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Fiction

ONCE THERE WAS A VILLAGE. By Katherine Dunlap. Morrow. 1940. 248 pp. \$2.

Katherine Dunlap's story of a French village in the summer of 1939 is a fragile tale that stays well within its prescribed limits. Wisely, there is no tangling with problems of political or military strategy. The author hazards no explanation of the tragedy of France. Out of long familiarity with the French countryside she has dashed off an affectionate and loyal sketch of some of the people whom that tragedy befell. Here are the men who harvested their fields while they waited to hear whether it would be war. After the flood of "I-was-there-and-I-knowabout-it" narratives of France in the current war, there is a strong stroke

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of realism in the story of men who knew nothing about it, who waited to be told when, where, and whether they would be sent, but who, in their own hearts, knew why they were going.

An American girl, her brother, who paints (not, to the reader, very convincingly), a paying guest, and a French novelist move in the foreground, all of them observed and commented on by the Village. Except for the paying guest, a rather heavily burlesqued sample of a crude American (as opposed to nice American) lady writer, all find themselves intimately involved with the fortunes of France and the village.

Mrs. Dunlap's novel is conventional, sentimental, tenuous, and trivial. Yet the terrible dignity of the events she touches on lends some nobility to the book, and her wholly unaffected tenderness and respect for the village, and its counterpart throughout France, are, beyond all question, honorable.

F. S

SOMETHING MORE THAN EARTH. By Helen Norris. Little, Brown. 1940. 252 pp. \$2.50.

The central situation of Miss Norris's novel is somewhat like that of a recent British novel, "Gold for My Bride," by Norman Collins: an unattractive woman bribes a younger man into marriage. The American novel, however, could be called "Land for My Bride," for it is the rich, red land of a cotton plantation in the deep South which the young man covets.

Helen Norris in her first book succeeds in avoiding the trap of lush romanticism, which claims so many Southern novelists, and she exhibits no interest in the turnip-gnawing Calibans and grotesques of Caldwell and Faulkner. Her plantation home is a two-family affair, the darkies do not sing like a Hall-Johnson choir in the background but snicker and gossip in kitchen and field, and the rich, good earth produces cotton for which there is sometimes no market. Some of the farmers discover what Sidney Lanier pointed out seventy years ago, that it might be well to grow corn at times.

The young author (only twenty-two) has conscientiously striven for simplicity and directness, both in description and anecdote. Robert Frost has pointed out, however, that perfection turns inward upon itself, and sometimes this earnest striving results only in a feeble oversimplification, as for instance in the primer-like imitations of Hemingway. "Something More Than Earth" has often fragility rather than simplicity, sometimes a mincing quality. The characters, for example, talk in no wise like voluble Southerners but out-do Coolidge in thrifty monosyllables. The niggardliness in the dialogue plus a considerable amount of what Winchell calls literary lace gives

to the novel an undeserved delicacy, for the story itself is firm and the characters are plausible and not at all shadowy.

R. A. C.

HEAVEN'S DOORYARD. By Marguerite McIntire, Farrar & Rinehart. 1940. 308 pp. \$2.50.

It is the spring of 1840 when this story opens and young Jonathon Chadbourne has come to Maine from Massachusetts with capital consisting of two thousand dollars, an ox-team, his own strength and integrity, and one loyal dependent, Peleg Jones, a crippled veteran of the Revolution. Jonathon is Quaker-bred and therefore a charming blend of the mystical and the practical. He wants a hilltop farm where the fields seem to "stretch into eternity," but he also wants a wood lot for firewood and soil that will bear a varied cash crop. He buys a farm, inherits a feud, and complicates it by falling in love.

The ensuing love story is lively and tender, set against a background which seems to record faithfully the social attitudes prevailing in rural Maine only a hundred years ago. Mrs. McIntire treats the economic and emotional limitations of the period indulgently—almost sympathetically. She seems to share that romantic nostalgia for the agricultural past so general among the writers of industrial society from William Morris to Lewis Mumford. Perhaps they do not realize that agriculture itself was once considered modern and therefore pernicious by races bred in a pastoral tradition. Mohammed, contemplating a plow, exclaimed: "When that implement appears among a people, virtue goes out of them!" H. M.

Miscellaneous

PANORAMA OF TREASURE HUNT-ING. By Harold T. Wilkins. Dutton. 582 pp. \$5.

Mr. Wilkins is a recognized authority on treasure hunting and his panorama of the subject provides the reader with vicarious romantic ad-



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The Saturday Review

venture in strange lands and queer places. The shades of Captains Kidd and Flood, Sir William Morgan, and other notorious buccaneers flit through its pages and attest to the author's exhaustive research among archives hitherto unexplored.

Mr. Wilkins views treasure hunting per se with a bilious eye, and thoroughly debunks those who organize the avariciously gullible into expeditions for that purpose. Certainly, the reader is left with the conviction that "all is not gold that golden seems" and that tragedy has marched shoulder to shoulder with those who have sought—and even found—buried treasure. The author devotes one very interesting chapter to the ill-fated expedition of the British explorer, Colonel Fawcett, who disappeared into the Matto Grosso section of Brazil.

the Matto Grosso section of Brazil.

"Panorama of Treasure Hunting"
would be more enjoyable reading if
the author's style were less pompous
and more valuable if it contained an
index.

L. W.

SAILING AND SMALL CRAFT DOWN THE AGES. By Edgar L. Bloomster. Annapolis, Md.: U. S. Naval Institute. 1940. 280 pp. \$5.

This is the book that every ship enthusiast has been awaiting for a long time. However they may try to bluff the matter through a conversation, even the most experienced yachtsmen do not know what a trabacoto or a rua pet is, unless by some wild chance they have sailed the coasts of Sicily or Siam. What is worse, there has been up to the present, no place where they could find out. Even the unabridged Merriam Webster and the encyclopedia are ignorant both of these and of half the other rigs mentioned; and when they do happen to have heard of (for instance) a lorcha or a proa, they are quite incapable of furnishing the important information about the craft. Now they have this book, an encyclopedia of sailing ships, the only one of its kind.

It is arranged on a simple and intelligent plan, opening with some ninety pages of drawings, ten or twelve pictures to the page. They are arranged by regions, all the Indian Ocean types on one page, the rigs peculiar to the North Sea on another. Following the

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 358)

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE $KING\ LEAR$

Blow winds and crack your cheeks! rage! blow!

..... and thou, all-shaking thunder,

Smit flat the thick rotundity o' the world!

Crack nature's moulds, all germins spill at once

That make ingrateful man.......

I tax not you you elements with

I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness.

pictures comes the text, arranged in dictionary form under the name of the type—a description of each ship, with notes on its peculiarities and something about its history. Not all the type. Finally, there is an excellent section on the sailing yachts now to be met in American waters, one on the America's cup races, and one diagraming and simply explaining the ropes used on a full rigged ship. With the date of its publication this became the standard work on the subject and an indispensable book of reference; and what is really surprising, it is good reading. F. P. reading.

UNDER SEA WITH HELMET AND CAMERA. By Felix Du Pont. Illustrations from Photographs taken by the author. Dodd, Mead. 1940. 87 pp. \$2.50.

This book is written by an ardent amateur who has succeeded not only in working out for himself a technique of undersea natural history, but also has embodied it in an interesting narrative designed to encourage others to follow his example. The second part of the book is a useful simple manual on apparatus and general procedure for those who wish to study their fish and other sea-life from below instead from above. There are some very beautiful photographs.

H. S. C.

Poetry

FIRE AND OTHER POEMS. By D. H. Lawrence. With a Foreword by Robinson Jeffers and a Note on the Poems by Frieda Lawrence. San Francisco: Grabhorn Press. 1940. 37 pp. \$3.50.

D. H. Lawrence's poems are less important in themselves than as back-

ground illumination for the novels. Even in his early period, when he was attempting a fairly traditional manner, with some balance of rhyme and stanza, Lawrence was rarely a poet in the small sense: he was forever breaking out of bounds, getting away from regularized and disciplined expression. Before long he sought relief in a rhapsodic free verse. By the end of his life his poems had become for the most part bitterly satiric thought-pellets, often crudely rhymed though the magnificent last-period "Ship of Death" must not be forgotten. As a whole, Lawrence's poems are a variegated scrapheap from which individual pieces can be salvaged, such as the superbly imagined and expressed "Change of Life" in the present collection of nine left-overs. Only one of this group, "Eagle in New Mexico," which appeared in less palatable form in "Birds, Beasts and Flowers," was rewritten and inserted by Lawrence in one of his volumes; the others are entirely new, previously unpublished first-draft material. If a few of them suggest the low ebb of the "Pansies" and "Nettles" collections, some of the rest have the kinetic power, the vividness, and the deep "special H. T. M.

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Double-Crostics: No. 359

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

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175·B	176-	D	77-:	5 1	78	·Z	79	·L																							

DIRECTIONS

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-six words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the muzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing The black squares indicate ends of words therefore words do not necessarily end at the rightside of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the an-thor and the title of thor and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New Inter-national Dictionary (1938 edition).

The solution of last week's Double Crostic will be found on page 25 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

- A. Smacking of the workshop.
- B. In a straightforward manner (phrase).
- C. Begone! (slang).
- D. State of intense strain (2 wds.)
- E. Domain of Freyr (Norse).
- F. Followers of Wycliffe.
- G. Feminine name used in poems by Wordsworth.
- H. Bridge to Paradise over the infernal fire (Moslem).
- I. Iroquois Confederacy Indians of Central N. Y. valley.
- J. Contorted.
- K. Goddess of Fortune (Gr.)
- L. French dramatist-poet (1868-1918).
- M. Called on for aid or protection.
- N. Wealthy.
- O. Character in As You Like It.
- P. English Prime Minister (1770-82).
- Q. Frequents and molests.
- R. With hand on the hip and elbows turned outward.
- S. Bars used to pry up or open.
- T. Scottish poet (Anster Fair, 1812).
- U. Title and hero of tragedy by Victor Hugo.
- V. Leading character in Aeschylus
- W. Not becoming (behavior).
- X. For deception to Joshua they were condemned to be drudges in the Temple.
 Y. Admiral and Regent of Hungary (1920-).
- Z. River on which Abbotsford is located.

words

105	125	130	169	158	165	54	132		
151	173	128	73	66	137	144	70	167	175

135 113 100 72 88 25 77

27 89 176 142 74 60 140 94 3

61 86 17 4 90 138 111

85 16 7 159 127 75 131 **150**

38 106 83 14

80 37 170 67 91 64 107

48 122 10 32 110 139 15

163 50 123 28 46 115

29 153 126 143 5

133 19 179 51 13 79 82 49 118 148 56 99 41 92

42 109 2 117 155 87 59

24 68 114 57 162 121

108 134 95 9 18

8 171 161 21 35 101 156

36 31 147 23 6 141

63 11 177 34 164 97

65 71 53 20 84 124 98 166 58 62 81 129 44 1

157 40 93 47 33 103 76 39 104 119 149 174 154 55 22

120 160 152 43 78 26 172 102 96 136

168 69 145 116 30 112 45 146 178 52 12