

# The Clearing House

CONDUCTED BY AMY LOVEMAN

*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

**SOME PEOPLE.** By Harold Nicolson. Houghton Mifflin.

**THE NATURE OF THE JUDICIAL PROCESS.** By Benjamin Cardozo. Yale University Press.

**DEATH COMES FOR THE ARCHBISHOP.** By Willa Cather. Knopf.

## Racial Groups and America

E. J. W. of Fort Morgan, Colo., wants a list of novels, biographies, etc., which deal with our various social groups—Negroes, Indians, Jews, European and Asiatic immigrants—in their native and adopted environment. "Of course," she says, "our aim is fuller appreciation of the contribution of these groups to our civilization as well as the problems of adjustment which they face here and our prejudices and discriminations against them. Also," she goes on, "could you recommend some books dealing with the leading religions of the world?"

**A**DEQUATELY to answer E. J. W.'s request would mean to write enough to fill much more space than I have at my command. To bring my reply within bounds I shall confine it to such books as present the various racial strains of America as they emerge in this country and not before they have reached these shores.

One of the most recent of the novels, and to my mind one of the most interesting of them, to depict the transplanting of the Jew from Europe to the United States is Joseph Gollomb's *UNQUIET* (Dodd, Mead) which as prelude to its picture of a foreign-born family adjusting itself to the New York scene presents charming descriptions of life as lived by a cultured Jewish family in Russia. Mr. Gollomb has portrayed the European background with nostalgic appreciation of its dignity and resignation and the American struggle for emergence from poverty and strangeness with proportion and understanding. Another book in the same tradition is Irving Fineman's *HEAR, YE SONS* (Longmans, Green).

There are a score of novels of the sort which have appeared in recent years but prudence bids me hasten on with mention of these two alone. A good many years ago now, back in the days before the war, or at least America's entrance into it (I'm writing at the distance of Alabama from all my reference books) Mary Antin's *THE PROMISED LAND* (Houghton Mifflin), a vivid and intensely personal account of a young girl's acclimatization to the American environment, was one of the best-selling volumes of its day. Ludwig Lewisohn's *UPSTREAM* (Harpers), in which were written down the reactions of a Jew of unusual brilliance to the people and institutions among which he

came to make his home, made much stir upon its appearance and still remains one of the most interesting of the autobiographical records of the Jewish immigrant to these shores.

But I must hasten and pass hurriedly through my list which I already see can be no more than a mere suggestion here and there if it is to be confined within the limits which space demands. I'm afraid, indeed, that it can be little more than a succession of titles to be supplemented in a later Clearing House.

To pass on to the Negro, on whom and by whom the literature of late has been voluminous. Only this winter there appeared a first novel which movingly and forcefully depicted the relation of the black man to his environment in Robert Rylee's *DEEP, DARK RIVER* (Farrar & Rinehart). Jessie Fauset's *COMEDY, AMERICAN STYLE* (Stokes) depicts the color problem in modern, middle-class Negro society. Though they are shown less in their contacts with the whites than with their own race in such works as Du Bose Heyward's *PORGY* (Doubleday, Doran) and Julia Peterkin's *SCARLET SISTER MARY* (Bobbs-Merrill) E. J. W. ought not to neglect these books and others of their kind, nor ought she, indeed, to fail to read *STEVEDORE* (Covici-Friede), by P. Peters and G. Sklar, a play portraying race relations in the South, and John Wexley's *THEY SHALL NOT DIE* (Knopf), a drama built about the notorious Scottsboro case. For a temperate and illuminating exposition of the relation of the Negro to white society E. J. W. should read James Weldon Johnson's *NEGRO AMERICANS—WHAT NOW?* (Viking).

Next for the Scandinavians, Bohemians, and other sturdy settlers in the prairie states who have had increasingly frequent depiction in recent years. Of them Elmer T. Peterson has written in *TRUMPETS WEST* (Dodd, Mead), the tale of three generations of Swedish immigrants who settled in Kansas and ran the gamut from farming to banking and oil; Martha Ostenso in *WILD GESE* (Dodd, Mead), Willa Cather in two of her best novels, *MY ANTONIA* (Houghton Mifflin) and *O PIONEERS!* (Knopf), and O. E. Rölvaag in *GIANTS OF THE EARTH* (Harpers), a depiction of valiant struggle against nature.

But I dare not linger—in fact, must squeeze into a few lines the titles of Oliver La Farge's *LAUGHING BOY* (Houghton-Mifflin), the best recent portrayal of Indian life in fiction to be found, David C. De Jong's *BELLY FULLA STRAW* (Knopf), the story of a Dutch immigrant family, and Elizabeth Eastman's *SUN ON THEIR SHOULDERS* (Morrow) in which a Finnish family is shown in the cranberry bog section of Cape Cod. And before I end this mere hint of racial-American literature I should like to commend to E. J. W.'s attention some of the recent proletarian novels in which the foreign laborer is shown at conflict with or at work in the

land of his adoption, such books as Catherine Brody's *NOBODY STARVES* (Longmans, Green), Fielding Burke's *CALL HOME THE HEART* (Longmans, Green), and Albert Halper's *UNION SQUARE* (Viking).

Now to take up her request for books dealing with the leading religions of the world. If she wants a brief, well-written textbook she will find it in George A. Barton's *RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD* (University of Chicago Press); if a very scholarly work, in Hopkins's *HISTORY OF RELIGIONS* (Macmillan), if a popular presentation, in Lewis Browne's *THIS BELIEVING WORLD* (Macmillan).

## Highlights in the Scholarly Journals

By DELANCEY FERGUSON

**T**HE 18th century also had its fakes, and it had its methods of exposing them. Here—its spelling slightly modernized—is part of Bishop Percy's analysis of the "Rowley" MSS. which Chatterton had forged:

"... The characters uniformly resemble the writing of no era whatever, nor are in any degree uniform and consistent with themselves: but are evidently written by a modern pen, which has endeavored to render the letters as uncouth and obscure as possible, and yet is frequently betrayed into escapes which are in the most modern characters. ... We remarked some of the letters to have been written in four or five different manners; so that the writer evidently went upon no principles, had previously formed to himself no alphabet; had a very imperfect random guess at the old alphabets and was incapable of imitating any of them truly. Even the poetical specimen ... is merely rendered obscure by a fanciful uncouth alphabet of the writer's own invention, reducible to no principle of genuine ancient writing.

"With regard to the parchment itself, it is evidently stained yellow on the back with ochre, to look like old parchment; but the fraud is so unskillfully performed, that you may see stains and besmearings on the other side; and if you rub the back with a wet white handkerchief it will be stained with the ochre. He hath also contrived an ink (than which nothing is more easy) that should be very faint and yellow. ...

"The contents contain no less proofs of the forgery, for they assert gross and ridiculous falsehoods, such as there having been ancient moneys current in England with the arms of Bristol on the reverse. ... I must again repeat, that so far as depends on the evidence of these specimens, the writings attributed to Mr. Thos. Rowlie may finally be pronounced to be forged and spurious."

So wrote the shrewd Bishop in September, 1773, after his friend Lord Dacre had submitted some of the fakes for his investigation. The letter is one of several, hitherto unpublished, by Percy and others, which A. Watkin-Jones of Exeter College, Oxford, prints in the fall number of *PMLA*. The Bishop lacked Messrs. Carter and Pollard's scientific apparatus for the analysis of ink and paper, but he knew his stuff.

# The Compleat Collector

RARE BOOKS: CONDUCTED BY JOHN T. WINTERICH

*In alternate weeks this Department is devoted to Fine Printing  
and is conducted by Carl Purington Rollins*

## Broad Stripes, Bright Stars

**THE STAR SPANGLED BANNER,**  
*Words and Music Issued Between 1814-1864. Compiled by Joseph Muller. New York: G. A. Baker & Co. 1935. 500 copies. \$5.*

THE air of an eighteenth-century English drinking song (an air with a throat-cracking melodic range) was combined a century and a quarter ago with the chronicle of a minor episode in our most luckless martial adventure to form what has since become the national anthem. Not, by the way, until March 3, 1931, on which day President Hoover wrote "Approved" at the foot of the printed draft of H. R. 14 as enacted by the Third Session of the Seventy-first Congress. At that particular moment a national anthem would seem to have been either our most desperate need or the one thing we were best able to get along without.

But, for better or worse, we have, and shall doubtless ever have, "The Star-Spangled Banner," and the history of its development and acceptance is an essential in the inventory of our social and cultural heritage. Mr. Muller has set down that history in elaborate, painstaking, and accurate detail. His bibliography is preceded by a graceful tribute from John Tasker Howard and a long introduction by Mr. Muller himself tracing and explaining the sturdy vitality of the song. No fewer than 108 of the 224 ample quarto pages are devoted to portraits and facsimiles.

This monograph will be of surpassing interest to every student of American music—a department of collecting activity which is now receiving, and deserves to receive, increasing attention. The comprehensiveness of Mr. Muller's researches lends his work an importance that passes far beyond the immediate goal of his investigations. Moreover he has not allowed his honest scholarship to bog down in a wallow of business. And, as a sound piece of bibliography ought, Mr. Muller's study makes good reading.

## Who Said It First?

It was in October, 1899, that Catalogue No. 1 issued from Goodspeed's Book Shop of Boston. Those were exciting times. Only a few days earlier Admiral George Dewey had been received in New York with such a fanfare as would not be matched until Charles A. Lindbergh, who was not yet born, returned in triumph from his Paris flight twenty-eight years later.

A few weeks ago, Catalogue No. 250 came out of Goodspeed's, prefaced with a delightful group of reminiscences over the signature of Charles E. Goodspeed. These are cordially recommended to collectors everywhere, in special to that regrettable fraction who credit the thesis that wit, erudition, and any slightest ac-

quaintance with the inwards of his wares are qualities undiscoverable in a bookseller.

The Compleat Collector read and re-read the paper with stimulation and enjoyment and was particularly happy to note an anecdote that was an old friend. Explaining by precept and example the desirability of specialization in the rare-book trade, Mr. Goodspeed cites a story recounted to him "by my good friend and neighbor, Andrew McCance." Here is Mr. McCance's story:

Tony had a sidewalk permit for his fruit stand from the bank. A friend asked him for a loan of ten dollars. Tony was sorry, but "I have agree' with da bank. They no let me." "What you meana, they no let you?" "Well, when I come here, they say, 'Tony, we no sell da banan, you no loana da mon.'"

The Compleat Collector had encountered this story once before, and liked it. It was in Spencer, Indiana, in 1925. Spencer was at that time within a few furlongs of the center of population of the United States, and visitors could inspect the very point whereby, if one inserted a sufficiently stout pencil under it, one could have spun the whole United States around. (Nobody actually did this until 1929.) Well, there was a little restaurant in Spencer where one lunched if one lunched in Spencer at all, and on the wall hung a sign: "We have an agreement with the First National Bank. They serve no meals, we cash no checks."

The bit of *ana* survived in the Compleat Collector's mind as a happy instance of native sardonicism. He cited it as just that a few days since, and was mildly disconcerted when one busybody among the listening group retired and emerged

some moments later with this from Ma-caulay's "Frederick the Great":

He [Frederick] once saw a crowd staring at something on a wall. He rode up and found that the object of curiosity was a scurrilous placard against himself. Frederick ordered his attendants to take it down and put it lower. "My people and I," he said, "have come to an agreement which satisfies us both. They are to say what they please and I am to do what I please."

The Spencer and Boston variants are obvious derivatives of the Prussian, but whence came the Prussian? Did Frederick make it up out of his own head, or did he simply go and take, and if so from where?

## The New Books

*(Continued from page 18)*

other fruit, Mrs. Temple's book will have justified its passage, for her five hundred pages of narrative and three hundred more of notes and records are replete with material of interest and value.

Cobb County is historic ground. Originally possessed by the Cherokee Nation, it was involved in the bitter Indian lands controversies of John Quincy Adams' and Jackson's administrations; in its annals is stirring history of courageous and resourceful Southern pioneers. To Roswell, in Cobb County, went a New York merchant in the fifties for his bride; she became the mother of a President, Theodore Roosevelt, and the grandmother of the present First Lady. To Cobb also went General Sherman on his way from Chattanooga to Atlanta in 1864. The scene enchanted him, it was "too beautiful to be disturbed by the harsh clamor of war," but quickly discovering it to be "one vast fort," he left it a desolate area. Mrs. Temple traces in almost minute detail, and with exceptional skill, the military operations that enveloped the region and graphically recounts the ravages of Northern armies and the mortifying depredations the county suffered at the hands

*(Continued on next page)*

Recover from the Holidays with these!

**Wodehouse, P. G.**

**THE LUCK OF THE BODKINS**

"S. S. Atlantic's" most eventful voyage, featuring Monty (wheels-within-wheels) Bodkin, and introducing Albert Peasemarch. \$2.00



**Wylie, I. A. R.**

**FURIOUS YOUNG MAN**

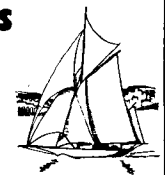
A modern, romantic story of a young Englishman in Russia who mixes love and communism with amazing results. \$2.50



**Oppenheim, E. Phillips**

**FLOATING PERIL**

A peaceful yacht floating on a sea of international dynamite. One of the old master's best full length novels. \$2.00



LITTLE, BROWN & CO. Boston