

more amiable satisfaction than these from Walter von der Vogelweide, the ancient minnesinger, which a well-loved teacher (Professor F. B. Gummere) had carved on a panel over his hearth:—

ER MINNET IEMER DESTE BAZ  
SWER VON MINNEN ETEWAZ  
HOERET SINGEN ODER LESEN

(He is the better lover who hears something about love in song or reading.)

\* \* \*

Twenty years ago I wrote something I thought funny; I doubt if I have done so since. I found it in an old scrapbook and reprint it with pride:—

#### Ritual for the Solemnization of A New Collar in Hot Weather

COLLAR, wilt thou have this man to be thy lawful wearer, to cleave together in the solemn estate of haberdashery? Wilt thou cling to him and adorn him so long as starch holdeth its gloss?

*The Collar shall answer, I WILT.*

\* \* \*

#### Delible Ink

"When I was quite young and didn't realize what a nuisance accumulated pa-

pers are" (writes D.A.C.) "I collected autographs. Among them was a letter from a very distinguished writer, since dead; as a matter of fact it was Rudyard Kipling. The other day I was going through old filing cases; I found the letter, written 20 years ago, and saw to my surprise that the signature had entirely faded away. The typescript was still clear and distinct, but the actual handwriting had completely vanished.

"Knowing Kipling's dislike of miscellaneous notoriety I couldn't help wondering whether he had deliberately chosen fast-fading ink for his replies to autograph hunters; as a certain humorist is said to do for his income tax returns.

"Then I noticed that a little water-color of which a friend of mine is very fond is also rapidly paling. Do the paint manufacturers also have this all thought out? You will recall that J. M. W. Turner has been much cursed by art critics because the colors of his masterpieces have faded badly.

"What sort of ink were the War Debt contracts signed in, and what should I think about all this?"

## Among the Babbitts

VILLES ET PAYSAGES D'AMÉRIQUE  
(États-Unis et Canada). By Jean Canu.  
Paris: J. D. Gigord. 1938. \$3.

Reviewed by HASSOLDT DAVIS

THIS book in French by the very French professor, Jean Canu, will dispel few of the illusions that his people have held regarding us. Though he has spent some years in this country, he still looks slightly down the Gallic nose. He admits that his purpose was not to examine the soul, but merely the body of America during his journey by car around it, and so his impressions are necessarily superficial. He is a little kinder to us than Georges Duhamel and considerably less excited by us than Paul Morand. He is forever crying "Voire!" or "Hélas!"

New York, to Jean Canu, was without flavor; the many ingredients in the stew of the melting pot seemed to cancel each other out. Our skyscrapers, "paralléli-pédiques," were not noteworthy except for their bad ornamentation at base and top, and much of our architecture was unoriginal. Driving up through Boston, which he admired for its old-world charm, he caught a breath of France in southern Canada, then descended past Niagara Falls to Detroit, "that Hell paved with good intentions" under the dominion of the "peasant-minded" Ford. All Frenchmen know, of course, that Chicago is infested by bandits. M. Canu saw none of them, but he does explain fairly accurately the graft and civic inertia which makes them possible, and he adds naively that prudent citizens never carry more than five dollars in their pockets.

Traveling across the plains and Rocky Mountains, stopping briefly to admire the national parks, he found himself at last among the Californians, a people "insupportably pretentious and naive." San Francisco, which is accustomed to two hours (*sic*) of sunlight daily, had certainly more flavor than New York, but Los Angeles, full of religious fanatics, movie stars, beggars, and Aimée McPherson boxing with her aged mother, left him eager to escape among the canyons of Colorado and the real, live Indians of the southwest. The rest of the trip is hastily described; New Orleans, Washington, Philadelphia were fair enough, as cities go. America as a whole was characterized by a "resigned atony," but M. Canu concludes gracefully that the huge land of his sojourn is much less monotonous than those who haven't seen it will admit. Right decent of him. Except for this patronage, and the absence of individuals, his book is pleasant reading. It is written well and racily in the present tense, with glimmers of humor and highlights of information that should make it popular with those who have never seen a bandit, a Babbitt, an Automat, or an Indian.

## The Much Promised Land

BY MAX EASTMAN

GOD promised to his Hebrews Palestine,  
A land with milk from other people's kine,  
And honey out of others' bee-hives flowing.  
Blame not on God the bloody crimes ensuing.  
God's father was the wish. He might reply,  
To smite those other people hip and thigh.  
Nor blame the Hebrews if to oust their rival,  
And hack their way to progress and survival,  
They made that section holy with the blood  
Of entire cities butchered where they stood.  
Nor blame the Philistines if they stood fast,  
And God looked rather foolish at the last,  
Dividing his large-spoken gift in two  
Between an armed and bleeding Me and You.  
As for the Romans, who can cast a stone?  
Their Gods had promised too that they alone  
Should drain those regions of their milk and honey,  
Or hold at least the ports and coin the money.  
The Arabs were still harder to refuse,  
For they brought only one God like the Jews,  
One God above, but under them two mammals,  
Horses for hard, and for soft going camels.  
As for dear England, she seems innocent  
As God himself in her predicament.  
Where Jahveh failed, could Balfour bring to hand  
The downright gift of this much promised land?  
I should not ask, had I been born a Jew,  
That either Lord should see his promise through.  
Since blood is on the birth of every nation,  
And on its death and on its whole duration,  
And crime and hate and horror never lag  
Where any unctious crew hang out a flag,  
I should be glad to think my own well furl'd,  
Myself a mind, a native of the world.

# A Poet's Letters

FURTHER LETTERS OF GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS INCLUDING HIS CORRESPONDENCE WITH COVENTRY PATMORE. Edited by Claude Collier Abbott. New York: Oxford University Press. 1938. \$6.

Reviewed by DUDLEY FITTS

THIS third volume of Hopkins's correspondence is a kind of appendix to the others. One reads it, as Hopkins remarked of Arnold's "Empedocles," "with more interest than rapture"; for the strain is running thin here, and while there are excellent things to be found, they do not occur with the frequency that made exciting so many of the letters to Bridges and Dixon. Even the fanatic admirer of Hopkins must be gravely tried by the sterile (and, as it happens, almost always unsound) scholarship of the bulk of the letters to Alexander Baillie — a correspondence which begins playfully ("Dear Baillie: Yes. You are a Fool. I can shew it syllogistically, by an Epimediculum or paradoxing . . ."), flares up into the precocious brilliance of the long discussion of Tennyson and ("Parnassian") poetry and the typically Hopkins speculations on symbol-counterpoint in the Greek choric odes, only to bog down hopelessly in Graeco-Egyptian etymology, sad chatter in the worst Isidorean *mulier verò à mollitie* tradition. And there is so much that is petty and narrow and dark, especially in the theological letters to E. W. Urquhart (one remembers with annoyance the letters to Bridges on the subject of alms-giving), that it almost seems as though Professor Abbott would have done the poet greater service by leaving more of these dead bones buried.

However, there are the letters to Patmore: minute analyses of Patmore's poems (a definitive edition was being contemplated, and Hopkins's advice on revisions had been sought by the older poet), line-by-line criticism, the most valuable kind of workshop discussion. Patmore's unexpectedly humble replies are printed, and the editor has gone to

great pains to indicate in his notes the final disposition of every one of Hopkins's suggestions. Whatever one may think of the work of Patmore, this dissection of a poem word by word, comma by comma, is a fascinating business and, in a time of pseudo-metaphysical generalizing about meaning, it has great corrective merit. There emerges the same kind of practical esthetic that one found in the letters to Bridges, only here the scope is much more limited.

For the rest, the book is unequal. There are some charming jokes: a notable parody of Francis Bacon: ("So I think alsoe is *Seneca* to be understanded *Quot corpora, Tot capita*; Every woman has a Boddice but not every one Stays") and an exhaustive elaboration of puns on the subject of vaccination, culminating in "I meant to have written arm but I *could* not." There is a drawing of St. Simeon "the Stile-ite"—a lackadaisical emaciated creature straddling a stile, absorbed in a paper labeled *High Churchman*, absently fondling, with skeleton left hand, the crescent moon. And scattered here and there are characteristic twists of phrase that sometimes illumine the darkest letters: "Be pregnant, bring thoughts, news, strokes, touches, Moncure Con-



A. W. Garrett, W. A. Comyn Macfarlane, and G. M. Hopkins, July 27, 1866.

way, friends (not in the body) butts, bulls, blunders"; "You may if you like revere me on yr. envelopes henceforward"; Eden's "Tree-to-decide-right-and-wrong-by"; "a whity-greeny January"; and (of lambs) "When they were a little younger and nicer and sillier"; "Probably if he had lived longer he would have written something that wd. have done the same." One reader, at least, felt like cheering when he came upon this dismissal of the shrill tin-glittering heroine of "Much Ado": "The vain women in Shakspeare are the impure minded too, like Beatrice (I do not know that I may not call her a hideous character)." And finally there is a marvelously angry scrawl from Professor Skeat, who had been chivvied beyond endurance by "Rev. Gerard Hopkins, S. J." in his role of etymological amateur:

"I can't discuss. I'm much obliged. And I regret to say I'm not convinced . . ."

It is doubtful if anything in this book adds to Hopkins's stature; but it is a volume that every serious student of the poet and the period will want to own.

## The Pueblos

FIRST PENTHOUSE DWELLERS OF AMERICA. By Ruth M. Underhill. New York: J. J. Augustin. 1938. \$2.75.

Reviewed by OLIVER LA FARGE

MISS UNDERHILL brings special qualifications to her book on the Pueblo Indians of the American Southwest. She is a trained anthropologist with wide field experience, whose work in the Indian Service gives her a realistic approach to the Indian as he is today, and who has, as this book shows, an excellently readable style. In brief compass and without unnecessary technicalities, she succeeds in presenting an accurate and informative survey of the whole range of Pueblo Indians from the Hopis in their remote, desert villages to the people of Taos under the shadow of their mountain. Livened by the excellent photographs by Lillian J. Reichard, this is almost an ideal general account for tourists, or for anyone who wants a general view of a fascinating group of people without having to put forth too much effort.

The tendency of writers about these Indians has been to turn away from the turbulent present to hide in the emotional satisfaction of the extinct past. There is no understanding the Pueblos without a knowledge of the far distant times in which they are rooted, but it would be an advantage to the Indians themselves, and a great help to those who visit them, if the union of past and present, and shadow of the future, which this book achieves, were more widely accepted. The young, educated Indian who knows how to drive and repair a truck or a tractor, and who at the same time remains unshakably faithful to the spiritual heritage of his people, presents a far more interesting subject than an extinct purity, however much he may have lost picturesqueness in his daily appearance.

I must point out one important omission. The author gives considerable attention to the organization and governmental system of the Hopis, as well as to present efforts to adjust Hopi life to the white man's encroaching civilization. It is surprising that in the course of this she should not have mentioned the fact that two years ago this tribe united for the first time in three hundred years, under a written constitution providing for a tribal council and other machinery of government which is a curious blend of the ancient and the new. Barring this one lack, the book is remarkably complete, and better reading than most that have been written on the subject.