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Inquiries, accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope, should be directed to Miss Loveman, in care of The Saturday Review.

A BALANCED RATION FOR A WEEK'S READING

CLAUDIUS THE GOD. By Robert Graves. *Smith & Haas.*

AMERICAN SONG. By Paul Engle. *Doubleday, Doran.*

QUEEN ELIZABETH. By J. E. Neale. *Harcourt, Brace.*

Books for Children

Some time ago now J. T. C. of Washington, D. C., wrote me a most charming letter in which she drew a sprightly picture of her three children, fourteen, sixteen, and twelve, who apparently persist in disappointing her own love for literature by maintaining an adamant resistance to reading. They are intelligent, vivacious youngsters, according to her description, with eagerness and vim, but somehow have up to this time failed to respond to exposure to books. Since their mother herself revelled in them as a child, she is most eager to have them discover the delight which they can yield, but she is reconciled to the probability of their not liking such tales as were her own favorites, the novels of Scott, Dickens, Lytton, etc. She thinks perhaps something humorous would capture their interest, and she wants them to form their taste on good literature.

PROBABLY the small boy doesn't live who can't be enticed into spending hours with a book if that book is TOM SAWYER or HUCKLEBERRY FINN. This year of celebration of Mark Twain's birth is a good time to start him off on that writer, for if he does yield to his blandishments he'll find articles on every side in magazine and newspaper to inform him as to Twain's life and achievements. He's one of the writers I should think would be sure fire with boys of the age of J. T. C.'s sons, and if their young sister doesn't like him as much as they do she'll probably be far more enthusiastic than they over Jane Austen's PRIDE AND PREJUDICE. I read that most charming of novels at the age she is now and though I've read it almost every year since that now distant winter have never demoted it from the place in my affections it won then. I wonder how a girl of the present day would take to Frances Burney's EVELINA which I read a year earlier than PRIDE AND PREJUDICE and found entrancing. It would be worth trying her out on it anyway, even if she finds it too remote from present-day feminine codes and behavior to win her enthusiasm. Both she and her brothers, to come down to a contemporary author, would probably enjoy Booth Tarkington's PENROD, and I have no doubt that they would find Winston Churchill's RICHARD CARVEL absorbing reading. Then if they want adventure and excitement there's the long range from Dumas's THREE MUSKETEERS and COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO through Sienkiewicz's THE DELUGE and PAN

MICHAEL, Lew Wallace's BEN HUR, Stephen Crane's RED BADGE OF COURAGE, and Stanley Weyman's UNDER THE RED ROBE to Kingsley and John Buchan and Anthony Hope. And if J. T. C. wants to keep all three youngsters completely content on a rainy day that forbids sports in the open she might launch them on what probably, thus inaugurated, will be a lifelong habit of detective story reading, by introducing them to the immortal Sherlock Holmes. And Kipling,—surely they will never be able to resist the fascination of Kipling. And here I desist, having stuck close to the type of book which I think J. T. C. has in mind to substitute for Scott, Dickens, and Bulwer.

Richard de Bury

M. P. B. of Pittsburgh, Pa., wants to know whether there are any published memoirs of Richard de Bury, author of the PHILOBIBLON, or any critical works on the author.

The chief authority for the life of Richard Aunerville, known as Richard de Bury, bishop of Durham from 1287-1345, is William de Chambre, whose comment on him appears in an English translation by E. C. Thomas in Wharton's ANGLIA SACRA and in HISTORIÆ Dunelmensis Tres (Surtees Society). With the translation is the Latin text and the volume contains full biographical and bibliographical introductions. The English text is to be found also in the King's Classics, and is, too, issued by the Grolier Club. On pages 125-127 of F. H. Pritchard's FROM CONFUCIUS TO MENCKEN M. P. B. will find comment on de Bury.

Nuggets from Correspondents

For the benefit of correspondents I excerpt from letters that have been coming in during the past few weeks little nuggets that I am sure will be useful to them. V. T.'s recent inquiry concerning deaf characters in literature has elicited from Mary Powell Tibbitts of Chicago an enthusiastic note in regard to Lorna Rea's charming and pitiful short novel, THE HAPPY PRISONER, published just a few years ago. "You will remember," she writes, "that the heroine goes back with relief to her deafness, after a brief experience of the hearing world." To the same inquirer Edward Leonard Borgess, of Toledo, Ohio, cites a book of short mystery stories entitled THE CASES OF SUSAN DARE in which one of the tales, entitled "The Spider," revolves about the deafness of a woman named Marie. The book is published by the Crime Club. To E. F. of Stockton, Calif., who asked for books on Ceylon, E. Cockburn Kyte, librarian of Queen's University, Kingston, Ont., suggests the "little known but most interesting, A REFUGE FROM CIVILIZATION, by R. Jones-Bateman (London: Arnold)." "I notice," he adds, an announcement by the same publishers of a book by a native of Ceylon, GRASS FOR MY FEET, by Vijaya-Tunga.

The New Books

Fiction

GIVE ME TOMORROW. By William Farquhar Payson. Dodd, Mead. 1935. \$2.50.

Though the incidents are melodramatic and the characterization is frequently lacking in depth, Mr. Payson's novel gives an impression of sincerity. His central figure is an adolescent girl who cannot forget that her mother had, some years before, been executed for murder. The lesson of the book is obvious: bondage to our yesterdays brings only unhappiness and lack of personal direction; salvation lies in greeting each tomorrow with a cheer. As soon as Helena Joyce sees that she can look forward rather than backward, her lost sense of well-being returns. In the course of his alert and exciting story, Mr. Payson rings the changes on this prescription for happiness.

"Give Me Tomorrow" begins admirably, picking up the tense moments preceding the execution of Helena's mother and detailing them with grisly realism. As the novel progresses and Helena grows from eight to eighteen, alternating flight and discovery succeed one another in rapid variety. The climax is ingenious and startling rather than wholly credible, but while we are reading, we are carried along by the momentum of the narrative. Mr. Payson has a talent for keeping our nerves on edge as he accumulates quick, sensational episodes.

R. B. M.

YOUR LIFE LIES BEFORE YOU. By Harry Hansen. Harcourt, Brace. 1935. \$2.50.

This slight tale, which has more value as a document than as a novel, has to do with the life of a young fellow in the newspaper game in an upper Mississippi River town at the opening of the present century. The lad is torn between vague musical ambitions and equally vague journalistic ones. The local professor of music has a daughter, and the reader can imagine the rest. The setting is worked up with considerable care, there being occasional clear glimpses of river-town life when there were still a few packets on the Mississippi, but none of the characters ever gets beyond the card-board puppet state. The book is curiously thin, the style in particular being naive.

H. M. J.

THE GINKGO TREE. By Cora Jarrett. Farrar & Rinehart. 1935. \$2.50.

This is the second novel which Mrs. Jarrett has written under her own name, though her publishers tell us that she has written detective novels under a pseudonym. That news will be no surprise to any one who has read her acknowledged novels, the first of which, "Night over Fitch's Pond," was highly commended, but missed many of its proper readers through a mistaken impression that its action classed it with "crime fiction" generally. "The Ginkgo Tree" is not likely to suffer from the same misconception; but the training of the mystery writer is everywhere apparent. And that, in regard

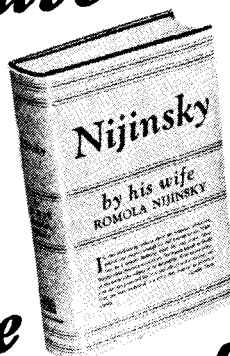
to this book at least, is praise; for the detective story, which Mr. Chesterton has called the last stronghold of morality in fiction, is very nearly the last stronghold of plot.

"The Ginkgo Tree" is indeed so closely plotted that it is difficult to give an idea of it without giving it away, but the initial complication must be sketched; Arnold

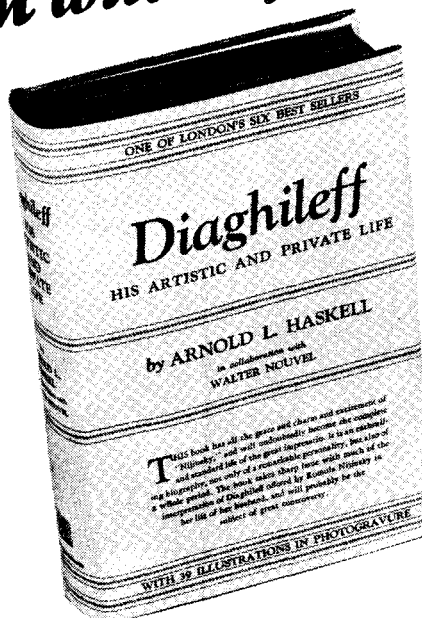
Horne, a parvenu and wastrel, who knows that he has lost his wife's love and is jealous of his son Richard (the Freudian implication is barely hinted, once, by the suspicious Arnold himself) finds his chief pleasure in tormenting them both. Just before Richard's marriage, his father tells him that some one in the family must marry Richard's playmate, the girl next door—scandal must be averted at all costs, for the sake of Richard's mother, whose heart is weak. Richard breaks his engagement and marries Rachel, only to

(Continued on page 27)

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