

## Normal Criminals

**BROTHERS IN CRIME.** By Clifford R. Shaw, with the assistance of Henry D. McKay and James F. McDonald. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1938. \$3.

Reviewed by RAYMOND G. FULLER

**T**HIS is a study of five brothers and their careers in delinquency and crime. These careers, in each instance, began in early childhood and continued for twelve to twenty years, despite the persistent efforts of public and private agencies to effect a rehabilitation. The brothers have spent more than a third of their 150 years of life in dependent, correctional, and penal institutions. Here are their official records, their case histories and their autobiographies, together with interpretive and analytical chapters.

The book, which comes from the Chicago Institute for Juvenile Research, is an outstanding contribution to the literature of crime prevention and treatment. Its method gives a clear picture and understanding not only of the beginnings but of the continuance and development of such careers from the first simple acts of stealing to the more serious crimes, like armed robbery, of later years.

The evidence of this very thorough investigation suggests strongly that social or environmental factors were far more potent in influencing the behavior of the five brothers than personality traits. The boys got started that way by living in a poverty-stricken family and neighborhood in the midst of the boys' gangs and criminal traditions. Their interests and ideals, their practices, and skills, were acquired from their social environment there. This informal training and educa-

tion was continued by contact with other delinquents in the correctional institutions in which they spent so much of their childhood and youth. In none of the brothers was there ever discovered, from examinations and tests, any marked deviation from normal in respect to intelligence or physical condition. Dr. Shaw is of the opinion that the label of "psychopathic personality" is too readily applied to delinquents and criminals, and that such a diagnosis, even by experts, is too often biased by the widely held preconception that criminals *must* be psychopathic. Of these Martin brothers it is said that under other circumstances they probably would have become law-abiding citizens, with socially approved habits and attitudes. They had the misfortune of adjusting to the weaker and less conventional part of the community.

The happy ending is that four of them are now going straight, while the fifth, who is still in quod, has similar intentions. Earlier confinements in institutions for juvenile delinquents seem to have had little or no deterrent effect, but later and repeated incarcerations have taught them that crime does not pay. They may have made up their minds less on grounds of ethics than of expediency, deciding that employment would be preferable from the standpoint of hazard and interference with freedom. Jobs were found for the four in a position to take them, and new habits and attitudes are being formed, in harmony with the new manner of life. Employment is set down by the authors as the most effective method of treatment in these cases. The most successful method of preventing delinquency and crime is held to be the community approach, with emphasis on work with the gang and improvement of neighborhood conditions.

## America and the League of Nations

**THE UNITED STATES AND WORLD ORGANIZATION.** By Denna Frank Fleming. New York: Columbia University Press. 1938. \$4.

Reviewed by WILLIAM O. SCROGGS

**I**N a well-written and carefully documented volume Professor Fleming relates the story of the attempts of statesmen after the Great War to set up political machinery which would make another such war impossible. Whatever may be said of the short-sightedness of the Allied leaders at Versailles, it cannot be denied that they created in the League of Nations a structure carefully designed to preserve peace and promote freedom and progress throughout the world. Yet the results of these efforts have been woefully disappointing. Is this the fault of the League itself? Professor Fleming's answer is No. The League had kept faith with the member states; but its strongest members have not kept faith with the League. And the United States, the World Power which, more than any other, was responsible for the League idea, took alarm at its own creation and refused not only to become a member but declined for a time to have any communication with it whatever.

In spite of American abstention, the League grew in importance and reached the apex of its influence in 1925 with the conclusion of the Locarno pacts and the admission of Germany to membership. For several years thereafter Geneva was the real center of European politics. Even the United States became less suspicious and more coöperative, and by 1929 its relations with the League had become close and cordial. But in this same year came the great depression, and with it a rising tide of nationalism and a collapse, one by one, of the agencies of collective security.

In 1928 sixty-odd nations had solemnly renounced war as an instrument of national policy; in 1938 war was raging in Europe and Asia, and other wars in Africa and South America had barely ended. Meantime, the leading powers were engaged in a destructive race of armaments that was leading no one knew where. Professor Fleming carries the story of this collapse of world organization only down to 1933, when civilization had not sunk to its present sorry state; but even so he relates a disheartening tale of the rise and fall of an idea and an ideal. His sympathies are so strongly pro-League and his opinion of isolationists is so low that his work cannot be described as objective. To indicate the baseness of the motives of many anti-Leaguers in the United States, he diverges into a detailed account of the oil scandals of the Harding Administration which to many readers will seem a non-sequitur. Such emotional discursions, however, are rare and do not impair the inherent value of the work. While the author uncovers no new material, he has brought together facts from many sources and produced a highly readable account of one phase of American foreign relations in a crucial period of the world's history.

## Mystery Fans Attention!

**I**F you have been complaining about the sameness of the fare offered you; if you are tired of spotting the criminal before you have reached page 42, you will be interested in a book that will be published next week. *It is not a mystery story*

Yet it is the story of the most famous (and the most mysterious) murder ever committed in this country. This murder has never been solved, although, as the author points out in an ingenious afterword which is printed in a separate pamphlet, the next few years may see evidence turned up that will at last make it possible to solve the case. Right now your guess is as good as anybody's.

As we have warned you, this is not a mystery story, but we think you will want to read it, because it is as gripping, exciting, and filled with action and suspense as any detective story you have ever read.

It is written as fiction, although it is based on careful research and an exhaustive study of the case. It tells the story of a historic murder, probes the mind of the man who committed it, and follows his desperate struggle to escape his pursuers in the greatest man hunt ever staged.

Its title is **The Man Who Killed Lincoln** and it is about John Wilkes Booth. It was written by Philip Van Doren Stern, and it will be published by Random House next Tuesday. 384 pages, \$3.00

## Two Lyric Poets

*RIDERS AT THE GATE.* By Joseph Auslander. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1938. \$1.75.

*KINGS AND THE MOON.* By James Stephens. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1938. \$1.60.

Reviewed by LOUIS UNTERMEYER

THESE two volumes are similar in size and range; they have much the same subject matter; they are, with the exception of a few sonnets, almost orthodox lyrics, songs that supply their own music. Yet in tone and taste the two volumes have practically nothing in common.

Read superficially, the first volume is a far more impressive collection than the second. It glitters with striking figures and flashes with brisk, if not always appropriate, epithets; it has the sound, and something of the fury, of memorable verse. The title-poem, although much too long, has the ring of outrage keyed—or keyed up—to a dramatic ballad. But all too soon the reader is bogged down in a lush growth of pretty verbiage, strained conceits, a confusion of manipulated effects; and what looked like true poetry is seen to be nothing more than a smooth poetic jargon. According to the program announced, the poems "deal frankly and unpretentiously with the permanent provocations of love, death, and nature." But the volume is crammed with lines which deal anything but frankly with the subjects, and few contemporaries have succeeded in writing more pretentiously than Mr. Auslander, especially when he speaks of so simple an object as a locust in such grandiose strophes:

He shapes the multisyllabled summer's  
chant  
To singular, that else were murmuring  
mist  
Of vowel and promiscuous consonant,  
O princely plagiarist!

Mr. Auslander has not achieved, as the blurb promises, a new significance; he does, however, express a contemporary social consciousness; he gives vent to a high-pitched anger against Hitler, Mussolini, and Stalin, and a fervor for justice, the hope of the harassed individual. The attitude is right, but the tone is wrong. The poet is in love, not only with the eternal verities, but with the standard abstractions, with such established virtues as peace, April, "Lord Shakespeare," robins, the best Chinese poets, Kansas, falsetto, and democracy. Chiefly, however, he is in love with words, as he confesses in the revealing "Indolent Credo." This leads Mr. Auslander to compose many fine phrases and several silly ones. It leads him to bewilder the reader with unfulfilled expectations and wholly artificial figures of speech. In "Song," for example, the central image is continually changed and distorted. In the first line the moon is introduced with a sweeping bravura:

I will mount with the moon her tremendous tidal horses,—

in the next verse the image and the direction are abruptly altered so that the poet may cry:

My fate in love I will bind to the moon's great wheel,—

and in the last verse the moon has shrunk to a trinket, while the sun incongruously becomes a coin and a keepsake:

... the sun sleeps in your pocket;  
I'll slip a string of stars around your wrist ...

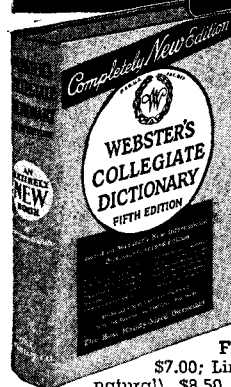
Such misdirection leads inevitably to metaphors as mixed and unintentionally comic as "A black hole in the heart applauds a bullet," and "The feathered implications time has crushed."

James Stephens also deals with "the permanent provocations," with the traditional commonplaces. But he does not rely on combinations of the "promiscuous consonant" nor does he, as Mr. Auslander does, attempt to unite the rose, poetry's stock property, with today's headline. The effect achieved is exactly the opposite of "Riders at the Gate." Here the first reading is deceptive; the lines are so simple as to seem banal, so unaffected as to seem sentimental. But the simplicity is attained by a cutting down rather than a piling up of poetic diction; Stephens refuses to inflate an emotion or pad a self-sufficing line. It is his taste as well as his sensibility that saves his straightforward verse from being a collection of polysyllabic clichés. Beneath the curiously clipped rhymes there runs an original melodic stream, a fresh fluency which is not mere fluidity.

Technically, Stephens's later verse presents an interesting paradox: the lines are not only shorter, they are brusque and sometimes breathless; yet they convey a greater sense of amplitude than was ever sounded in his earlier and more popular verse. Such poems as "Shall He—Wilt Thou," "Envyng Tobias," "To Lar, with a Biscuit," the memorable cycle "Kings and Tanists," and the peak of the volume, "Theme with Variations," disclose the ripeness of Stephens's wisdom; here vision is fused with clear perception and bitter humor. Half Gaelic, half Gothic, this is a poetry which is severe and strange, scornful and tender. It has that clarity which comes after a poet has reached his full maturity, when the personal element is inseparable from the universal.

*The Best Handy-Sized Dictionary*

**WEBSTER'S COLLEGIATE**



**Fifth Edition**

Largest, latest abridgment of the big new Merriam-Webster, WEBSTER'S NEW INTERNATIONAL DICTIONARY, Second Edition.

**NEW from Cover to Cover**

110,000 Entries; 1,800 Illustrations; 1,300 Pages. Thin-Paper Style; Indexed; Cloth, \$3.50;

Fabrikoid, \$5.00; Leather

\$7.00; Limp Pigskin (dark blue or natural), \$8.50. Purchase of your book-dealer, or order direct from publishers. Write for fascinating New Quiz and Picture Game—FREE.

G. & C. MERRIAM CO.

256 Broadway

Springfield, Mass.

## The Book of Festivals

Dorothy Gladys Spicer

An authentic reference on the festivals and folkways of thirty-five nationalities represented in the United States. The story of the calendar is included, and a complete bibliography of festival literature. Delightful reading.

**\$3.00**

**THE WOMANS PRESS**

600 Lexington Avenue, New York City

## SANTAYANA

By GEORGE W. HOWGATE

A biography of Santayana's mind—the influences that have shaped his thought and a guide to his writings. "Provocative, wide-ranging, epigrammatic and polished . . . the most complete account thus far published."—SPRINGFIELD REPUBLICAN

Just out, \$3.50

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA PRESS: PHILADELPHIA