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Americans in France

JOURNEY THROUGH TIME. By Larry Barretto. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1940. 312 pp. \$2.50.

Reviewed by RICHARD A. CORDELL

THIS novel is not nearly so Priestleyan as its title would indicate; far from being four-dimensional, it is sometimes flatly two-dimensional, but an experienced and shrewd romancer can often make a ride through the shallows as entertaining as a ride through the deep. Barretto uses his favorite ingredients in composing "Journey through Time": Americans in France, echoes of the war, national differences, aftermath of the 1929 crash, etc. The materials may be familiar, but they are not shopworn, and the novel is for the most part lively and diverting.

"Journey through Time" tells the story of Bruce and Jane Randolph, who had gambled and lost (in 1929) and who were not too successful in adjusting themselves to the impecunious new world and in bringing up their only son as a gentleman. Their snobbishness and unquestioning faith in a "privileged class" they see not as vestigial remnants of a defunct order but as brave attempts to retain dignity and self respect.

Mr. and Mrs. Randolph seize an opportunity to make an inexpensive journey to France in the late summer

of 1939, partly for the sake of their convalescent son, and during their two months abroad their pasts arise to confuse them further. Bruce's former mistress, now revolting in her lachrymose glamor, crosses their path again—and seduces their son; a dashing French officer with whom Jane had been infatuated in 1918 reappears as a sou-pinching bourgeois and lays the ghost of an old romance. The triviality of the parents is emphasized by the idealism of the son, whose near-platitudes about liberty, Hitler, justice, etc., astound them. As the Randolphs sail from Bordeaux on a freighter—fortunate to secure any sort of passage—they see the fading lights of the city as a symbol of a greater darkness.

The exact theme of the novel is not clear, and the writing is without much distinction—in fact it has often a naïveté one does not expect in a book by this competent novelist. But it is readable, the background of Europe on the eve of catastrophe is exciting in itself, and Barretto's accurate knowledge of France and its people—of everyday French life as well as the lurid exhibitionism of the Riviera—gives authority to his picture. Subtly suggested is the ingrained pacifism of the average Frenchman, which before 1940 most of the world had underestimated.

Progressive Teacher

BRONSON ALCOTT, TEACHER. By Dorothy McCuskey. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1940. 217 pp. \$2.50.

Reviewed by HOWARD MUMFORD JONES

DULL, vaguely written, and fundamentally uncritical, Miss McCuskey's book on Bronson Alcott adds almost nothing to Odell Shepard's "Pedlar's Progress" and very little to our knowledge of the history of education in the United States. Miss McCuskey makes a half-hearted attempt to link Alcott to the "Progressive Movement" in education, of which she appears to be an adherent, but one reads that "such a claim would be justified only if Socrates, Plato, Jesus, Pestalozzi, and all great teachers were called the fore-runners of progressivism." Careful historians will continue to content themselves with less cosmic assertions.

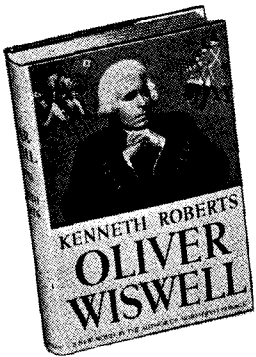
Professor Paul Shorey once declared that books in education were not written in English but in Pedagogue. Miss McCuskey avoids Pedagogue, but her style is of that sort which is alleged

to conceal thought. Here are some sample sentences: "The book bears inescapable marks of his influences from 'Pilgrim's Progress' on the reading list to the concluding account of the graceful, lively exhibition that was substituted for the customary final examination."

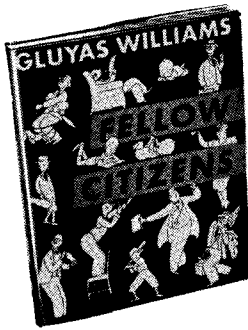
It is useless in the face of writing like this to protest that the catechism is not a subject or that a fine art is not divorced from thought. It is likewise useless to remark that Alcott's theory of education, whatever its merits, was fundamentally anarchic, that it was applicable only to children of a certain class in his own day, or that, given the complex civilization of our time, a "child-centered" school which is never anything more than "child-centered" is about as dangerous a toy for sentimentalists to play with as one could imagine.

The work was awarded the annual prize offered by Kappa Delta Pi for "the best study on a significant phase of the history of American education."

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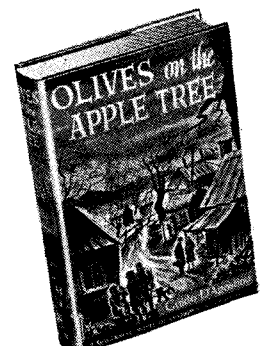
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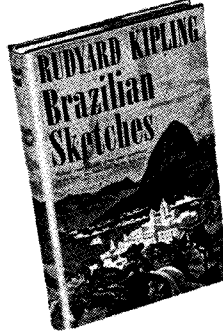
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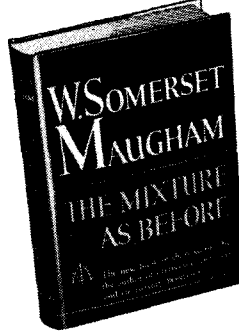
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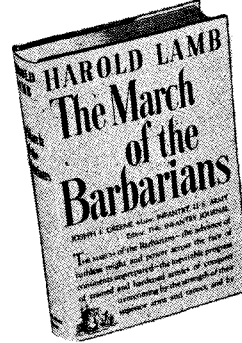
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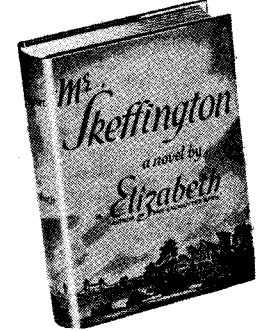
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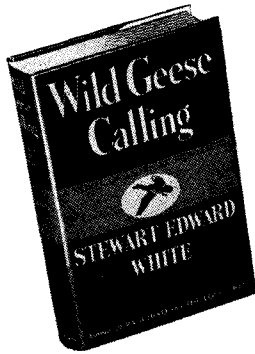
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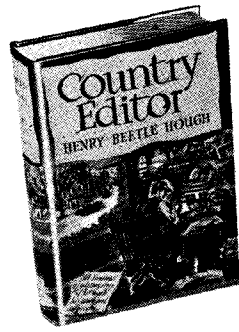
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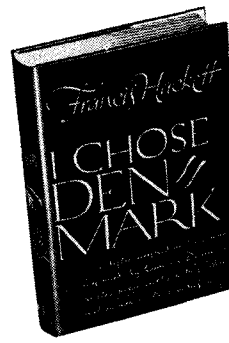
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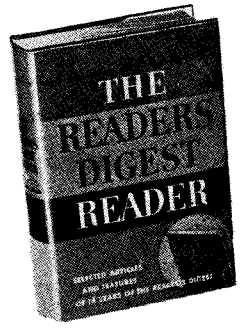
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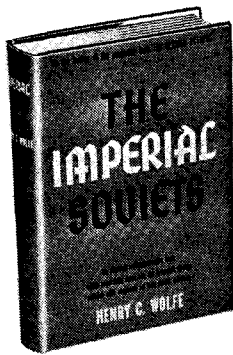
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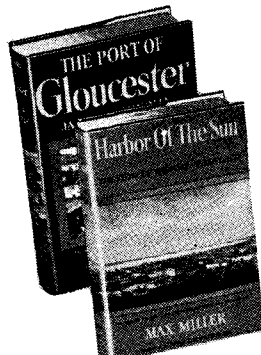
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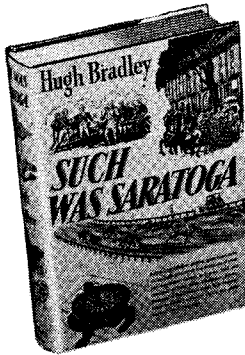
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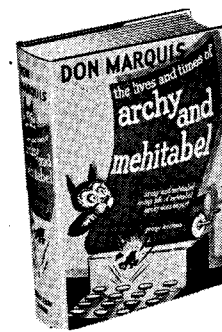
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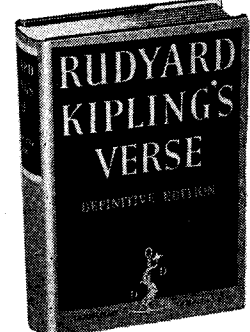
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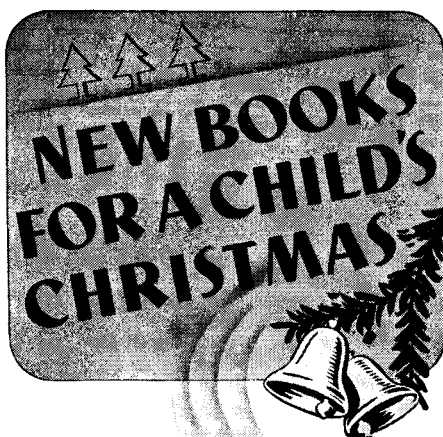


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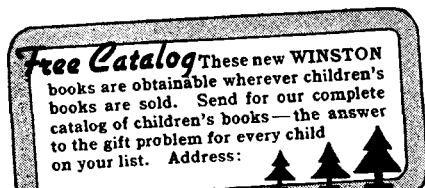
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Title and Author	Age and Sex	What It's About	Our Opinion
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BIG KNIFE <i>William E. Wilson</i> (Farrar & Rinehart: \$2.)	10-14 Boys	The career of <i>George Rogers Clark</i> , and especially his capture of <i>Kaskaskia</i> and <i>Vincennes</i> .	Excellent
HE WENT WITH CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS <i>Louise Andrews Kent</i> (Houghton Mifflin: \$2.)	12-16 Both	An English boy who sails as deckhand with <i>Columbus</i> on the <i>Santa Maria</i> experiences many adventures in the West Indies and Spain.	First-rate
LONE STAR RISING <i>Gertrude Crownfield</i> (Crowell: \$2.)	10-14 Girls	The Texan war of independence, seen through the eyes of an American merchant in <i>San Antonio</i> . He witnesses the capture of the <i>Alamo</i> , joins a train of refugees which follows <i>Sam Houston</i> in some of his marches, is captured by the Mexicans, and sees the battle of <i>San Jacinto</i> from the Mexican side.	A spirited story
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WALKING ON GOLD <i>Phyllis Crawford</i> (Julian Messner: \$2.)	8-14 Boys	The gold rush to California in 1849; the hero a lad who travels out to the diggings by the <i>Santa Fe</i> trail, endures hardships and dangers, sees much of both hostile and friendly Indians, and finally decides that farming will pay better in California than gold-hunting.	Rough piece of work
QUEST OF THE CAVALIERS <i>Faith Yingling Knoop</i> (Longmans: \$2.)	12-16 Both	Popular account of <i>De Soto's</i> adventures in <i>Darien</i> , <i>Peru</i> , and the southern part of the present United States.	To be highly recommended
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