

Patter into Pattern

THE PATTERN OF POLITICS: The Folkways of a Democratic People. By J. T. Salter. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1940. 246 pp. \$2.25.

Reviewed by T. V. SMITH

IF voters plus politicians make politics, then a description of the two would be a picture of, if not "the pattern of politics." Whether it would also be, as the sub-title suggests, "the folkways of a democratic people," would depend upon how fully the interrelation of the two were shown to constitute a tradition. My mind was full of this thought of the texture of traditions as I laid down the proof of my own forthcoming little volume on "The Legislative Way of Life" to pick up this latest book of Salter. At first I was disappointed.

Not that the book is not diverting. It is just that from the dedication right through to the conclusion, which sagely observes that "the only conclusions that are really important in the democratic process are your own—the people's conclusions." I know of no one in America indeed who writes of politics with more sprightliness and color than does Mr. Salter. In this regard he is a most unacademic academician. This book maintains that reputation, and maintains it with quickened tempo. Through "Ethics and the Voter," "Talk versus Bullets," "Of

(Continued on next page)

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Title and Author	Crime, Place, and Sleuth	Summing Up	Verdict
AND SUDDEN DEATH <i>Cleve F. Adams</i> (Dutton: \$2.)	Wife of missing criminal with huge hoard of loot leads hard-hitting operative McBride across Pacific to hot time in Hawaii.	Outrageous methods of unprincipled and rumbustious sleuth bring Nipponese nobleman and other wicked men to deservedly sticky end.	Exhilarating
BLACK CORRIDORS <i>Constance and Gweneth Little</i> (Crime Club: \$2.)	Blunt instrument erases three trained nurses in hospital rooms where searchers seek for missing document, and hypochondriac's niece spots slayer.	Unflagging action, some mirthful but most of it hair-raising. Not very complimentary to motives of nursing profess but eminently readable.	Good hunting
DEATH IN COSTUME <i>Allan McRoyd</i> (Greystone: \$2.)	Insp. Franklin Brady and long-suffering asst. track killer of ex-vaudevillainess from Broadway stage to Lon Guyland palace.	Smouldering mass of old hatreds which finally burst into murderous flame effectively and melodramatically quenched.	Passable
DEADLY NIGHTSHADE <i>Elizabeth Daly</i> (Farrar & Rinehart: \$2.)	Atropine epidemic summons sleuth Gammadage from Manhattan snuggery to Maine resort where persevering killer is finally run to earth.	Gypsies, artists, missing children, ditto jewelry, attractive autumnal scenery, variety of queer characters, and an unorthodox finish.	The berries
FAREWELL MY LOVELY <i>Raymond Chandler</i> (Knopf: \$2.)	Chance encounter with herculean bank-robber injects investigator Marlowe into raw and ruthless saga of Pacific coast wickedness.	Crooked Cal. cops, psychic birds of prey, lush ladies, and gambling magnates make life torrid for practically indestructible sleuth.	Swift and savage
JOURNEY INTO FEAR <i>Eric Ambler</i> (Knopf: \$2.)	Attempted murder in Turkish hotel upsets plans and nerves of homeward bound English gunnery expert. Sea voyage is even worse.	Effectively under-stated story of frantic fly who finally evades clutches of urbanely malevolent bunch of murderous Nazi spiders.	Exciting
CRIME INCARNATE <i>Carolyn Wells</i> (Lippincott: \$2.)	Cold-blooded killer wreaks havoc in Adirondacks until Fleming Stone solves secret of sealed room.	Method of first murder interesting—if possible. Other crimes (two) cleverly done and stylishly unfathomed.	Good ole Stone!
GOLD COMES IN BRICKS <i>A. A. Fair</i> (Morrow: \$2.)	Donald Lam, pint-size sleuth with Brobdignagian brain, spoils toughest gang of Cal. Egyptians who ever nth-degreed double-cross.	Action so fast, dialogue so tart, plot so completely bamboozling it keeps reader's mind turning endless series of delighted somersaults.	The Real McCoy
BLACK PLUMES <i>Margery Allingham</i> (Crime Club: \$2.)	Mgr. of London art galleries stabbed and dumped in closet. Black-mailing asst. treated likewise. Broad-burred Scottish detective handles case.	Excels in characterizations, background and generally glossy professional finish. Solution not exactly startling, but "head nark" Bridie deduces bonnily.	Pleasing
WHO'D SHOOT A GENIUS? <i>Sturges Mason Schley</i> (Random House: \$2.)	Pretty widow with mental "quirk" enlists Manhattan psychiatrist in apparently hopeless hunt for possible slayer of "suicide" writer-spouse.	Deductive ice gets pretty brittle at times, but likable characters, smart background, and extra good conversation save the day.	High gloss
MURDER IS NOT MUTE <i>Audrey Newell</i> (Macrae-Smith: \$2.)	Female skeleton in woods near seashore resort gives bored New York detective blessed surcease from vacation.	Plenty of action and reasonably air-tight plot, but story suffers somewhat from gauche stylistic touches.	Commendable
THIS DEATH WAS MURDER <i>March Evermay</i> (Macmillan: \$2.)	Pistol eliminates widow-heir to fortune. Strip-teaser also slain. Violently antagonistic step-children all suspect.	Level-headed girl helps sleuth and gets in numerous perilous situations. Colorful kettle of red herrings.	Better grade

the People," "Personal Attention," and "Leadership," he gaily plunges to "Conclusions" that are no conclusions.

The headings might be anything else without impairing the author's animated account of the political scene. Every time the pot of politics boils the author bubbles to match its boiling. But it is primarily of the actors that he writes, only secondarily of the acting, and almost never of the plot. The American voter, he says, "has a sense of ego, but not a sense of state." "A politician," he says, "is a physician of the body politic." And as for the relation between them, he says, "The voter sets the standard—the politician comes up to it." What the standard is and how the voter sets it; the way the politician comes up to it and why—these are variously and happily illustrated from practitioners high and low—but mostly fairly low.

Through the pages here move many political names, names of both the living and the dead. And hardly a name is not seen to be vivid and rewarding. In its roll-calling the book is as up-to-date as Wendell Willkie. Indeed, a remark of Mr. Willkie kept running through my mind as I smiled down page after page. It was Mr. Willkie's canny if candid description of himself as "a conversational farmer." Mr. Salter is "a conversational politician." His innumerable talks with and about politicians, and their conversations with each other, spill over into print like a benign flood deluging the whole land. The book is the nearest thing I have seen to a candid camera's reporting of politics as a continuous campaign. Mr. Salter is Boswell to all the bosses.

But even so the title misfired at me and left in me a mood of discontent as I read along. Of showmanship, yes, here was the picture; of gossip, yes, here was the pattern; of reader-interest, yes, here was the climax. But what of statesmanship, where was it? And of the configuration of American life arising as the impersonal precipitate of things made personal for 150 years, where was it? Where indeed was the *pattern* that is to politics as language is to conversation?

And then at last I remembered that I myself have described the politician as the specialist of things-in-general through the power of words, politics as the poetry of our economic life, and democratic citizenship as counting the coin of free communication to be the gold standard of civilized values. As I thought of this, I decided that perhaps Salter had strategy in trusting the pattern to emerge from the pictures, in letting the heart-burns touch but never tarnish the smiles, and in allowing showmanship to constitute statesmanship until death prove more potent than life in purging political power of its inherent poison.

Life Story, Part II

ACROSS THE BUSY YEARS, Recollections and Reflections, Volume II. By Nicholas Murray Butler. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1940. 474 pp., with index. \$3.75.

Reviewed by JOHN ERSKINE

THE second volume of President Butler's recollections and reflections records some of his adventures in international affairs, thus supplementing the first volume, which gave an account of his experiences as educator and citizen at home. The two volumes naturally must be read together if we are to get a picture of one of the most extraordinary lives in our time, yet even here we do not come at the whole story. President Butler's other books, his University reports, his reports as president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and the bits of memorabilia which have enlivened his talks to Co-

lumbia students and alumni, are all needed for the complete portrait. He illustrates an ideal of citizenship more common among the founders of the Republic than in our day. Some of Jefferson's teachers in the College of William and Mary had a high place as statesmen and administrators, but the specialization of later times has nearly abolished the type of the fully developed man, such as philosophers have liked to imagine, the man thoroughly competent to fulfil all the offices of citizenship.

In the first volume of these memoirs we have the record of President Butler's youth, of his education, in his home, in school, and in college, and the record also, though altogether too modestly set down, of his astounding achievement in turning Columbia from a small local college into an international university. It was even then his ideal, which he has preached and illustrated to generations of students, that an educated man should at all times be active in the public affairs

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