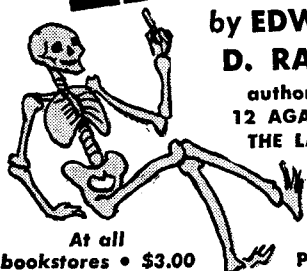


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A M E R I C A N A

(Continued from page 21)

Sierra Nevada and Inyo Mountains above Death Valley, the lowest spot in America. Then thirteen miles up into a steep-walled valley called Whitney Portal, almost at the base of Mt. Whitney, America's highest mountain.

This is the setting of "Up in Our Country," and Putnam's book is a series of light sketches of its animals, birds, flowers, mountains, his solitary "picture-book" lodge, and few neighbors. All are presented in a manner pertinent, whimsical, and amusing. But, strangely, they all seem to have been viewed through glass.

There is the lodge itself: Shangri-Putnam. The western half of the Fireplace Room looks out through the Mt. Whitney Window. On the other side is the Fireplace Room Window. Against the plate glass, on the outside, is placed a Bird Lunch Counter. From an armchair one can watch Madame Grouse, Hopalong Cassidy, the grouse with one leg; the bluejay, Oliver Twist; the skunk, Forget-Me-Not, and Mary Marten, the marten. The Chic Sale farther away is named View House for its undisturbed view —once one has raised across the path a semaphore arm lettered "Occupée."

Petunia is the Ford pickup. It has "a gay petunia on the panel of each door, with the vehicle's name emblazoned beneath it and her home port." Through its windshield glass, as it were, one views neighbors like John Lubken, the old cattleman, and Louis Joseph, the old German merchant.

Or one goes walking and examines through a magnifying glass the *crustose*, *foliose*, and *fruticose* lichens, and the *Pentstemon Parryi*.

No matter how pertinent, whimsical, and amusing, everything curiously seems viewed through a thin, ra-

tionally transparent film that yet blocks the sense of poetically triumphant or dramatically tragic immediacy. Only in the stories of loner Jim and his wheelbarrow and Indian Deefy, who died without ever attaining a wristwatch, do we break through to the quick of life.

Perhaps it is because everything is so pleasant. The land is but leased from the U. S. Forest Service. Nothing is grown but flowers. There is no conflict, no interdependence, and no vital relationship with the land and the people. Yet it seems inherent everywhere: between the soaring height of Mt. Whitney and the sinking depth of Death Valley, the thick falls of mountain snow and the steadily dropping underground water tables, the diversion of Owens Valley water to Los Angeles and its effect upon the few remaining settlers, Mr. Putnam's own notable career and his present retirement.

It is this deeper relationship we hope that Mr. Putnam will gradually establish as he sinks deeper roots into that "abiding place of the affections" which now claims him.

Americana Notes

THE FORTY-EIGHTERS: *Political Refugees of the German Revolution of 1848. Edited by A. E. Zucker. Columbia University Press. \$4.50.* This is the first book ever written about the Forty-Eighters as a group. Its appearance now marks a sort of delayed centennial celebration, and it is a worthy and valuable memorial. Eleven scholars discuss the European background (the revolutions began in France and one result they did accomplish was the reform and unification of the Swiss confederacy), the American scene (the turbulent situation in the country to which the refugees fled), adjustment to the United

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

| Title and Author | Crime, Place, and Sleuth | Summing Up | Verdict |
|--|---|---|------------------------|
| STOLEN GOODS Clarence Budington Kelland (Harper: \$2.75) | Murder in dept. store starts chipper copywriter Sherry Madigan on sleuthing career with exciting and romantic ending. | Sharp vignettes of dept.-store folk done with typical Kelland finesse. Heroine cute, action steady, suspense above average, ending O.K. | Slick and enjoyable |
| UPSTAIRS AND DOWNSTAIRS Carol Carnac (Crime Club: \$2.25) | Broken neck, accidental or otherwise, kills unpleasant English hospital clerk with possibly thieving proclivities. Julian Rivers, C.I.D., investigates. | Ins and outs of British hospital system pleasantly investigated, with romantic trimmings, sufficient plot, and unsuspected ending. | Dogged British baffler |

States (accenting Milwaukee, Chicago, St. Louis, and Midwestern rural communities), the Turner (the growth of the Turnvereine, which the Forty-Eighters did not originate), the Forty-Eighters in politics (Carl Schurz was only one among many), the radicals (especially Karl Heintzen, foe of Communists and Marxists), the Forty-Eighters in the Civil War (there were others beside Sigel), and Carl Schurz has a chapter all to himself. There is a biographical dictionary of Forty-Eighters, which gives detailed summaries of hundreds of careers—a comprehensive and useful addendum. This book is at once a sound study and a valuable historical reference tool.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN EMPIRE, edited by Elvon L. Howe. Doubleday. \$3. These narratives, which first appeared in the *Rocky Mountain Empire Magazine* of the *Denver Post*, the work of staff members, seek to present "revealing glimpses of the West in transition from old to new," according to the book's subtitle. Some of them are contemporary, some ancient, as antiquity is reckoned in the big-hill country. All of them are lively reflections of lives once lived, or still being lived, in a region where, as Editor Palmer Hoyt of the *Post* admits, "all geography is spectacular." So, apparently, are most of the people, at least the ones who get into these stories. The book exemplifies the rich store of local chronicle waiting to be dug up anywhere in America by alert newspapers—waiting not merely to be dug up, but to be read. These twenty-nine factual narratives prove that regionalism is for everybody

RAINY RIVER COUNTRY: A Brief History of the Region Bordering Minnesota and Ontario, by Grace Lee Nute. Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul. \$2. The Rainy River runs west from International Falls into Lake of the Woods to form a hundred miles of boundary between the United States and Canada. Beyond its mouth lies the Northwest Angle, the northernmost area of the United States, well above the forty-ninth parallel. The mere fact that it sticks up there the way it does is proof that the region has an interesting history. Rainy River was named for Rainy Lake, and Rainy Lake is a simple translation of Lac La Pluie, as it was christened by some moist and homesick Frenchman. Today the area owes its livelihood to fish, newsprint, and tourists (the paper on which these words are printed may well have floated down Rainy River). From 1893 to 1901 it experienced the misfortune of a gold rush, but recovered. Today its population includes Chippe-

was who still live in wigwams and Scots whose winter sport is curling. This neat little history, though not written for the summer trade, will not do them a bit of harm. There is a good collection of photographs.

OHIO NEWSPAPERS: A Living Record, by Robert C. Wheeler. Ohio History Press, Columbus. \$6.50. Two-thirds of the front page of the first number of Ohio's first newspaper (*The Centinel of the North-Western Territory*, issued at Cincinnati on November 9, 1793) was given over to an extract from Laurence Sterne's "A Sentimental Journey Through France and Italy," and the rest to a statement by the editor, William Maxwell, of his plans and hopes. Mr. Wheeler reproduces the whole issue life-size in this whopping book, which measures eleven by seventeen inches in order to permit him to present legible facsimiles of today's eight-column productions in full page. (*The Centinel* gave him no trouble at all; it measured only nine and one-half by twelve.) He gets a running start by going back to America's first newspaper (*Publick Occurrences*, Boston, 1690) and follows the western movement of the press to New York, Philadelphia, Williamsburg, Pittsburgh, Lexington, and so across the river to Ohio. Examples thereafter selected accent geographical distribution within the state and are chosen largely for the important events (the importance of which was often not recognized at the time) which they chronicled—events in most instances of more than parochial importance. Mr. Wheeler, as head of the newspaper library of the Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society, "was prompted to compile this work after observing many young visitors and their enthusiasm for the sight of 'really old' newspapers." The result is an admirable visual aid, particularly

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—N. Y. HERALD TRIBUNE

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THE FIRST ANESTHETIC: *The Story of Crawford Long*, by Frank Kells Boland, M.D., University of Georgia Press. \$3. This latest contribution to the "ether controversy" accents the part played therein by Charles T. Jackson as a possible link between Long and Dr. W. T. G. Morton. Jackson, a native of Plymouth, Massachusetts, was brother-in-law of Ralph Waldo Emerson. He was something of a claimer; he tried to walk off with Dr. William Beaumont's prize specimen, Alexis St. John, the youth whose open stomach became the basis of modern study of the digestive processes; meeting S. F. B. Morse on a trip from Europe and hearing about the transmission of electricity through wire, he later wrote Morse referring to "our" telegraph; he put in a word for a share in the discovery of gun-cotton. He also spent seven years in a mental institution. Dr. Boland attacks the assertion that Crawford Long "died in poverty and obscurity." On the contrary, Long died very much in harness; his last words were, "Care for the mother and child first"; a past chancellor of the University of Georgia delivered the funeral oration, and six medical associates published a resolution of respect in his honor. The Long-Morton controversy appears to be largely a question of one's interpretation of the word "discovery." Morton demonstrated the use of ether before a professional audience with a view to introducing it to the world; Long, three years earlier, had quietly and painlessly extracted a small cystic tumor from the neck of one James Venable. The operation, anesthetic included, cost \$2.

—J. T. W.



—From "Confessions of an English Opium-Eater."



A LITTLE less than a hundred years ago—May 22, 1851—a distinguished journalist and novelist walked onto a London lecture platform and began a series of six lectures. The speaker was William Thackeray. His audience contained men and women no less distinguished than himself—Carlyle, Dickens, Charlotte Brontë, Macaulay—; while his subjects were fixed stars of English literature and art—Swift, Congreve, Addison, Steele, Prior, Gay, Pope, Smollett, Fielding, Sterne, Goldsmith, Hogarth. And the lectures themselves were destined to find their own permanent if modest place in the great library of living books, for they have been many times reprinted, and they are still well worth reprinting, as is proved by the attractive Grey Walls Press edition of "The English Humourists of the Eighteenth Century" (\$2.50), distributed in this country by the British Book Centre.

These papers—fresh, witty, eloquent, hard-hitting, opinionated—make as lively reading, or hearing, as they did when first written. They may still be read for pleasure and intellectual stimulation, as well as information; but they must be read with understanding of the fact that they are the products not only of Thackeray's gust for literature, and his excellent taste, but also of Victorian morality. The critic was a child of his age, and it must be remembered, too, that his lectures were concerned more with men than works. He was horrified by Swift, while fully recognizing his genius. He was shocked by Congreve, while appreciating his wit. He enjoyed Smollett hugely, but found it necessary to deplore his coarseness. He came close to idolizing Addison, was tender to Dick Steele, liked Mat Prior and John Gay, shook hands happily with Harry Fielding, admired Pope, loved Goldsmith, and felt a hearty, masculine, British contempt for at least nine-tenths of Laurence Sterne. He indulged in a kind of rhetoric that is now unfashionable, he permitted himself a freer gush of sentiment than is now approved, he moralized in a way that is now taboo; but he spoke from a deep love of writing and mankind, in language that proved him worthy of his subjects.

Another book, and a charming one, brought to us by the increasingly active British Book Centre is the Cupid Press limited edition (660 copies) of "Georgian Love Songs" (\$7.50), ed-

ited by John Hadfield, with decorations by Rex Whistler. Mr. Hadfield's aim has been to collect a number of "the best and most representative love lyrics printed between 1714 and 1780," and I believe he has succeeded. There are few anthological hacks among his hundred selected songs, although it is obviously impossible to limit such a collection to unfamiliar poems, if it is to contain the best or second-best. There is much pretty rhyming, many clever conceits, and a few amorous trifles that are perfect of their kind. These verses are far removed from the uplands of poetry; they are the delightful flowers of a formal garden. But the soil of that garden, in which artificiality and fashion reigned, was still fertilized by the fundamental nature of man.

Still another importation from England is the first volume of G. M. Trevelyan's "Illustrated English Social History" (Longmans, Green, \$3.75), devoted to "Chaucer's England and the Early Tudors." This volume, the first of four, is a fine example of scholarship putting itself, without loss or condescension, at the service of the general reading public. Trevelyan's text, designed to supplement and explain the political and economic history of the period, largely confirms A. F. Pollard's statement that "of all the schisms which rend the woven garment of historical understanding, the worst is that which fixes a deep gulf between medieval and modern history." The many illustrations, well chosen by Ruth C. Wright, will repay long study.

De Quincey's masterpiece, "Confessions of an English Opium-Eater" is with us again—in a beautiful Heritage Press edition (\$5), with twelve haunting gravures by Zhenya Gay and an introduction by William Bolitho; and in a more compact Cresset Library edition (Chanticleer Press, \$2), prepared by Edward Sackville-West, which also contains extensive selections from De Quincey's "Autobiography." Both volumes use the original, 1822, text of the "Confessions." And I am happy to see another comely Heritage Press book. This is Dumas' "The Three Musketeers" (\$5), reprinted from the photo of the Limited Editions Club "Musketeers," for which I wrote the introduction in 1932, but freshly and spiritedly illustrated by Edy Legrand.

—BEN RAY REDMAN.