

TRADE Winds

THOSE HIGH-FLYING SMITH GIRLS—

Betty and Lillian—already dominate the best-seller lists; from the present look of things they soon will be first on the court calendars as well. Betty's Cousin Sadie says that the character of Cissy in "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn" is a libelous caricature of herself, and that the only thing that will enable her to live the rest of her life in peace is \$250,000 damages. Lillian's "Strange Fruit," which has already turned the delicate stomachs of sundry Boston hypocrites, has now engaged the attention of our over-zealous post office authorities, and any number of suits and counter-suits are threatened. This sort of thing will continue until the public finds a way of convincing letter carriers that they are paid to deliver mail and not regulate the country's morals.

Many other of our best publishers and authors are being presented in court in what is assuming the proportions of an epidemic. A sizable section of the literary refugee colony claims to have assisted Etta Shiber in the composition of her thrilling "Paris Underground," and is suing for a share of the royalties. Mr. Lewis R. Linet has hauled Scribner's into court for misrepresenting Arthur Train's "Ephraim Tutt" as non-fiction, and selling it at \$3.50 a copy instead of \$2.50 or \$3.00. He wants restitution for "himself and the other 55,000 readers of the book." What divine providence appointed Lewis R. Linet either to represent the 55,000 persons referred to, or to tell Scribner's what price to set on any one of their publications has not been made clear at this writing.

All this to-do stimulated good old John Sumner to come bounding out of his New York Society for the Suppression of Vice, and work himself into a lather over D. H. Lawrence's "The First Mrs. Chatterley." He had been out of action so long that one court attendant blanched at his reappearance, and, unconsciously plagiarizing Miss Dorothy Parker, exclaimed hoarsely, "My God, I thought he crawled into the woodwork twenty years ago!"

Mr. Sumner, in mid-season form, characterized "Mrs. Chatterley" as "lewd, lascivious, filthy, and disgusting." "A lot of men," he pointed out, "are going to come back from this war just like the man in that book came back from the last one. What kind of an example do you think it is for American women, to suggest that

they deliberately go out and get pregnant by a gamekeeper?" Mr. George Joel of the Dial Press, publisher of "The First Mrs. Chatterley," intimated that the problem was not too pressing, since there really are very few gamekeepers in America, but Mr. Sumner paid him no heed.

Magistrate Keutgen, understandably intrigued, decided to read the book himself. Mr. Sumner graciously offered the magistrate his own copy, with some ninety-two passages that he considered obscene carefully underlined. Horace Manges, counsel for Dial Press, didn't think this a good idea at all, whereupon Mr. Sumner produced another copy, saying "This is a virgin copy." "So is the book," snapped alert Attorney Manges, who is paid handsome fees to say things like that. Booksellers, who have stocked reprint editions of other versions of "Lady Chatterley" for the past ten years, were vaguely puzzled by the proceedings. When a final decision in the vital affair is reached, Mr. Sumner and his henchmen presumably will return to the seclusion of their Society for the Suppression of Vice, which must have by this time one of the juiciest collections of lascivious literature and "feelthy" pictures in the world.

In Trade Winds' Utopia there will be a law stipulating one year at hard labor for every self-appointed censor

and publicity-crazed nitwit who clutter up the courts with imbecilic suits and complaints at a time when the country is at war, and a harassed judiciary is already burdened with overcrowded calendars. . . .

BEN AMES WILLIAMS'S new novel, "Leave Her to Heaven," the June selection of the Literary Guild, is packed with action, including a murder, a whopping cloudburst in New Mexico, and a forest fire in Maine. There is nothing in it, however, that is going to provoke a tenth as much fan mail as a puzzle about a quantity of coconuts that Williams used as a *Deus ex machina* in a short story in the *Saturday Evening Post* some years ago. The trouble stemmed from the fact that he propounded the puzzle but neglected to furnish the answer. The day the story appeared in print, Editor Lorimer wired, "For love of Mike, how many coconuts? Hell popping around here." Some two thousand letters arrived in the course of the next week. Before turning you loose on this puzzle, I must tell you that one professor at M.I.T. gave it up after a full week's torment. Ben Ames Williams says the record for a correct solution up his way is fifty-four minutes, but Herbert Wise, the horror story specialist, produced the right answer in thirty-five. It took him longer than that to explain how he arrived at it! If you're as good at algebra as I am, I advise you to skip the whole thing. The answer is printed on page 33. Here is the problem:

Five men and a monkey were ship-



"I can't understand what happened to them."

wrecked on a desert island. They spent the first day gathering the entire local supply of coconuts, which they heaped in a great pile.

During the night, one of the men—call him A—decided, in order to avoid argument, to take his share of the coconuts that night. He divided the big pile into five equal piles, had one coconut left over which he gave to the monkey, took his pile away, and hid it, and put the other four piles back in one big one. Later a second man, Mr. B., awoke with the same thought, divided the pile as he found it into five equal piles, had one coconut left over, which he gave to the monkey, hid his own pile, and combined the four remaining piles in one. And Mr. C., and Mr. D., and Mr. E., each with the same thought, each in turn did the same thing, and each one had a coconut left over which he gave to the monkey.

In the morning—I suppose, since each felt a sense of guilt, no one commented on the obvious shrinkage overnight—they divided the remaining coconuts into five equal piles and had none left over for the monkey, the five piles coming out even.

QUERY: How many coconuts were there in the original pile? . . .

THE UNLIKELIEST STORY of the week is relayed from the Pacific Coast by Jess McComas. A noted San Francisco bookseller, in his cups and in a hurry to get home to his deserted bride in Oakland, spotted a ferry about fifteen feet from the Market Street slip. He made a magnificent running broad jump, and landed on the deck like Balaam came through Jerusalem. Pulling himself together, he hiccuped and exulted, "Hot diggety, I made it, didn't I?" "You certainly did," agreed a bystander. "But why didn't you wait? The ferry was just coming in!" . . . Does Margaret Mitchell's visit to her publishers in New York presage a sequel to "Gone with the Wind"? . . . An obscure note in the obituary columns announced the death of Dr. Eugen Steichen, the Viennese monkey-gland rejuvenation expert. He was the inspiration for one of the biggest fiction successes of the '20s: Gertrude Atherton's "Black Oxen." . . . Did you know that Anya Seton, the author of "Dragonwyck," is the daughter of Ernest Thompson Seton, the famous naturalist? . . . Inmates of the Pentagon Building now refer to themselves as "Chairborne Infantry." . . . A gambler's seven-year-old son, asked to count in school, responded promptly: "One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, jack, queen, king." . . . The Toledo Public Library reports that a Mr. Norman O'Neil returned a

volume six weeks overdue. The title of the book was "The Art of Rapid Reading." . . .

HERE IS SOME plain talk from the financial statement of the Curtis Publishing Company: "If we made an additional million dollars we would be able to keep currently only about fifty thousand for stockholders. It is probable that that extra million profit might easily require an extra investment in plant and markets of five million. The risks of a five-million-dollar investment are not justified by a fifty thousand dollar net return." . . . *The American Bar Association Journal* offers the following definitions:

An optimist is a person who thinks the future is uncertain.

A pessimist is a person who is afraid the optimist is right.

A specialist is a man who concentrates more and more on less and less.

A professor is a man whose job it is to tell students how to solve the problems of life which he himself has tried to avoid by becoming a professor.

A statistician is a man who draws a mathematically precise line from an unwarranted assumption to a foregone conclusion.

A consultant is a man who knows less about your business than you do and gets paid more for telling you how to run it than you could possibly make out of it even if you ran it right instead of the way he told you. . . .

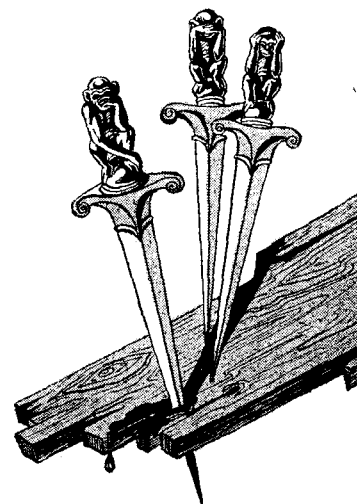
ROBERT ST. JOHN, the famous correspondent, was dining in Chicago's Palmer House recently. A lady at an adjoining table recognized him and said, "Why, there's St. John! I didn't know he was in Chicago!" Her companion was impressed. "St. John, eh?" she hazarded. "He's probably here for the Baptist Convention!"

BENNETT CERF.

ANSWERS TO LITERARY QUIZ

1. Chaucer: "The Legende of Goode Women."
2. Shakespeare: "The Tempest."
3. Bacon: "Of Studies."
4. Jonson: "To the Memory of My Beloved Master, William Shakespeare."
5. Carlyle: "The Hero as a Man of Letters."
6. Emerson: "In Praise of Books."
7. Longfellow: "Morituri Salutamus."
8. S. W. Mitchell: "Books and the Man."
9. Dickinson: "A Book."
10. Twain: "The Disappearance of Literature."
11. John Wilson: "For a Catalogue of Second-hand Books."
12. Andrew Lang: "Old Friends."
13. Stevenson: "The Land of Story-books."
14. Wilde: "Preface to the Picture of Dorian Gray."
15. Hilaire Belloc: "On His Books."

THE JUNE CRIME CLUB SELECTION



THE BLACK PATH OF FEAR

by

Cornell Woolrich

author of THE BLACK ANGEL

SHE was killed in Sloppy Joe's as the photographer snapped her picture . . . stabbed by a long knife with a see-no-evil monkey on its jade handle. Every finger pointed to Scotty; even the Chinese shopkeeper lied with exquisite courtesy about the knife Scotty had bought, and only the swarthy woman in the black room believed the photograph would reveal the killer. A dark and perilous journey for an answer—in the negative—that would clear a tortured man of murder. \$2.

THE CRIME CLUB

* See back of any new Crime Club mystery for explanation of these symbols.

NATIONALISM: THE ROOT AND THE FLOWER

(Continued from page 6)

ticized religion. All this was pretty much achieved by the eighteenth century. And then men made the discovery that even this was not enough to fulfil their needs. They discovered that the sovereign state, while it had freed them from religious and feudal tyranny, could itself become the tyrant, that it offered in itself no faith or security, no sense of oneness with others, no sense of something bigger than oneself worth striving for.

And thus opened the era of the militant and democratic nationalisms. The effort to liberate a people from the dynastic power, to unify it inwardly by a common culture and the sense of a common heritage, became the great effort of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and it is still going on. The demos, created by the gathering forces of industrialism, had been appealed to in the struggle against the church and the aristocracy: they now took the slogans of liberty seriously, and made a bid for power in a democracy. The individual sought fiercely to assert his liberties and his natural rights first against the tyrant state, and then against any kind of state. The modern era was upon us, with all its passion for unity and its passion for separateness.

It is the tragedy of our time that nationalism, as we have known it, has not fulfilled the deep psychic needs of men, has not given them the inner security they need, nor created for them the outer security of a warless world. That does not mean that nationalism is by any means dead. We are witnessing today the emergent nationalism of India and China, the renascent nationalism of France and Yugoslavia, the new socialist nationalism of Russia. What is not clear, however, is whether these mark the end of an era or the beginning of one.

As we look back at nationalism's history, with retrospective wisdom, we can lay our fingers on what it was that made nationalism inadequate. There was nothing in the nation-idea itself to resolve the struggle within each people between the acquisitive and the fraternal, the capitalist and the democratic. In fact, through the control which the holders of economic power were able to achieve over the symbols of the time, the symbol of national interest was corrupted and twisted and used more easily against the people than for them. The nationalist idea could be made into what Dr. Samuel Johnson called patriotism: "the last refuge of the scoundrel."

It was still a powerful symbol, how-

ever, in war—even when it had lost some of its force internally. But while it was powerful to unify a people in a struggle against another, there was nothing in the idea of nationalism itself which could unify what Arnold Toynbee has called the "parochial states" of the world against aggression and war. And the struggle for economic power, splitting the world into capitalist and socialist lines of direction, gave the fascists exactly the wedge they wanted with which to divide their enemies and make a bid for another world imperium, with its capital at Berlin.

Finally, nationalism has failed to create for men a sense of community. There are some who believe that men had this sense once in the Middle Ages, and that what we need to do is to return to it and restore it. But I find this another form of the Golden Age thinking that crops up most persistently in periods of social transition. I should say that the potentials for a genuine community were to be found in the democratic nationalist movements of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. I agree with Karl Polanyi's argument, in his "Great Transformation," that it was because we failed to organize our industrialism for human needs rather than for the market, that we did not create a

real society. And where there is no sense of society within a people, it is almost futile to hope that a transnational society can be created. There are many today who dream of a world community, largely because it is easier to do that than to face the difficult tasks of creating a genuine sense of community within the nation itself.

There may be some hope in the fact that the crisis of nationalism today has become in the barest terms a crisis of survival. If a transitional structure of international order is not created, it will mean the end of nationalism itself. For a world of autonomous nation-states will not survive many more world wars. They can lead only to world chaos, or to a new single world *imperium* under a new type of social system. The greatest hope for the maintenance of the democratic idea during the harsh generations ahead springs from the underground movements in Europe today. Out of the catacombs of Odessa and Sevastopol, the grottos and caves of Yugoslavia, the undergrounds of France and Greece, something new is emerging which may prove for our time the "civil religion" which in the famous chapter in his "Social Contract" Rousseau invoked for his own time. The idea of the nation is in it. But there is also the passion for the mastery of the machine by any social means, the will to have a warless world, and—above all—the determination to create a *society* rather than a haphazard collection of individual wills.

William Morris and the Guild

THE DAY IS COMING. By William Cameron. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1944. 573 pp. \$3.

Reviewed by PHILIP VAN DOREN STERN

HERE is a novel based on a wonderful idea—the growth of the socialist movement in England from the days of William Morris to the outbreak of the present war. Its hero, young Arthur Cullen, joins the Guild of English Craftsmen when it was founded in 1887, moves with it from the slums of London to the beautiful Cotswold countryside, and then has to return to London and a life of poverty and disillusionment after the Guild breaks up in 1914. Trained by Morris and his disciples in fine craftsmanship, he finds himself unable to fit into the shoddy commercialism of British factory production. Socialism, which had seemed imminent in Morris's time, is always tantalizingly near but never near enough to be realized. Finally, as an old man, Cullen, disgusted with every-

thing he had once believed in, goes in for what we would call a racket and at last makes enough money to buy the fine furniture and household goods he had always wanted to own.

It is a disappointing life and a disappointing story. The first half of the book, which deals with Morris and the Guild, makes fascinating reading, but the last half, which is mostly concerned with Arthur Cullen's failure to fit into a highly industrialized society, is less interesting.

Perhaps a new genre, which would combine the narrative aspects of fiction and the intrinsic interest of historical material, may be developed for the telling of stories in which the theme is more important than the characters. Except in the hands of a Tolstoy or a Thackeray, fictional characters tend to be dwarfed by great men and great events. Yet such stories need to be told, and it may be easier to devise a new form for them than to find enough geniuses to give us wholly successful thematic novels.