

world, and it is truly remarkable that no member of the Bingham parties, of which there were five in all, paid with his life for his curiosity, although one barely slid from his mule in time to avoid going over a precipice. (The mule climbed back, mostly over his ex-rider.)

Naturally the tale of Machu Picchu cannot be told without some mention of the Incas themselves, and Mr. Bingham quotes ones of the botanists who accompanied him as saying that these extraordinary Indians "domesticated more kinds of food and medicinal plants than any other people in the world." They also tamed the little camels called guanacos and the llamas, and one of the reasons Mr. Bingham is sure their history is at least as long as that of the Mayas is what they accomplished as plant and animal breeders.

Allowing plenty of room for differences of opinion between Mr. Bingham and the other experts on controversial matters such as Inca chronology, we should be grateful to have this first-hand account of an epochal discovery, told with winning modesty and conveying its sense of excitement without over-dramatization and without even one purple patch in the writing.

The photographs, generous in number, form a perfect complement to the text.

## Eastern Tapestry—Antiquity to Date

THE PAGEANT OF INDIA'S HISTORY. By Gertrude Emerson Sen. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1948. 431 pp. \$4.50.

Reviewed by LOUIS FISCHER

MRS. SEN is an American married to an Indian scientist and has lived in India for many years. She writes beautifully. She knows India and Asia. History is exciting to her and she makes it exciting. No footnotes, none of the formal paraphernalia of history writing clutter her pages, but all the scholarship is there. The contents of the book and its bibliography show a vast knowledge and keen understanding not only of India from antiquity to date but also of Greece, Rome, China, Persia, Tibet, etc. And what fascinates is the delicately woven pattern of relationship between India and the rest of the antique world.

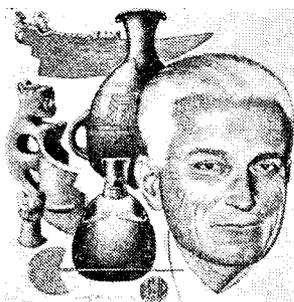
History is influenced by climate and geography and that is where Mrs. Sen begins. Then the people and their ethnographic origins, told popularly but seriously. As ancient centuries die, time blurs the political record, and reigns and dynasties become mere milestones in the march of culture. Culture in India was religion; religion

included art, law, philosophy; religion shaped customs, costumes, personal conduct, national psychology, contacts between countries, and trade. History is life as it was, and the life of India was a rich, highly colored pageant. That is how Mrs. Sen writes about it. Her book will reward the expert, fascinate the layman, and supply young people with a treasury of travel tales, personality profiles, and interesting facts. I can imagine a parent reading this book and interrupting repeatedly to call to a grown-up son or daughter or even to a child and say: "Did you know that Arabic numerals were invented by Indians and then passed on to the Arabs and by them to Europe?" "Did you know that the zero is an Indian discovery?" "Did you know that Indian mathematicians of 2,000 years ago are helping you with your arithmetic homework? It was they who determined that when a 2 follows a 1 it is twelve and when the 1 follows the 2 it is twenty-one. Simple, yes. But would you have thought of it if you hadn't known it?"

In 1922, an Indian archeologist was investigating some Buddhist ruins of the second century A.D. in the Indus valley in Western India; he came upon some older ruins going back to 3300 B.C. Here were streets, houses made of burnt brick, drainage pipes for sewage, a swimming pool. In a silver jar a piece of cotton cloth was found, the oldest piece of cloth in the world. Jewelry, necklaces with beads of lapis lazuli, gold, turquoise, and jadeite, four different types of bronze razors, clay whistles in the form of birds, marbles, a bronze model of a cart with a driver sitting in it holding a whip, dice of ivory and stone, and numerous seals have been dug out of the debris of the town born more than five thousand years ago. Inscriptions spell out the history of that distant era and Mrs. Sen tells the story with a wealth of detail and breathless excitement.

Most of Indian mythology is in this book—and it is as imaginative as the Greek. Here is the whole story of Buddha and an explanation of Buddhism. Included, too, are extensive summaries of many of India's sacred books: among them the Rig-veda and Bhagavadgita, the Hindu bible.

In the new flag of independent India is a wheel, the wheel of Asoka. He ruled in India in the third century B.C. and built himself a vast empire. Then he renounced war and declared, "Only the conquest of the law is a conquest of delight"—a world government slogan. Asoka was a Buddhist. He stopped animal sacrifices. He erected numerous gigantic monumental pillars of stone surmounted with



**THE AUTHOR:** A treasure hunt forty years ago led Hiram Bingham to uncover the lost city of Machu Picchu. He and a friend were passing through Peru on mule back when a local prefect with whom they'd exchanged *buenos tardes* insisted they spade the Andes for Inca gold. Mr. Bingham protested that his Ph.D. qualified him as history and politics teacher at Harvard and Princeton the previous five years but lent him no authority as archeologist. The prefect smiled.

It was the rainiest rainy season in memory and the canyon trails mortally dangerous, but Dr. Bingham gave in—mindful that Elihu Root, who had appointed him U.S. delegate to the 1908 Pan American Scientific Congress (the better to continue his study of South America) had cautioned him to be polite. Although he unearthed no gold on that or subsequent expeditions for Yale and the National Geographic Society, he turned up a wealth of skeletal and architectural remains, artifacts, and sherds from pots tossed out temple windows by Incas in their cups. And—harking back to his Honolulu boyhood, when his clergyman father started marching him up hills at age four—he made the first ascent of 21,703-foot Mt. Coropuna. He wound up World War I as commanding officer of the Aviation Institute Center at Issoudun, France, returned to a Yale professorship until 1924, when Connecticut advanced him from Lieutenant Governor to Governor. The next year he began two terms as U.S. Senator (Rep.). He has fathered seven sons and written thirteen books: besides those on South America, two each on the Monroe Doctrine and Elihu Yale; "An Explorer in the Air Service" and "Freedom Under the Constitution." Last October he was to be guest of honor and officiate at the opening of a new road—Carretera Hiram Bingham—from Cuzco to Machu Picchu, but a couple of revolutions spoiled the fete. —R. G.

capitals in the shape of lions, elephants, horses, and bulls. On these pillars were engraved the philosophic thoughts of Asoka and, writes Mrs. Sen, "for the next thousand years, the civilization of Asia bore the deep imprint of those same thoughts." Asoka is today an Indian hero, but who in the Western world has ever heard the name?

Why did Buddhism die in India which gave it birth only to conquer most of the rest of Asia? What did ancient Rome get from ancient India? How do finds in Turkestan lay bare the past of India? See the book.

"Did you know that chess was an Indian game," the parent calls to his offspring, "and copied by the Persians?" But I give up. I thought I could communicate the thrilling nature of this book. I thought I could suggest its broad sweep and vision. I hoped to indicate its tremendous value—especially in view of the West's ignorance of Asia. I fear I have failed. It would take an entire issue of *The Saturday Review* to do justice to Mrs. Sen's wonderful volume.

*Louis Fischer is author of "Ghandi and Stalin" and "A Week with Stalin."*

## French Past

THE MIRACLE OF FRANCE. By André Maurois. New York: Harper & Bros. 1948. 477 pp. \$5.

Reviewed by J. C. LONG

ANDRÉ MAUROIS' book is a useful, well-organized reference work, valuable for the home library; and that is the best that can be said for it. If the reader wishes a quick, condensed report on Charlemagne, Henry IV, the Bourbons, any one of the long procession of French rulers, they are all here, but more mundane than miraculous.

Curiously enough, the author is least satisfactory in what might have been a high point in his history, namely the story of Joan of Arc. He devotes only four pages to her life, apparently on the assumption that everyone knows the details, "Everyone knows how she was introduced into the castle" . . . and so on. He recites the events of the maid's career in such elliptical form as to be virtually unintelligible.

Most of the book proceeds in a



clear, direct manner which has its educational rewards. It is suggestive of the old-fashioned lantern-slide lecture wherein the pictures were the main feature, and the editorial comment of varying merit. Maurois, for example, gives a brisk account of the rise of Philip Augustus. By 1214, through the inheritance and marriage laws of the feudal system, he had become the ruler over most of the French territory. Then came war with the combined forces of England, Germany, and Flanders. Philip Augustus, with 20,000 bourgeois infantrymen, overcame his enemies at Bouvines. Thus, according to Maurois' puzzling and unconvincing comment, "the national community was born." He adds, "Nothing better unites a people than festivities. The convulsions of anarchy were succeeded by the traditions of the monarchy."

Maurois' confusion may arise from being a monarchist at heart, while mentally accepting democracy. He glows with pride whenever writing of a strong French ruler. He defends the absolutism of the Bourbons as important to the security of the nation. He regards the Parliamentary tradition of England as a luxury made possible by her protective sea wall. He does not, however, suggest monarchy as the solution for France's future.

Fundamentally, Maurois' chief moral contribution in the book is a commendable faith in the durability and adaptability of France. He sees her as garlanded with virtues. "Chivalry, courtesy, romantic love . . . are French creations." Again, France "has always driven the invaders out." Further, he affirms that France has stood as "the moral vanguard of liberty for the continent of Europe."

Maurois' faith indeed seems to know no limits. He holds it altogether likely that France will solve the riddles of the future, that she will "bring forth . . . solutions which tomorrow will make possible the continuance of the human experiment." So mote it be.

## Your Literary I. Q.

By Howard Collins

"EPISTLE TO RUTH"

Ned Beatty Bartlow, of Baton Rouge, is the author of the following letter, which contains fifty-seven titles of well-known plays, most of them recent ones. Whip out a pencil and underline the titles which you recognize. Allowing two points for each one correctly identified, a score of sixty is par, seventy is very good, and eighty or better is excellent. Answers are on page 12.

FROM LETTERS TO LUCERNE:

Dear Ruth:

Morning's at seven and while merrily we roll along on our flight to the West I'll tell you the good news.

Harriet had a foolish notion that she wanted to be one of the doughgirls, since she was over twenty-one, no longer a junior miss, and afraid of becoming an old maid. It was on the eve of St. Mark that she made her decision.

Although, as you may recall, she has never been a pick-up girl, she did make an innocent voyage with Jason to Oklahoma after he had first promised not to kiss and tell. Also I remember Mama saying that she had once been Paris bound with the late George Apley.

At any rate she obviously recalled the old adage about the bird in hand, and when Harvey called her his blithe spirit and asked her to be his dream girl she said that though she was not born yesterday and was well aware that a soldier's wife often had a rugged path through another part of the forest she still had a fatal weakness for a magnificent Yankee.

Frankly, though she anticipates living a rich full life on Angel Street with chicken every Sunday, I greatly fear that she will repent her hasty heart when she finds that they have no common ground and that his only confreres are Jacobowsky and the Colonel and others of the patriots constantly in a dither over the state of the union. The boy meets girl situation sometimes proves a dead end rather than a prologue to glory.

By the end of summer I fancy that we will again find her following the easiest way and that she will shuffle along in the searching wind up in Central Park, or perhaps even take to arsenic and old lace. What a life!

Now I must call it a day, for this is no biography or family portrait, though Uncle Harry and my sister Eileen do send love. So goodbye again.

CLAUDIA.