

# Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

IT was a devilish bad summer, the Trade all tell us. Everybody seemed allergic to literature. Even Old Q. averted himself from symptoms of print; consequently he now comes back to his desk with a bulimy for books. If the world is determined to blow itself up in sulphur and cinders, let the reaper find us in our overstuffed chair with something worth reading, inshallah! Harry Snyder, the Trade's Far Eastern representative, was wise enough to pause at Manila and not go on to Shanghai. All bibliophiles rejoice to hear that our old friend and welldoer Mr. A. Edward New-


ton, after a serious illness, is recuperating in his library at Daylesford, Pa. When we get pessimistic about the behavior of man, the imperfect anthropoid, we cajole ourself to good humor by studying the catalogues of university presses. For instance among the Behavior Monographs (Johns Hopkins Press) is *An Analysis of the Learning Process in the Snail, Physa Gyrina Say*, 100 pages, \$1.25. P. G. Say is not the name of the author but of the snail. The author is Elizabeth Lockwood Thompson. Or *The Effect of Length of Blind Alleys on Maze Learning: an Experiment on 24*

White Rats, by Joseph Peterson, 56 pp., 75 cents. Mankind is a snail in a long blind alley, we say to ourself, and at once feel better. Or for \$1.15 (87 pages) you can study with L. W. Sackett *The Learning Process in the Canada Porcupine*. Or even more timely perhaps, *The Mental Capacity of American-Born Japanese Children*, by Marvin L. Darsie. In brief, as we have said many times, nothing is so full of excitement as the catalogue of a university press.

*New Frontiers of the Mind*, by J. B. Rhine of Duke University, chosen as Book-of-the-Month for October, is an interesting example of one of these "academic" studies that suddenly broke through into the light of general public scrutiny. But why not go ahead on one's own and discover some more of them for ourselves? Or is *Physa Gyrina Say* a symbol of the average reader? Asa Don Dickinson, distinguished librarian of the University of Pennsylvania, whose beard was once stolen right off his chin by an author friend—this sounds mysterious but we'll have to ask him to explain it himself—continues his series of valuable compilations of "best books" (H. W. Wilson Company) with *The Best Books of the Decade 1926-1935*. Speaking of beards, we remember that Harcourt Brace and Co. used to get occasional requests for a copy of Carl Sandburg's "Cornwhiskers." Booksellers are always superstitious about the Equinox, viz. September 21-22; when the evenings begin to get longer and people go to reading again. Miss Frances Steloff of the Gotham Book Mart, after consulting every kind of auspiciating authority, chose the period September 20-30 for her zodiacal bargain sale and equinoctial "osmosis." We like her choice of the word *osmosis*, which she says means a diffusion or circulation between two media of differing densities; viz., presumably, books and customers. *Games for Two*, by Clement Wood and Gloria Goddard (Hillman-Curl, Inc.) we find on our desk, it looks like good fun for autumn evenings.

Modern Age Books, which is publishing books in paper covers at 25c and 35c, issues its first list this week, including a collection of short stories by Duranty (*Babies without Tails*), Kaltenborn Edits the News, an adventure story, a mystery, a juvenile, and several others. These are new books; a list of reprints will follow in October. Among other interesting replies to their announcements, Modern Age received this letter: "Dear Sir, Please send me paper cover, *Gone with the Wind*, by Margaret Mitchell, 25c enclosed." Organizers of the enterprise are Richard Storrs Child, president, and Samuel Craig, former president of the Literary Guild.

Been meaning to ask Linton Wells what is the source of the phrase *Blood on the Moon*, which he used as a title for his vigorous book. The earliest use of it Old Q. can think of is in that old melodrama farrago *The Black Crook*, where someone cried in a voice of basso profundo foreboding: There's blood on the face of the moon! But presumably the line is very antique. It always pleases to remember that the original meaning of *plagiarism* is kidnapping.



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