

vere intent upon arousing Southern patriots to the dangers of Cornwallis's advance through the Carolinas. The mountain men, reluctant to leave their homes vulnerable to Indian and Tory raids, ignore his warnings to consolidate their forces into an army fully equipped to meet the British. When their small bands are repeatedly defeated and Colonel Ferguson threatens to come over the mountains and plunder their lands, the shell of isolationism cracks and the truth of MacDermott's words is realized. The newly-formed patriot army of the Carolinas engages and defeats Ferguson's forces in the battle of Kings Mountain. Their victory assures Reece of the eventual success of the American Revolution.

Although the progression of historical events provides the bulk of excitement and suspense, myriad touches of local color, romance, and characterization make this partial reconstruction of a vital period in our history a well-rounded, entertaining story.

—JOSEPH M. GRANT.

STAR OF GLASS, by Ann Birstein. Dodd, Mead. \$2.75. Probably the better aspects of this book emerge when it is read as an exposé, when it is seen as a visit to the sanctum of sanctity, when one imagines it subtitled "Inside Jewry." On this level, the most understandable since it employs at least a small bit of fact, the reader is able to dismiss the amateur characterizations and the fuzzy motivations and see the novel as somewhat interesting. It is the story of the workings of a synagogue, of the animosities and disparagements which fringe the holiest of places. Here, says Miss Birstein, is a place of squalor, a place where the rabbi loves neither his wife nor his congregation, where pride and vanity take the place of humility.

Unfortunately, this part of the novel is much in the background. The meaning of the larger part of the story is, I'm afraid, completely lost. It seems to concern the meeker thread in the congregation's tangled skein and it appears to be a love story between the rabbi's secretary and his brother. It is a story that makes little sense because the people speak and move more as props and prototypes than as human beings. They are conceived so heavily as Jews and are forced so entirely into an unreal idiom that they lose all their natural humor and dimension. Because of this the characters have been mechanically teamed, and there seems to be a kind of muddy message along with this. All the bullies, and these are stereotyped as crude, broken-English Jews, get banished from the sanctum, and the meek inherit the synagogue.

—MADELON SHAPIRO.

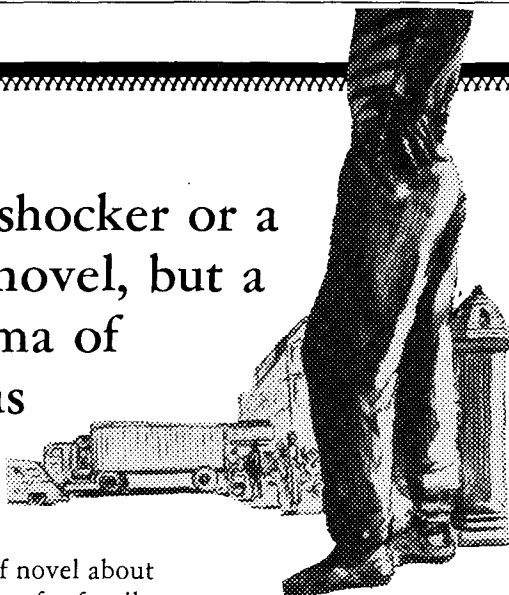
TORCH FOR A DARK JOURNEY, by Lionel Shapiro. Doubleday. \$3. At the center of this tale we have Gregor Karlene, a world-famous Czech geologist who is smuggled out from behind the Iron Curtain by an American oil man, Justin Clayfield. Clayfield, the familiar pattern of a brash, expansive, at once naive and amoral American industrialist, needs Karlene to exploit his new Texas oil fields; he has invested in the freedom of Karlene and expects his dividends. But Karlene's problem is the more complex, for this freedom from his own country is a sharp-edged boon. After the thrilling physical adventure of escape across the border, Karlene suffers another and profounder conflict. It is the old, agonized self-questioning of the exile: where does his homeland lie, and where his loyalties?

There is another story overlaid upon this one, a love story designed to give, shall we say, popular appeal to the otherwise bleakly moral dilemma.

Philip Channing, an American newsman with one of the large press agencies, is sent to France to cover this story with all of its tangle of political implications. Channing falls in love with Moussia, Karlene's daughter, and out of his emotional involvement he comes to regard his duties as a newshawk in a new light. He abstains from pumping Karlene on conditions in Czechoslovakia, understanding Karlene's reluctance to play the role of informer; he withholds part of the story, a newsman's heresy and symbol, again, of the dilemma of choice in a time of trouble.

The elements, then, have been combined and brought to precipitation with obvious melodramatic purpose. Certainly, this is not as it stands a serious study of the political or ethical factors involved. Nevertheless, it contains a statement of them in the person of Karlene, the one impeccably mature character in the book, the one figure of real contemporary rele-

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vance. I should think he represents a theme that will certainly be treated someday in a greater book. For the rest, the romantics of Channing and Moussia, the melodramatics of Endor, the Communist, and Aleksandrow, the adventurer, and others serve to make the story what it is always at the very least: continuously exciting and diverting.

—N. L. R.

WILL OF IRON, by Isadore Rosen. Crown. \$3. This is a Brooklyn ghetto story, which at its best gives us photographic reality, without a spark of inner life to transcend it. None of the people in it seems to have any other idea than to get on in life, to make a little more money, to live better, i.e., more prosperously. The

dreamers who peopled Zangwill's stories are singularly absent. The heroine is a matriarch who, married to a good-natured but ineffectual husband, and having a large family, took matters into her own hands. Ruth was not one for lying down on her job. She started by buying and selling buttons, peddling them in the street and from door to door. When she had enough money she opened a store, in which buttons were but a small item. She enlarged the store when it became necessary. Then there was a fire, and the store was consumed. Ruth hadn't insured it. Did that worry her? No, not Ruth. She had established credit, and was soon running a larger store than before. Ruth grew prosperous. Her daughter

Your Literary I.Q.

By Howard Collins

OSCULATION, WIDE AND OTHERWISE

Chester G. Curtiss, of Easthampton, Mass., offers fifteen quotations on the subject of kissing. Allowing seven points if you can name either the author or the source of each, a score of sixty-three is par, seventy is very good, and eighty-four or better is excellent. Answers on page 45.

1. Or leave a kiss but in the cup
And I'll not look for wine.
2. Sweet Helen! make me immortal with a kiss!
3. For each red ear a general kiss he gains.
4. Yet I smile and whisper this:
I am not the thing you kiss.
5. Then come kiss me, sweet and twenty,
Youth's a stuff will not endure.
6. The rough male kiss of blankets.
7. One kind kiss before we part;
Drop a tear and bid adieu.
8. Yet each man kills the thing he loves. . . .
The coward does it with a kiss.
9. Strephon's kiss was lost in jest,
Robin's lost in play,
But the kiss in Colin's eyes
Haunts me night and day.
10. I couldn't stand it, sir, at all
But up and kissed her on the spot!
11. Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft.
12. Lord! I wonder what fool it was that first invented kissing.
13. When we fall out with those we love
And kiss again with tears.
14. Many a green-gown has been given,
Many a kiss, both odd and even.
15. Some there be that shadows kiss;
Such have but a shadow's bliss.