

a harp à la Ossian. But we get a different image from Robin Flower:

They correspond in a way to the university men, but their fixed place in society was higher than any that his attainments alone have ever been able to secure for the university man in England. They were indeed, until the fall of the old Irish order an intellectual aristocracy, with all the privileges and, no doubt, many of the prejudices of a caste.

Another mark that Robin Flower sets up is the rise of a poetry derived ultimately from Provence. It was first practised in Ireland by the Norman-descended aristocrats who used both French and Irish and by the Gaelic aristocrats of whom the princely Manus O'Donnell is representative. This poetry is comparable to the poetry that was written about the same time by Surrey and Wyatt in England, the English poetry stemming from Italian while the Irish poetry stemmed from French. The bards took over the themes from the aristocrats:

This poetry is the offspring of the marriage of those two orders. In this happy union the aristocrats of position contributed the subject and the aristocrats of art the style.

Robin Flower made his own of this particular period. Out of his studies in it came the arresting poems he translated as "Love's Bitter Sweet." Some are given in these pages with many others from earlier centuries, and these excellent translations of beautiful, quaint, and always distinctive poems add to the charm of "The Irish Tradition." Robin Flower was (alas, that one has to say "was") Keeper of the Irish Manuscripts in the British Museum. He was an Englishman whose enthusiasm for the Irish tradition led him to live with his family every year among the last custodians of that tradition, the farmers and fishermen of the Blasket Islands. There is no history of Ireland, properly speaking. But with "The Irish Tradition" and Dr. Dillon's recently published "Early Irish Literature," the common reader can get a good idea of what the spirit was that conditioned Irish history.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S
DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 747)

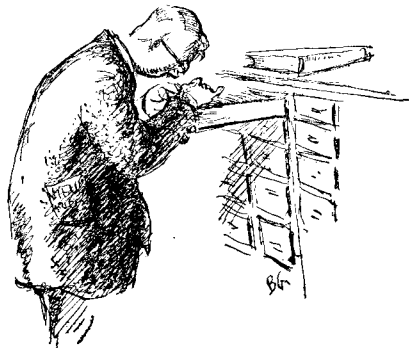
M. VAN DOREN:

BURDEN OF ORNAMENT

My darling with a single daisy,
Porcelain, pinned in her hair,
On other afternoons will glitter
With earrings, silver, or a fair
Gold brooch, that supper changes
Into an apron, crimson, there.

My darling bears the ancient burden
Smiling

Indologian Holiday



THE KING AND THE CORPSE. By Heinrich Zimmer. New York: Pantheon Books, Inc. 1948. 316 pp. \$3.75.

Reviewed by SIEGFRIED KRACAUER

THIS handsome volume of essays by the late Heinrich Zimmer, a publication of the Bollingen Series, is the yield of what can be called an Indologian's holiday. Zimmer was not only a scholar versed in Sanskrit texts, but a profoundly agitated mind living in the present as well as in the past. So he wandered to and fro between the ages, trying to decode the symbolic language of old myths in terms of contemporary experience. Here is the result of his wanderings. Expertly edited by Joseph Campbell, these essays rest upon Zimmer's belief—a belief which he shares with Jung and others—that the spiritual heritage of archaic man still survives in "the deeper unconscious layers of our soul." His meditations are a compound of psychology and mythology. They are ingratiating because they are not meant to be more than the musings of a learned dilettante.

Zimmer ambles between Orient and Occident, antiquity and the Middle Ages, leisurely recounting each story he picks up en route. The first, drawn from the Arabian Nights, is the well-known tale of the niggardly Abu Kasem and his patched-up slippers which make him the laughing-stock of the town. When he eventually attempts to dispose of them, they persistently return to their owner, causing his ruin. The miser who did not wish to part with them now is punished by their disastrous presence. The slippers, as Zimmer sees it, are an externalization of Karma—the ever-growing sum of man's actions and omissions, failures and achievements.

In this way Zimmer expounds an Irish fairy tale, a medieval German legend, four sagas from the cycle of King Arthur, the Sanskrit story of the King and the Corpse, and several Indian myths which, incidentally, have never before been translated into a

European language. The stories are so arranged that they compose a sort of psychological epic. Having demonstrated the impact of Karma through Abu Kasem's slippers, Zimmer shows how we should deal with the demoniac forces that threaten to overpower us. It is the eternal conflict between the unconscious and the conscious, evil instincts and good intentions, anarchical nature and spiritual purity. In the light of Zimmer's exegesis both the Irish Conn-eda story and the German legend of John Golden-Mouth teach the reconciliation of these opposites. Conn-eda, the naive hero, must learn to be ruthless; and the bishop Golden-Mouth cannot achieve saintliness unless he lives the life of a beast.

Evil, then, demands to be accepted, for only by wrestling with it can we mature to wholeness. This is the moral of the sagas of Gawain and Owain, who trustingly follow their elemental drives and thus succeed in establishing an inner balance which benefits their highest aspirations. They become "knowers," able to see eye to eye with death; they lose their original innocence to regain it on the level of consciousness. Zimmer's psychological epic culminates in the famous Sanskrit story after which the book is named. Resuming the Karma theme, this story mirrors the relationship between an individual's conscious life and his unconscious past. The gist of it, according to Zimmer, is the feat of self-integration accomplished by the king of the story: he does not let bygones be bygones, but in a torturing scrutiny resurrects what he has left behind, exorcising and incorporating it.

It is true that Zimmer identifies mythical events as psychological processes, but he never follows the current practice of featuring such processes at the expense of their meanings. Many psychologists do precisely this. They are so engaged in tracing outer occurrences to inner mechanisms that they all but forget to examine the significance of what we displace, rationalize, or project. Zimmer, on the contrary, is entirely unconcerned with these mechanisms and their interplay. His objective is not so much psychology for its own sake as the psyche—inner life conceived of as a meaningful whole. To him the "soul" is the arena of forces that antagonize or attract each other in the interest of unquestionable human values. And he would not even think of isolating psychological drives to which no such values can be attached.

Zimmer seems to have been deeply disturbed by modern positivism and the blindness to values and meanings in its wake. This follows from certain passages of his book in which he elegiacally points to our remoteness from

the wisdom inherent in ancient myths and tales. Science, he says, has learned to master the material forces of nature, but it has lost control "over the forces of the soul." Our psyche is undirected; we are strangely unable to determine its content and scope. Similarly, he complains of the "overresolute morality" we display in handling individual and social problems. Such rationally streamlined behavior increasingly prevents us from communing with our instincts—those fairy horses and miraculous lions that guide the hero more safely through the danger zones of life than would all his conscious reasoning. And finally, in keeping with this trust in the animal part of our existence, Zimmer condemns any excesses of planning. He does not expressly say so. Yet his emphasis on the Indian notion of the world as a product of ever-repeated spontaneous acts clearly implies his belief in the superior blessings of continual improvisation.

Amiable as the book is, it lacks strength and precision. Zimmer is right in calling himself a dilettante. His exuberant language, visibly influenced by oriental narratives, reminds one less of these than of layers of tropical vegetation. There is a certain confusion in him which contaminates his psychological concepts and makes him indiscriminately endorse both genuine myths and Wagner's counterfeits. And his undialectical reveling in the old teachings reveals him to be an incorrigible romantic. But whatever its weaknesses, Zimmer's book will captivate those who, like himself, are homesick for meanings.

**FRASER YOUNG'S
LITERARY CRYPT: No. 266**

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 266 will be found in the next issue.

NMBQCPQ BDNETQCB GHKQ;

TEQBQCPQ BFEQCXFDQCB WF.

FDHONB LRGGQE—

XCHOHGHXWN

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 265

God invented the talking machine. I only invented the first one that can be shut off.

THOMAS EDISON.

Baseball. *If a poll were taken among New York sportswriters today, it seems a cinch that first choice for the most unpopular manager of a big-league baseball club would be Leo Durocher—and a not inconsiderable portion of that unpopularity might be traced to "The Dodgers and Me," reviewed below. The sportswriters claim that Durocher, in addition to his brashness, impetuosity, aggressiveness (he once socked a spectator after a game under circumstances highly advantageous to Durocher, to say the least), will steal a base on the truth every time he can. Meanwhile, the 1947 pennant-winning Dodgers (under Burt Shotton) are playing slow, uninspired, heads-down, bush-league ball under Durocher. Anyone wanna take any bets about Durocher being back next year?*

Diamonds from Brooklyn to Boston

OF the dozen and more baseball books published this season, the one that has aroused the most controversy, as befits its author, is Leo Durocher's recital of his life with the Brooklyn Dodgers. In "The Dodgers and Me" (Ziff-Davis, \$2.50), Leo—or Mr. Harold Parrott of the Brooklyn front-office staff who is the ghost-presumptive—has managed to project his catalytic personality into print with little or no modulation. In these days when every athlete who has his autobiography written for him insists on loving everyone in sight, it is definitely refreshing to come across an avowed anti-mugwump like Durocher. The players and magnates who don't measure up to his standard, he berates sharply. The ones he approves of he embraces with equal ardor. Since Leo knows which side his check is endorsed on, the man who draws the best press from him is Branch Rickey, or just plain B. R., as Leo refers to him. Leo, by the way, is addressed by his players as "Skipper." They worship him.

The trouble with Leo's arguing of the case for Durocher is that he sets out to give himself an absolutely clean slate, a quite impossible assignment. In his efforts to re-mark his own report card, he has not been above, or below, twisting some of the facts so that they fit neatly into the portrait of himself of which the 1948 or slightly-abridged Durocher approves. His version of the famous clubhouse mutiny of 1944, according to most sportswriters, is one of the finest pieces of imaginative prose that has come along in years. Leo is also a skilled hand at omission, and not bad at all at ungallantry. His must qualify his praise for Burt Shotton, who led the Dodgers to a pennant during Leo's year of exile, with the reminder that Burt had Jackie Robinson (and Leo didn't),

and there were quite a few close games that Burt let slip away which, Durocher implies, Durocher's acumen and vigor would have pulled out of the fire.

Rickey, that plexus of anomalies—or, to hark closer to Bedford Avenue, "that man of many faucets, all of them running"—is also the co-hero of Jackie Robinson's autobiography "My Own Story," by Jackie Robinson (Greenberg, paper \$1, cloth \$2). Whether or not Rickey's liberalism contains a certain commercial yeast, it is to his eternal credit that he ripped through the Jim Crowism of our national game by giving a fine Negro athlete a chance to play in organized baseball and by directing with dogged astuteness Robinson's climb to the big leagues. Now that Robinson has established himself as a star and another Negro, Larry Doby, is doing well with Cleveland, it is easy to forget just how revolutionary the Robinson experiment was and how tremendous was the pressure on a young man, an intelligent young man acutely aware that his race as well as himself was involved in his every move.

With the able assistance of Wendell Smith of the *Pittsburgh Courier*, Robinson narrates calmly, factually, and with his characteristic discretion the progress of the experiment—the bitter days in Florida when some towns refused to allow the Brooklyn squad to use their fields because of Robinson's presence, the nights when he worried about his inability to give a good account of himself because of the unrelenting pressure and brooded about chucking the whole idea, his first friendships with his team-mates and his undisguised joy in making good in Montreal, his promotion to the Brooklyn team where he developed into a key factor on a pennant-winner. Robinson goes out of his way to tell