in the 60's*, and T. R. Glover's *Horace*. * * * For special students is a volume of *Seventeenth Century Studies* by members of the Graduate School of Cincinnati, edited by Robert Shafer. Mas-

singer, Ford, and Samuel Butler among the subjects. * * * A useful textbook with bibliographies is *Social Pathology* by J. L. Gillin of the University of Wisconsin, published by the Century Company (\$3.75). The book discusses drug addiction, alcoholism, mental disease, illegitimacy, prostitution, etc. * * * Still another brief survey of the world of modern physics has been written by Hans Reichenbach of the University of Berlin, translated and published by the Macmillan Company. It is called *Atom and Cosmos* (\$2).

Murder Will Out

By WILLIAM C. WEBER

It is a definite delight to sound the tocsin for a trio of relatively new writers instead of ringing out the criminal activities of the old standbys. *Imprimis*, there is "Burn Witch Burn," by A. Merritt (Live-right, \$2). Mr. Merritt is hardly a new name in the domain of death and terror—more than a decade ago he wrote "The Moon Pool," a Rider-Haggardish affair that has not grown old with the passage of years. But "Burn Witch Burn" is without doubt the grisliest piece of writing that has come from his pen and, since "The Moon Pool," the most worthy of a large and terror-stricken audience. A sinister Italian lady is able to endow certain costume dolls she constructs, in a peculiarly horrible manner, with the power of motion. She bends the dolls to her will and, with needle-sharp poniards round their necks, they venture out by night and kill as she bids them. It will chill the blood of the hardest mystery hound. This reader saw strange little figures scuttling into dark corners the night he read it. Try it yourself—and wake up screaming.

Ethel Lina White flashes across the ken of this reader for the first time with a grand story—"Put Out the Light" (Dial Press, \$2). A wealthy spinster, one of the most diabolically fascinating creatures in mystery fiction, holds in practical peonage her three young cousins—two boys and a girl, all penniless, all expecting to get part of the old lady's fortune, all treated like dogs by her, and all hating her in return. There is murder in the air from the first page, and finally the old gal gets what has been coming to her for a long time. The criminal tries to cover her (or his) trail in extraordinarily clever fashion, but a plodding country detective solves the puzzle. Unusually well done, and A-1 entertainment.

They tell me that Erle Stanley Gardiner, who writes "The Case of the Velvet Claws" (Morrow, \$2), isn't a newcomer to the lists, but has been a Darling of the Pulp for years. Well, this is his first book-length opus to get into boards—and it is a wow. Perry Mason, hard-boiled criminal lawyer, is retained by a fair lady who for sheer devilry has most of the Jezebels of fiction backed off the map. But Mason sticks by his client until the last ditch, in spite of warnings from his secretary, who has womanly intuitions and is also a bit jealous. The lady with the velvet claws even tries to shift her husband's murder from her own shoulders to those of Mason—who thereupon makes her, first, confess the crime, and then in a rousing climax shows that she didn't do it—and who did. Much of the story is in dialogue of the crispest sort, with a punch in every sentence, and when there isn't dialogue there is action. Pretty hard to beat, this one.

Crime and humor, as a rule, do not mix. But there is one author who has achieved an almost perfect blend—David Sharp, whose "I, the Criminal" has just been published by Houghton Mifflin & Company (\$2). It is another chapter in the adventurous history of that Professor Fielding who, in an earlier story, found a dead man in the street—or on his doorstep—, casually phoned a friend of his about the gruesome discovery, and toddled blithely away to deliver a lecture on philology. Mr. Fielding can be depended upon always for the unexpected and the amusing. In "I, the Criminal" he steals a valuable first edition from the bookshelves of a careless friend, meaning, of course, to return it later and show how easily his friend's treasures could be ravished. But the friend dies before Fielding can confess his crime, and the safe in which the book was hidden is ransacked by a real burglar, and then everything begins to pop at once. The book is exciting, amusing, and well worth reading.

The light touch is also evident in "The Mystery of Mr. Cross," by Clifton Robbins (Appleton, \$2). Clay Harrison, one of the suavest detectives in fiction, and his impeccable secretary, Henry, in this

(Continued on next page)



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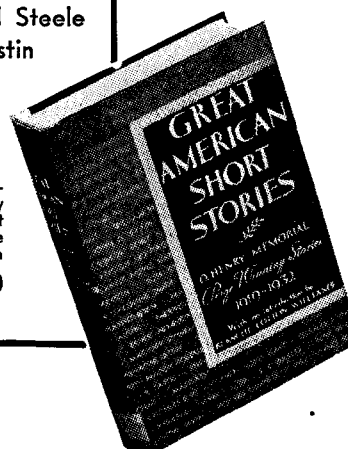
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