

# Jane Grey, Queen of England

THE LILY AND THE LEOPARDS. By Alice Harwood. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. 508 pp. \$3.50.

By VICTOR P. HASS

THERE isn't much that is new that can be said about Tudor England in a fictional way but, as Miss Harwood proves in the pages of this excellent novel, there is much that can be said better than most novelists have said it. Miss Harwood is no peddler of literary bagatelles; "The Lily and the Leopards," the story of tragic Jane Grey, is a sound, scholarly, vital, and exciting reconstruction of history. It is historical fiction as it should be written, but seldom is in these days.

Jane Grey, beautiful and intelligent daughter of the thick-skulled Duke of Suffolk, proud descendant of the Plantagenets, pawn of power-hungry politicians, ruled England for nine days after the death of Edward VI, the sad and lonely boy king. At the end of those nine days Jane paid for the badly bungled coup which she had not planned by dying on the block. Miss Harwood suggests that she might have become a topflight ruler. Certainly she was preferable to Bloody Mary Tudor who followed her; unquestionably, however, she could not have matched the great Elizabeth who came out on top in the power scramble.

Telling Jane's story is no simple matter of nine days of power; rather it is a matter of picking up Jane as a child on the knee of the dying Henry VIII and then filling in the years of tortuous political savagery that kept England in torment until Elizabeth came to the throne. Jane emerges here as a sweet, excellently educated, beautiful, bewildered girl. She is human and completely believable. But Miss Harwood is no less successful with all that crowd of be-ribboned, be-titled, be-mitred connivers—the Greys, the Dudleys, the Seymours, Pembroke, Cecil, Paget, Cranmer, and all the rest who played a dangerous game, played for keeps and knew that the price of failure was the block. Except in a few vignettes and a number of mob scenes, the common people do not enter the story and yet such is Miss Harwood's skill that she manages to convey to the reader that there the real power rests; there is the final arbiter.

As was inevitable, considering the scope of the subject, the novel is a maze of plots and counterplots, men named the Earl of Dorset one day and the Duke of Suffolk the next. Keeping

them straight must have been a first-class headache for Miss Harwood in the writing, but she had done the job so well that only the dumbest reader will fail to notice when the political weathervane has shifted and somebody else is in the driver's seat. There are times—but not often—when Jane



—From the book.

Grey is lost in the shuffle, yet even this does not constitute a weakness in the novel since poor Jane could not have been a dozen places at once and,

frequently, events which shoved her closer to the throne occurred simultaneously.

The great danger in a novel of this genre is that the author will succumb to the common failing of drawing her chief characters more than life size. Miss Harwood conquers that obstacle almost at the outset with a superb portrait of Henry VIII that makes that mighty monarch just an old man with the gout—querulous, tired, and rheumy-eyed. And having proved her mastery of the biggest figure of them all, she has no trouble keeping the comparative pigmies who fought for his mantle in line.

I must confess that I picked up "The Lily and the Leopards" with something akin to distaste since there has been such a spate of Tudor novels in the past decade that they begin to pall. But Miss Harwood jolted me out of my lethargy almost immediately. She has a feeling for mood, for weather, for dozens of little things that knit into a single fabric of suspicion and foreboding. And once you are caught in her spell there is no turning back, for interest grows with every paragraph.

This is a fine historical novel, perhaps not an "important" or "significant" one, but certainly an absorbing one.

## Your Literary I. Q.

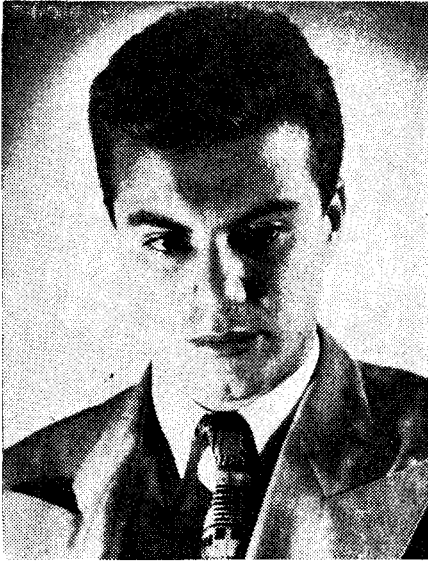
By Howard Collins

### PARADE OF WORDS

Fannie Gross, of Asheville, N. C., lists twenty sequences of words as they appear in poems by twenty well-known poets. Can you identify either the poet or the poem? Allowing five points for each correct answer, a score of fifty is par, sixty is very good, and seventy or better is excellent. Answers on page 42.

1. Boards, actors, prompters, gaslight.
2. Changes, sustains, dissolves, creates.
3. Correct, insert, refine, enlarge, diminish, interline.
4. Crosses, relics, crucifixes, beads, pictures, rosaries.
5. Essayist, atheist, novelist, realist, rhymester.
6. Genius, virtue, freedom, truth.
7. Grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt.
8. Majestic, equable, sedate, confirming, cleansing, raising.
9. Mercy, courage, kindness, mirth.
10. Palely, tinily, surely, mightily, frailty.
11. Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears.
12. Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens.
13. Screw, spring, tire, axle.
14. Shackled, scourged, tortured, crucified.
15. Shoveling, wrecking, planning, building, breaking, rebuilding.
16. Soft, meek, patient, humble, tranquil.
17. Tins, boxes, bottles, shapes.
18. Tonic, elixir, panacea, lotion, opiate.
19. Triolets, villanelles, rondels, rondeaus, ballades.
20. Trusty, dusky, vivid, true.

## Apprentice Saint Joan



—John H. Popper.

Edwin Fadiman, Jr. — "solid earth beneath his saint's feet."

*THE VOICE AND THE LIGHT.* By Edwin Fadiman, Jr. New York: Crown Publishers. 249 pp. \$2.75.

By EVELYN EATON

**E**DWIN FADIMAN, JR., has chosen an interesting, difficult, and absorbing theme for his first novel, for it deals with the apprenticeship of a saint, and saints are the most attractive men and women who have ever lived, the most challenging. They excite and embarrass us with their courtesy, their freedom, their light-heartedness, their frankness, their disconcerting habit of including all the world in a fellowship of prayer. They are never dull. In their infinite variety they are alike in one thing only, they have exchanged self-centeredness for love of God, and this, they say, is the spiritual vocation of the race. A Voice crying to every man for coopération and surrender offers in return growth and joy.

A novel about the first intimations of sainthood to any saint would have its appeal, both timeless and timely, to the reader in Year Five of the Atomic Age. Saint Joan of Arc has also the advantage of being one of the more easily understood saints, one of the most loved. She did not have to achieve simplicity after a lifetime of discarding worldly complications. She began with it. She was a practical saint who achieved a concrete goal. She "got results." She liberated France, and France has never been permanently conquered since. She was loyal to her country, to her Voices, to her God, even to martyrdom. Mr. Fadiman shows the begin-

nings of the growth of that loyalty.

He portrays Jeanne in the village of Domrémy, obeying her Orders, although they brought her into conflict with everyone she loved, first with her peasant father, the strong, prejudiced Jacques d'Arc, who told his sons: "If I believed that the thing I have dreamed of her should come to pass, I should want you to drown her, and if you did not do so, I would drown her myself." Jacques punishes his daughter, tries to marry her off, suffers shame and rage before Jeanne finally leaves home. Her brothers, her friends, her suitors, even her mother, are equally frustrated in their attempts to understand her or to make her conform to the pattern of the life they know and endorse. Jeanne contrives through her own sharp wit, and the working together of many small convenient miracles, to reach the Governor, the Duke of Lorraine. After convincing him, she returns with his support to Robert de Baudri-

court, whom Saint Michael, Saint Catherine, and Saint Margaret have designated as the man who will take her to the "gentle little Dauphin," whom she is to save. "Que Dé m'apporte victoire," she says as the bugles of the morning sound and she begins the quest.

In his first novel, Mr. Fadiman has succeeded in evoking a well-known France. He has put the solid earth of Domrémy beneath his saint's feet. He has surrounded her with credible characters. It is a picture of the Meuse valley and of the young Jeanne d'Arc for which we should be grateful, but the saint's "lovely life of service which is Christ's" has never been caught—entirely—by any pen, even in the hand of a saint. In this respect the book may disappoint. In all others it is interesting.

Evelyn Eaton is author of "North Star is Nearer," and co-author of "The Heart in Pilgrimage."

## Nostalgia & Nausea

*THE WORLD IN THE ATTIC.* By Wright Morris. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 189 pp. \$2.75.

By KENNETH S. DAVIS

**A**T the heart of this novel, flawing its integrity either as a work of art or as a perceptive report of small-town Americana, is an irritating tentatiousness. It is evident that Mr. Morris believes he has done what his publishers say he has done, namely "made a novel that expresses much more than is apparent on the surface." In the opinion of one reader, at least, he has done precisely the opposite: he has made a novel expressing much less than seems apparent on the surface.

At first glance, one is convinced that so slight a tale simply must have hidden meanings. Clyde Muncy, a writer, is driving through Nebraska on his way to New York with his wife and two children. He passes through the tiny village of Junction, where he was raised, and decides to stop for a visit with his boyhood friend, Bud Hibbard. Inevitably, the Muncys are trapped into spending the night with the Hibbards, and before they manage to get away twenty-four hours later Clyde has become involved in funeral arrangements for Mrs. Clinton Hibbard, Bud's aunt, who has always been an alien in that community because of her alleged cultural superiority. He also encounters as corny a group of stock small-town "characters" as has been assembled

in one book in years. Great effort is made by the writer to create a mood of mingled nostalgia and nausea; he labels the mood "nostalgia" and "nausea." It is an effort which many readers may agree is only 50 per cent successful.

The chief trouble seems to be that Clyde Muncy, who tells the story in first person, is conceited as all-get-out, and none too bright, either. He's so blinded by his sense of personal superiority that he doesn't really see anything, save the stereotypes in his own mind. Midwestern small towns are simply not as Clyde sees them to be. For instance, two pages of unfunny dialogue are devoted to the outraged surprise of a restaurant waitress when Clyde, city slicker that he is, orders iced coffee. The waitress is supposed never to have heard of such a thing. Someone ought to tell Clyde Muncy, or his creator, that the people in towns like Junction now read the same magazines, subscribe to the same book clubs, see the same movies, listen to the same radio shows, read the same AP news, and buy the same standard brands of merchandise as do the no more pampered people in Eastern cities.

There are differences between Midwest and East, and between country and city people, but those differences are much too subtle to be accurately perceived by guys like Clyde Muncy. A certain humility, a willingness to submit mind to fact, is essential to clear vision.