

**GORDON, FROM** the advertising agency, suspected trouble the minute he saw the welcoming smile on the face of his client Anthony Bump. Nor was he reassured when the capricious publisher waved aside the proofs of several small ads with a "Gee whiz, Ralph, do I have to O.K. every dinky follow-up 'ad' you talk me into? What am I paying you fifteen per cent for anyhow?"

"No," continued Bump happily, "I wanted to know if you happened to catch that Crosby-Durante program the other evening. The Schnozzola had a funny gag on it. Very funny indeed."

"I did not," said Gordon pointedly. "I was working on the campaign for that new Hopkins novel that you in your quaint fashion want ready about eight months ahead of time."

"Well, let me tell you about this gag," persisted Mr. Bump. "Durante says, 'I just passed a fellow who's doing a land-office business down the block.' 'Selling what?' asks Bing. 'Hundred-dollar bills,' answers Durante. 'He's selling hundred-dollar bills for two bucks apiece.' Bing is amazed of course and asks, 'How on earth can he make a living that way?' 'It's a cinch,' explains Durante. 'He doesn't advertise.'"

Bump slapped his knee and laughed so hard he fell over backwards, a feat in which he had become proficient since the office manager had introduced a slippery linoleum mat under his swivel chair to protect the carpet. Gordon, however, was definitely not amused. "You don't have to advertise to please me," he said sourly. "Two other publishers begged me to take over their accounts only this morning. I'm not the one who ordered a whole page in the *Bilgeville Bugle* just because the book editor said I had kept him waiting in the hall for six minutes, and you can't treat a big-shot in such cavalier fashion."

"You hurt his feelings," said Bump defensively. "Got to preserve our press relations, old fellow. Very pukka. Cricket, you know. But that Durante gag. . . ."

"Before going into another paroxysm," interrupted Gordon, "I wish you'd tell your manufacturing department again that when I'm supposed to map out a ten-thousand-dollar campaign it would be of some slight help to send me a set of galleys so I could read the blank blank book."

"Sometimes, Gordon, you ask too much," observed Tony Bump airily, still in high good humor. "And say, who's been telling columnists the book business is in a nosedive? I've just been studying our own figures for May. They look pretty good to me."

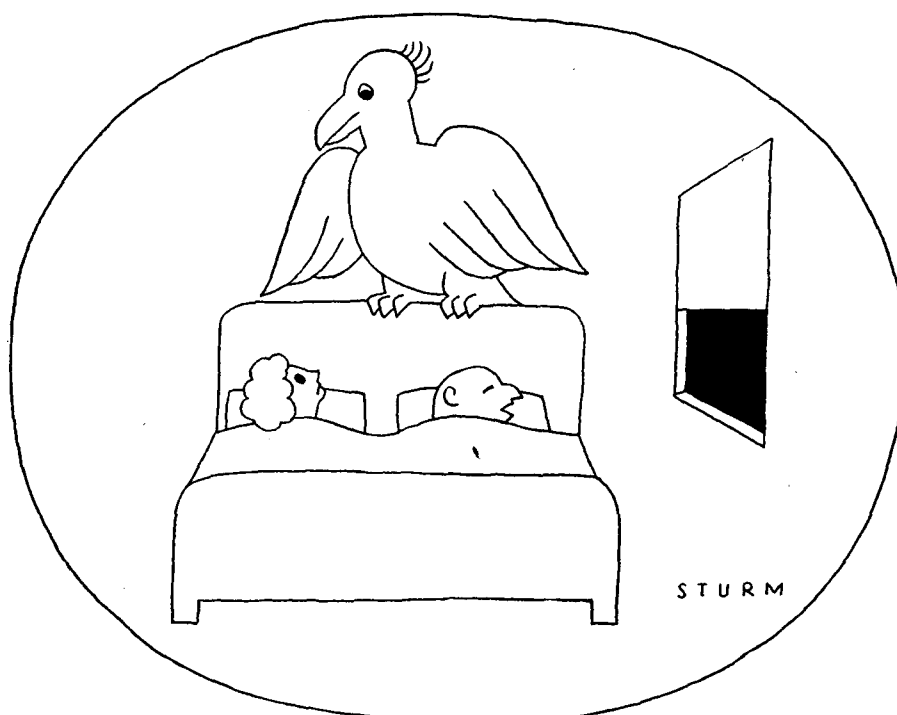
"Ah ha," cried the advertising counsel, known in the office as Last-Word Gordon. "You're still making profits, hey? I told you you weren't spending enough on advertising."

"I give up," sighed Bump, reaching for his hat. "What's playing at the Capitol this week?" . . .

**VIKING WILL SOON** publish a new book called "The Meaning of Treason" by that superb British writer Rebecca West. In New York for a visit, Miss West was confronted by a well-known boulevardier and his young friend. Although they are several inches apart in height, these two Beau Brummells affect identical suits, shirts, cravats, and haircuts. "My God," commented Miss West. "They look like a nest of tables!" . . . Lillian Gray reports a Mexican at San Jose State College who started confidently to study English, but threw up his hands when he ran across a quiz in *Encore* magazine asking for nine words with a different sound for the letter combination "ugh." (The words: dough, bough,

bought, cough, rough, through, thorough, hiccough, laugh.) . . . My partner, Bob Haas, who loves to discover new words, left the following note on my desk the other day: "An opsimath just dropped in with a yaffle of chthonic scripts. In my opinion all of them are fungible." I discovered, with an assist from the dictionary, that the message made more sense than many of Bob's, at that. . . . Richard Sherman's "The Bright Promise," coming from Little, Brown, is already the Success Story of the year. *Good Housekeeping* bought the first serial rights for \$50,000; Twentieth Century-Fox added \$245,000 for the picture rights, and the Literary Guild tabbed it for August distribution. Mr. Sherman, it appears, will spend the fall marching through income tax declarations. . . . Sign on a prominent literary agent's wall: "If two partners always think alike, there's one partner too many." . . . George Stevens, of Lippincott's, saw an author off on a plane to Hollywood, and sighed, "Another worshiper of the Golden Calif!" . . . Ted Shane's description of "conscience": a little gimmick inside you that makes you tell your wife before somebody else does. . . . Department of local pride: In Gwen Davenport's new novel, "Belvedere" (Bobbs-Merrill), the heroine solves the problem of getting a "sitter" for her children by inserting a classified ad in the *SRL*. The applicant is not only a writer, but a **GENIUS**. . . .

**IF YOU LIKE BOOKS OF** reminiscence by crack newspapermen (I love them!) get a copy of Jack Kofoed's



"Just ignore him and he'll go away."

# "From where I sit"



NOTE: Paul's novel *FINE TOOTH COMB* has just been published. This week his column is guest-conducted by Kenneth S. Davis.

HE HAS almost as many facets as the City of which he writes, this young man who signs himself simply "PAUL" and who has now published



his first novel, *Fine Tooth Comb*. He paints brilliantly well in at least half-a-dozen styles. He does piano improvisations which are sometimes sad, often hilarious. He's an amazing mimic. All these varied talents are dis-

played in the dialogue, the penetrating wit, the vivid color and movement of his novel. He writes, as his friend Nelson Gidding once remarked, with fluid drive. . . .

But you mustn't think from all this that *Fine Tooth Comb* is just a slick job, a kind of bravura piece. Actually it's a serious and, I'm convinced, an important novel. This generation which graduated from Depression into World War II has qualities which were sadly lacking in the "lost generation" of the twenties; it seems to wear its heart on a casual sleeve, but its *real* heart is a questing one, compassionate and as concerned with creating living values as that earlier generation was with smashing them. There is little of self-pity and practically nothing of soft sentimentality in these young men schooled in war. I've been meeting classes of them at New York University for the last two years, and I can assure you that PAUL is a valid spokesman for them.

*Fine Tooth Comb*, then, is a novel of quest. Dan Sane, the protagonist, is a young man in search of a soul, caught up in the mad whirl of New York in wartime, borne seemingly helter-skelter on a tide of history, losing in common with his generation virtually all power of self-determination, yet retaining through it all a stubborn integrity, a certain gay defiance of hostile fate. There are remarkably funny things in this book, but the whole of it is informed by a haunting pathos—not a weak sadness, you understand, but a kind of strong poignant realism which points the way toward an affirmative conclusion.

It's that note of affirmation which I found most thrilling in *Fine Tooth Comb*. PAUL blinks none of the facts of life, but he isn't repelled by them either. In his book he says "yes" to them and presses on, grimly gay, toward whatever future there may be.

Kenneth S. Davis.



"Leg Man in Seven League Boots" (Glade House, Coral Gables, Florida). Kofoed has been around a lot and his stories are authentic and exciting. He once worked on a staff that included Gene Fowler, who, he recalls, was "not only a great reporter but a master at hoaxing an expense account." A Manhattan city editor once refused to send Fowler across the Hudson to cover a tremendous fire in Jersey City. "The blasted fool," surmised the editor, "would charter a ferry boat to get him there, and the story isn't worth that much to us." . . . In a Miami hot-spot, Kofoed discovered a girl who had been a Copacabana beauty, and the toast of Broadway only a few years before. Now, though her diamonds were real, and her dress the latest Valentina model, her hands shook as she reached for a double-Scotch, and her eyes had lost their lustre. Her story? She had been in love with a young writer named Barry Hallett. He was good—but his stuff didn't sell. They were married anyhow. She thought love was enough until Mr. Glomp came along. Dun & Bradstreet estimated the Glomp fortune at fifty million, and that made up for his damp hands and his fat, stupid face. It seemed so at the time, anyhow. She went to Reno, then married her moneybags. The wedding was spectacular; the house she moved into the last word in luxury. But the very next morning she read in the paper: "YOUNG MILLIONAIRE COMMITS SUICIDE. Barry Hallett, the writer, who two days ago inherited \$10,000,000 from an uncle in Australia, shot himself to death today. The note he left said that life without his ex-show-girl wife was not worth living." . . .

A RECENT NOTE IN THIS COLUMN to the effect that *American Notes and Queries* was compiling a list of famous stories and plays featuring

modern characters who step into a by-gone milieu, brought so many suggestions that I can list only a few:

Upton Sinclair's "Roman Holiday" and "Our Lady."  
I. Leslie Mitchell's "Three Go Back."  
L. Sprague de Camp's "Lest Darkness Fall."  
Warwick Deeping's "The Man on the White Horse."  
Ford Madox Ford's "Ladies Whose Bright Eyes."  
Robert Nathan's "But Gently Day."  
Robert Ardrey's "Thunder Rock."  
A. Merritt's "The Face in the Abyss."  
Maxwell Anderson's "The Star Wagon."

And, of course, there is that new Broadway musical hit "Brigadoon."

In turning over my answers to the editors of *American Notes and Queries*, I had a chance to learn something about them and their unique little magazine. The board of editors and the entire staff consist of two young people: Walter Pilkington, who makes a living in the New York Public Library, and "B. Alsterlund," otherwise Mr. Pilkington's wife, Betty. When they registered their newborn monthly in April 1941, they were warned that a man who went into business with his wife was headed for disaster. They didn't know, fortunately, that the male half of the board would soon be off in the Army, or that the female half would produce a daughter, Maud.

Through it all, however, they have persisted, and succeeded in producing a magazine that I think *SRL* readers should know about. Why not send a quarter to Betty Pilkington, at 7 West 44th Street, New York 18, and ask for a sample copy? *AN&Q*'s circulation is small by Publisher's Row standards; it deserves to be ten times greater. At one time, they hoped to make enough out of the magazine to buy a little place in Vermont and edit it from there. That was before they knew how much research work would be involved and before costs began rising. Today Betty is counting on a book she's writing to serve as the magic carpet. I think she'll make it! . . .

D. A. DORAN brought East the story of the month: An Indian fire writer was transmitting a message to his tribe in New Mexico when a terrific explosion not only interrupted him, but sent him flying into a ditch twenty yards away. It was the atomic bomb experiment, and the Indian pulled himself together in time to see a tower of smoke billow out into the sky. He watched in awe-stricken silence for a moment, then clucked his tongue, and murmured, "I wish I had said that!"

BENNETT CERF.



# CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

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*Listed here are five recent books from the Cambridge Press. Orders should be placed with your bookseller. Further information may be obtained by writing to the address below.*

*Copies of the Cambridge Spring list are available, describing books on such diverse subjects as Lango Religion, Probit Analysis, and Darwin's Finches.*

# THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

60 Fifth Avenue  
New York 11.





## Business at the sign of the owl

**I**T WAS Henry Holt himself, glowing and just out of Yale, who determined that books published under the owl which he chose as a colophon should have a maximum of both educational and entertainment value. We have tried to uphold that warm tradition, and with this issue we want to give a hearty shake to the hands of the University Presses who are doing so much, and doing it so well, in the field to which Henry Holt gave his best efforts. They are younger than Henry Holt and Company, but they have an enviable tradition and a most challenging future.

Usually these pages are caught up in our enthusiasm over publication of some trade book—publishers' jargon for anything not a textbook. But we publish textbooks too—for college and university use, for foreign language study, for schools whose students may or may not have the privilege of continuing their education. We'd like to quote the philosophy of our School Department, as set down by its head when our president asked for a forecast of the next few years' program. It makes sense as a sound basis for publication of all books, because all books must be related to the need of those who will take profit and pleasure from them.

### *Says the School Department:*

We did not invent the mouse-trap. We do not stimulate public demand for mouse-traps. But, noting public demand for same, we try to make better and better mouse-traps. That is a crassly commercial oversimplification of our attitude towards our job. It can be put otherwise. We are rarely missionaries proclaiming a new educational gospel. Mainly we don't play the role of a prophet, far ahead of his times. Let the teachers colleges and the curriculum experts be the prophets. Whatever demand for their wares they may create in the public schools, we'll undertake to supply, provided that it be both a respectable and a substantial one.

Usually we spot a fad, watch to see if it is becoming a trend, and then, if it has the earmarks of a trend, "imple-

ment" it with a book. If we disclaim leadership in the building of courses of study, at the same time we claim a certain leadership in devising books for those courses. *STORY OF NATIONS* by Rogers, Adams, and Brown is a good example. Our proper brand of leadership is to offer the keenest teaching-and-learning tool for any widely offered course. To repeat, we don't make the courses but we make the tools, and by improving the tools we strengthen the courses.

Now about the courses themselves. The youth of this nation study practically the same subjects through grade 8. Some schools, to be sure, unwisely force all students to take the same courses throughout senior high school. But in the better schools there is considerable divergence after grade 8. One group, the minority, elects or is forced to take a college-preparatory course. The majority elects or is forced to take a nonacademic or vocational or "general" course, terminal at grade 12. The former becomes the "educated"; the latter, "trained". (That is the commonly accepted way of describing the two types of schooling.) The former *should* provide the nation's leaders in politics, industry, agriculture, services, and scholarship. (Not long ago, Dean Carman of Columbia College called admission into his college the equivalent of admission into West Point or Annapolis.) The latter should be expected to provide only the followers—the workers in production, distribution, servicing.

The privileged group goes from college into the activities of adult life; the other must plunge straight into the workaday world. Both groups will be citizens, voters. The college-educated presumptively will know how to be good citizens and intelligent voters. Is it not important to assure the nation that those who go no farther than high school shall have learned how to vote intelligently and how to be good citizens? After all, being the majority, they can out-vote the "educated". It is in the public interest to prepare them, if not for college, then for economic and political citizenship.

We will continue to publish, as we have always done, a list of basic textbooks for arts-and-sciences courses in academic high schools. These are the college-preparatory courses, and in supporting them we help the colleges create a vast pool of leaders. We will publish an even richer list of basic textbooks for those students—nonacademic or "general"—who will not have the privilege of a college education but who, more numerous than the college-educated, will be the workers and the voters in our country. It was only ten years ago that the superintendent of one of the largest school systems in the East said of the nonacademic students, "The law requires us to give 'em room until they're sixteen, and that's all we're going to give 'em."

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The foregoing is only part of our School Department's program for the next three years. It applies equally to the years that have gone before and to the years that will follow, for it is basic philosophy. We think Henry Holt would be proud of us.



*The Saturday Review  
of Literature*

*By the Scholars, for the People*

RONALD MANSBRIDGE

I HAVE heard more than one scholarly author argue that a university press cheapens itself by going in for the publication of popular books. Such stuff is the proper concern of the commercial publishers, they say. This argument is seriously made, and not only by those in whom one may suspect that it springs from frustration, envy, or disappointment.

The publication of books by scholars for scholars is certainly a function of a university press, but it would seem to me a mistake to consider it the only function. It is reasonable to suggest that it is the press's proper job to extend into the larger world, by means of the printed word, the efforts towards knowledge and wisdom that would otherwise be held within the narrow confines of the study, the lecture hall, and the laboratory. A university is, in Johnson's words, "a school where everything may be learnt," but learning calls for teaching, and research is of less value if its results are not passed on. A grammarian may devote his life to "settling hoti's business," but a university must see to it that the understanding of the use of hoti is disseminated. In "setting back the frontiers of darkness" there is need for the guide that shows the way to others, as well as the pioneer, though Housman himself may have preferred the latter role.

If then we agree that a university press should through its publications extend the university's teaching function as well as its research function, we may ask how best the job can be done.

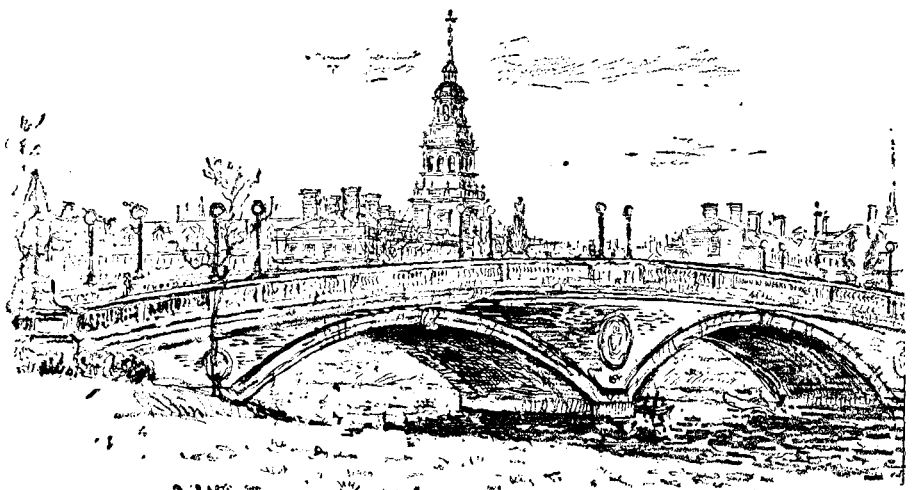
First, clearly, by getting, encouraging, and promoting those authors who are themselves good teachers, authors who can by their own effective style attract readers to their subject. If this involves simplification of

the subject, well and good; it is only oversimplification that is dangerous. Oxford's recent one-volume condensation by D. C. Somervell of A. J. Toynbee's magnificent "A Study of History" is a splendid example of the good that can be done by making attractive to a hundred thousand readers something that might otherwise have proved too formidable for all but two thousand. Chicago's "From Galileo to the Nuclear Age," by Harvey Bruce Lemon, does a first-rate job of giving difficult material in a form that is clear and attractive to read; Paul B. Sears's "Deserts on the March" (Oklahoma) had an immediate and sustained success because of its author's inspired handling of what might have been an arid subject.

Nor is it improper for a university press director or editor to "think up" books and projects, as any successful commercial publisher does. Bernard Brodie's "Guide to Naval Strategy" and Foster Rhea Dulles's "The Road to Teheran" are two books that have stemmed from the intelligent and

creative planning of the Princeton University Press. The latter book, by the way, achieved what must be a unique distinction, a rave review in *The New Masses* and simultaneous apotheosis on the approved list of the Cardinal Hayes Literature Committee.

THERE is a third way in which the university press can contribute to the job of "setting back the frontiers of darkness," and that is through its advertising and sales efforts. The book for which the popularizing has been done editorially presents little or no problem. When a press has a book like Toynbee's, a real potential best seller, it merely has to do the same things that any commercial publisher does when he has a salable book on his hands. I say "merely," not to depreciate the skill and knowledge of promotion, advertising, and selling necessary in such a case; in fact, a quarter century ago few university presses had acquired these necessary skills. But nowadays the university press best seller is not such a rare



—From "Harvard & Cambridge: A Sketchbook."

The John W. Weeks Memorial Bridge

JUNE 7, 1947

9