

# Clare Leighton's Plain People

*GIVE US THIS DAY.* By Clare Leighton. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock. 1943. 86 pp. \$2.50.

Reviewed by R. ELLIS ROBERTS

THERE is a pleasant story told in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, about those remarkable farmers, the Amish. The members of that religious sect do not use modern

machinery, or electric light, or automobiles, or telephones; and their farms are second to none in the country. An inspector from Washington, full of admiration for the industry of one community, asked the elder, "Now why won't you use tractors? The department would be glad to provide one." "I'll tell you why we don't want tractors for our farms. They don't breed and they don't give dung."

That fable might have been invented as a motto for this stirring, lively, at times over-earnest little book of Clare Leighton's. Hers is a call to us city-tied, gadget-ridden, can-conscious people to go back, in imagination, fancy, and gratitude at least, to the hard, beautiful reality of soil and toil, of earth and its inescapable needs, its unpredictable beneficences.

There's no false pastoral sentimentality about "Give Us This Day," no Beverly Nichols gush about "beautiful young men who do things with their bodies": Miss Leighton knows well enough how grim and grudging

can be the lives of those who work close to the earth. She knows, too, that this life can give a wisdom which is no less profound because often it is inexpressive. Yet it can express itself, and not only through the poets, through Virgil or Thomas Hardy. Take this story of a Middle West farmer:

He turns then, to show us the picture of a favorite work horse. "She's twenty-two years old, she is. And she's just like my hired men, who've been with me about as long as she has. She's just like them because she's well kept and because she has confidence and good feed."

Beside the plain, sound sense of the text we have here ten beautiful chalk drawings by the author, as lovely as any of her wood-engravings. My only complaint against the volume is that it is put up in a paper wrapper, the beauty of which is scarcely a compensation for its extreme fragility.

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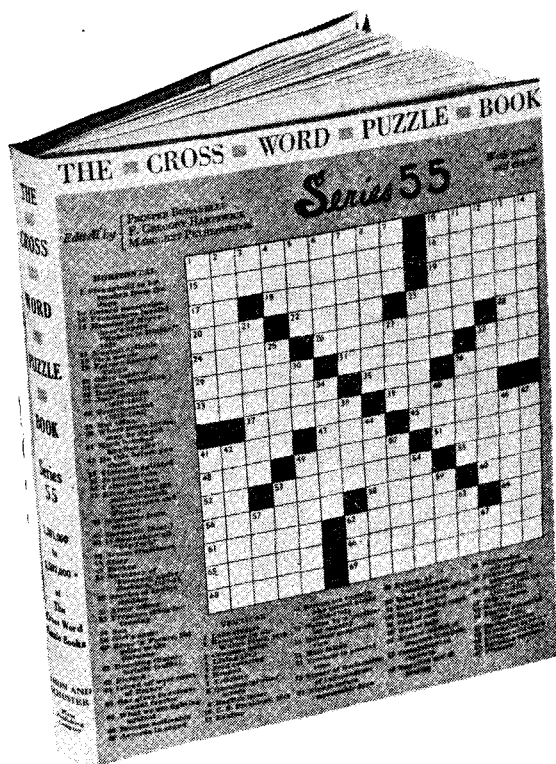
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## The Madden Type

*SEED OF THE PURITAN.* By Elizabeth Dewing Kaup. New York: The Dial Press. 1944. 400 pp. \$2.75.

Reviewed by N. L. ROTHMAN

FOR those who found power and originality in Mrs. Kaup's earlier book, "Not for the Meek," this present novel will probably prove disappointing. Designed as a study of the rise of a dominant political personality, out of provincial, even Puritan, beginnings, it lacks from the very beginning the compelling qualities it needs—either a vigorous central figure or a penetrating analysis of background, of the world in which this figure flourishes. Josiah Madden is certainly not endowed with any commanding qualities, and as we read along the puzzle of his mounting to power is forever unanswered. He seems to blunder into it by grace of doggedness and Mrs. Kaup. This may very well be a transcript of actuality, but it is neither vital nor enlightening. He is dull, this Madden, and success does not make him important to us. The details of his life, his business relationships, his marriage, his entanglements, are very prosaically related, and there are great numbers of pages given over to interminable dialogue that conveys little. Perhaps Mrs. Kaup does not admire the Madden type and had to get it done this way, but he hardly seems to justify his title. The Puritans were too rich in character to produce this dried seed.



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## Jasmin and Tony

*DIRIGO POINT.* By Elizabeth Foster.  
Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1944.  
214 pp. \$2.50.

Reviewed by HARRIET C. BEACHBOARD

WHEN Jasmin Hawthorne met Tony Carteret and fell in love with him there were only two things that troubled her—that she was a year or so older than he and that she was so abruptly going to have to leave him to spend the summer with her mother in Maine. Not that she didn't love Maine, but it meant leaving Tony when she'd only just met him; in the circumstances the prospect of chaperoning her mother—divorced from Jasmin's father some twenty years ago—and the faithful Sandy was scarcely appealing. At Lake Winnebago, where the cold clean freshness of the northern spring casts its usual spell upon her, her young love finds rapture in the discovery that Tony's family owns the cottage next to the Hawthornes'. The rapture is short lived, for there is a mysterious and exaggerated opposition to Jasmin's marriage. Jasmin has never known the true reason for her parents' divorce; her discovery of it all but wrecks her relationship with Tony.

Miss Foster weaves an intricate web with skill and tenderness—gossamer and engaging; in the course of its unravelling two love stories reach their fulfilment and Jasmin is given a rather terrifying insight into the lives of her mother and father and the blind misconceptions whereby people rush to destroy their own happiness. A living part of the story is the air of Maine which it breathes; one can smell and feel and taste it.

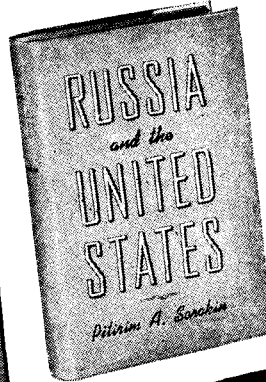
### ANSWERS TO LITERARY QUIZ

1. Masfield: "Sea Fever."
2. Coleridge: "Rime of the Ancient Mariner."
3. Byron: "The Destruction of Sennacherib."
4. Shelley: "To A Skylark."
5. Macaulay: "Horatius."
6. Stevenson: "Requiem."
7. Browning: "How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix."
8. Burgess: "The Purple Cow."
9. Moore: "A Visit from St. Nicholas."
10. Southey: "The Battle of Blenheim."
11. Herrick: "To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time."
12. Nash: "The Cow."
13. Waller: "Go, Lovely Rose."
14. Service: "The Shooting of Dan McGrew."
15. Poe: "Ulalume."

MARCH 11, 1944

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