

PART ONE
of the
Entire Library
of the Late
John Gribbel

will be on view from
October 25 to Time of
Public Sale, October 30, 31
and November 1

at the
**PARKE - BERNET
GALLERIES • INC**

30 EAST 57 STREET
NEW YORK

Among the Rarities

A Button Gwinnett

Signed Document, 1776

Presentation copy of the 1865
Suppressed "Alice in Wonderland"
Robert Burns Letters

*And many other Superb
Collectors' Items*

ILLUSTRATED CATALOG, \$1.



At New York's Grand Central Terminal just toss your bag to a porter and say "Hotel Roosevelt"... He'll escort you through our private passageway, direct to the Roosevelt lobby... Time-saving convenience and complete comfort... Satisfying meals... Restful rooms, \$4.00 up.

**HOTEL
ROOSEVELT**

BERNAM G. HINES, Managing Director

MADISON AVENUE AT 45th ST., NEW YORK

ONLY 20 MINUTES BY EXPRESS SUBWAY TO THE WORLD'S FAIR

Hamlet Leads the Revolution

THE FIELDS OF PARADISE. By Ralph Bates. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1940. 382 pp. \$2.50.

Reviewed by CARLETON BEALS

THIS novel attempts to present the Mexican agrarian revolution in microcosm: the story of a single village—semi-tropical San Lorenzo—flaring into blind revolt against the rich hacendado, with his broad acres, and his political henchmen. Although the book is a sort of revolutionary miracle play, Mr. Bates is far too accomplished a writer to allow his sermon to crowd his action or his characters into a corner. The thesis is plain enough: successful revolt against oppression, a tender philosophical explanation of the inevitable resultant dissensions, and a hymn to the necessity of collective labor if the new freedom is to be profitably preserved.

Almost any Mexican village at some time during the past twenty years would have provided as startling episodes as those woven into Bates's intricate pattern. In his stimulating book "America: Novel without Novelists," South America's leading literary critic, Luis Alberto Sánchez, argues that in countries such as Mexico, life has been so constantly hectic, vivid, and ruthless that southern writers have felt little urge toward strong fictional utterance. In Mexico the materials for grandiose or at least Grand Guignol fiction—violence, cruelty, romance, beauty, class-struggle—are so ready-made that the average storyteller could easily fall into too naive acceptance.

Not so Bates. He accepts none of Mexico's prodigal gifts without due measure. Carefully he strains the native fruits through his remarkable literary sieve and labels his jelly with artifice. Not that he spurns the dramatic. There are memorable scenes, and the novel rises through an atmosphere of growing menace to the powerful climax of the prison-break, the peasant assault on the I-Am-Laughing tavern, the mounting flames of burning buildings, all promptly followed by an intimate if rocky love-scene—a literal reference, for the nuptial couch consists of sharp rocks.

All this occurs little more than half way through the book. Suspense is heightened by making the leader, a journeyman maker and vender of fireworks for fiestas, a relative stranger to the town, so that the complex threads, both the personal lives of the various characters and of the forces at work in the village are revealed

piecemeal as the action progresses. Although the remainder of the volume, after the social fireworks have exploded, is taken up with elaborate parables on fear and driving out the money-changers from the temple, with philosophical harangues on the fatuity of personal power, heated theological argumentation, and recondite dialectic, even so, Bates has an eerie way of distilling out eternal moments into a flask that seems motionless yet that one knows must surely explode. Suspense is thus further maintained by postponing the happy ending for two hundred pages of post-victory disputes, a near mass attack on the church, and the threat of a counter blow from armed forces assembled by the uncle of the murdered hacendado. The lengthy hamletic doubts of the chieftain of revolt help sustain the uncertainty of the outcome.

Bates's mellow philosophizing is remote indeed from the stark reality of "Los de Abajo" ("The Underdogs") by the native Mexican novelist, Mariano Azuela. As a matter of fact, Bates's story is not so much the record of the Mexican revolution as of "The Revolution" intellectualized. It is incidental that the setting happens to be Mexico, and though it will seem alien indeed to most Americans, at few points did I have any feeling that it was an authentic picture of Mexico or Mexicans, or even an authentic picture of peasants.

None of these comments should leave the impression that this is not a superior novel. It is full of wisdom and haunting beauty; it is very gripping; and its style is subtle and unique. It is written by a man who has seen and experienced much and has pondered the meaning of human conflicts deeply.

ANSWERS TO LITERARY QUIZ

1. Sinbad the Sailor, his second voyage, in *The Arabian Nights*.
2. Darius Green, in *Darius Green and His Flying Machine*, by John Townsend Trowbridge.
3. Daedalus and Icarus, in Greek Mythology.
4. *The Jumbies*, by Edward Lear.
5. Prince Dolor, in *The Little Lame Prince*, by Dinah Maria Mulock Craik.
6. Phileas Fogg, in *Around the World in 80 Days*, by Jules Verne.
7. *Pinocchio*, by Carlo Collodi.
8. Gulliver, in the voyage to Brood-inag, in *Gulliver's Travels*, by Jonathan Swift.
9. *Wynken, Blynken, and Nod*, by Eugene Field.
10. Cavor, in *The First Men in the Moon*, by H. G. Wells.

France Under Napoleon III

THE SECOND EMPIRE. By Octave Aubry. Translated by Arthur Livingston. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company. 1940. 638 pp., with index. \$5.

Reviewed by CRANE BRINTON

M OCTAVE AUBRY has had a career perhaps unique in modern letters. Having made a name for himself as a successful historical novelist, he turned some years ago to historical research, and produced a book on Napoleon at St. Helena which won acclaim even from French academic historians, a group disposed by professional training to regard a *romancier* as an untouchable. An excellent biography of the Empress Eugénie prepared the way for this latest book, a full-length study of the second Empire. M. Aubry has succeeded in living down his past, and is now a full member of the guild of historians.

His success, fortunately, has not meant repudiating entirely the gifts that made him a good novelist. He can, and does, still tell a story with a skill which most academic historians, laboring under their load of social sciences, and fearful of compromising their reputations as scholars, rarely achieve. The story of Napoleon III, always worth telling for its dramatic, and indeed sometimes melodramatic interest, is especially worth telling in these days, when a whole new crop of Caesars and Napoleons seems to be flourishing as unshakably as did Louis Napoleon himself in the first years of his dictatorship. M. Aubry wrote well before the outbreak of the present war. He makes no effort to draw analogies or parallels with current events. But the reader may draw his own, if only to comfort himself. This book, and the admirable history of the Third Republic by D. W. Brogan which by a happy accident appears at the same time, will help to remind him of something apparently forgotten by many of our commentators on the news. The Germans wrote *finis Galliae* once before—and at Sedan. But it was not the end of France.

M. Aubry's book is perhaps the best account of these twenty years of French history available in a single volume. It is not as witty as Mr. Guedalla's "Second Empire," but it is much meatier, more restrained, and it is much less allusive. Indeed, M. Aubry has unobtrusively solved one of the great problems confronting a historian thoroughly, directly, almost intuitively familiar with the minute de-

tails of his period: he has so sifted and arranged his material that the reader is never confused, never halted by cross-references and cross-currents. His book will not puzzle even an American relatively ignorant of French history. His battles are understandable (though a few maps would have helped), his diplomatic history makes sense—but not too much sense, which would be to falsify the facts—and his people come to life under epithets which just escape being strained. There is just enough conscious literary skill to make things move—and moving; but the necessary restraint is there, and the episode of Maximilian in Mexico, for instance, which in unskilled hands can be made insufferably sentimental, is told with the dignity it can bear. A long chapter on "Society under the Second Empire" brings in skillfully the kind of social and intellectual history our modern notions demand of the historian, and a brief conclusion sums up and judges the place of the second Empire in French history.

Like so many others who have studied Napoleon III, M. Aubry comes out in the end liking him. It is not an unqualified admiration. M. Aubry clearly has no fondness for dictatorship. He believes that modern France has been marked by her past as in some sense essentially democratic. He thinks that the second Empire was an unsuccessful imitation of the first, an historical accident. He thinks that Napoleon III made many mistakes, that he chose inept subordinates, that he lacked administrative ability, that he was muddle-headed, at once an idealist and an unprincipled schemer, that notably in foreign affairs he pursued incompatible ends that were bound to bring him to disaster. But he insists that Louis Napoleon's faults and weaknesses are redeemed by his fundamental trait of greatness; unlike his apparently successful rival Bismarck, Louis Napoleon saw beyond the narrow nationalism of his day—and, alas, of ours—into a Europe and a world organized as a commonwealth above war. Perhaps, Louis Napoleon's uncle, too, dreamed of the "peace and order of Europe"—at St. Helena.

"This England"

The Rosenbach Company is opening an exhibition of rare books and manuscripts entitled "This England," on Monday, October 14, 1940, at 15 East 51st Street, N. Y. C. The exhibition contains memorials of England's greatness from Chaucer to Kipling.

Expert instruction in SHORT STORY and ARTICLE WRITING

practical home study training for those who must work in spare time

The Magazine Institute, a private school completely owned and operated by successful writers and editors, offers practical, up-to-date training in fiction and non-fiction writing. You work in your own home. Every assignment you submit is returned with detailed criticism.

INDIVIDUAL ATTENTION

An experienced writer or editor takes you in hand, answering all your questions, helping you find the work for which you are naturally suited. Before long you are writing in your own home fiction stories, short sketches, essays, whatever you are best fitted to do.

SEND THE COUPON TODAY for the free booklet which describes opportunities in magazine writing.

THE MAGAZINE INSTITUTE, dept. ML-10
50 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N. Y.

Please send your booklet, without obligation, to:

Name.....

Address.....
(Inquiries confidential. No salesman will call.)



The singular story of a man's search

"A novel of a painter's life as earthy and detailed as the novelized lives of Van Gogh and Gauguin."

—Herald Tribune \$2.75

DUELL, SLOAN and PEARCE

A New Book of
Poems for Today

TO WHAT STRANGE ALTAR

BY
DOROTHY
QUICK

Warm beauty and a quest for enduring value in these troubled times mark this new collection of poems by a distinguished American poet. \$2.00

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS