

Maple Street in Springfield, Mass., in 1894 at a brisk seven miles an hour. Mr. Purdy is, as has been suggested, a zealot, but his enthusiasm never beclouds his factuality, his fluency, or his competence to produce entertaining reading. This book is by no means exclusively for the specialist; the most plodding bus-rider can read it with high enjoyment.

For real people emerge, no less than surpassingly fine cars. Ettore Bugatti would not employ a draftsman who could not draw any part of a car in three dimensions. Sir Henry Rolls said: "It's impossible for us to make a bad car. The doorman wouldn't let it go out." The bewhiskered Stanley brothers started their business life in the photographic field (ever hear of the Stanley Dry Plate?) and in 1899, with an output of 200 steamers, they became the first successful automobile manufacturers in history. "We may yet," says Mr. Purdy, "see a renaissance of steam."

This is not one of those ye olde motor-carre books (it is too much of today and tomorrow) but it has some fine throwbacks in it—there is a notable reconstruction of the Vanderbilt Cup Races. Automobile races, Mr. Purdy holds, should be run on roads, not on tracks, be they circular, oval, or square. He is a man of strong loyalties and equally strong antipathies. And he can back up both sentiments cogently.

—JOHN T. WINTERICH.

**THE CASE OF ALFRED PACKER, THE MAN-EATER.** By Paul H. Gantt. University of Denver Press. \$3. On April 13, 1883, Larry Delan hurried from the courthouse in Lake City, Colorado, to a saloon and told a story that has become famous:

"The Judge says:

"Stan' up, yah voracious man-eating son of a bitch, stand up!"

"Then, pointing his trembling fingers at Packer, so raging mad he was, says he:

"They was sivin Dimmicrats in Hinsdale County, and ye eat five of them, G— d— ye!"

"I sintins ye t'be hanged by the neck until ye're dead, dead, DEAD, as a warnin' ag'in reducin' the Dimmycratic population of th' state."

Fortunately for folklore, Larry Dolan's "judgment" was much more colorful than the one pronounced by Judge Melville B. Gerry.

In November 1873 Alfred Packer and twenty other foolhardy Argonauts had set out to cross the Rockies from Utah to reach a gold strike at Breckenridge, Colorado. In January they came to the camp of Ute Chief Ouray, who persuaded them to spend the

(Continued on page 34)

**The Book.** A quarter of a century ago the late Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach paid \$106,000 for a copy of the Gutenberg Bible, thereby convincing millions of Americans that there must be something to book collecting. Other Americans, less numerous but more knowing, realized that the collecting of books brings satisfactions other than monetary. The bookman is adept at communicating his enthusiasm through the printed page, as Lawrence Clark Powell demonstrates so charmingly in his little volume, "Islands of Books," reviewed on page 34. His enthusiasms may run to the appurtenances of books, as Louise Seymour Jones shows in "The Human Side of Bookplates" (below). Despite innovations in the field of communications, nothing has as yet replaced the book. For a knowledge of the ancient book we must turn to an institution like the one Edward Alexander Parsons describes in "The Alexandrian Library" (page 21), for that of the seventeenth-century Western world to the 80,000 volumes scrupulously listed in Donald Wing's "A Short Catalogue . . ." (page 21).

## Mine! . . . But Yours Too

**THE HUMAN SIDE OF BOOK-PLATES.** By Louise Seymour Jones. Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press. 155 pp. \$5.

By EARNEST ELMO CALKINS

**I**N this good-looking book Mrs. Jones has assembled a remarkable lot of gossip and lore about bookplates, book-lovers who use them, artists who design them, and enthusiasts (of which she is one) who collect them. But this is not a technical book, of which there is already a plenty, but a sort of by-product which she accurately describes as the human side of bookplates.

It is the fruit of years of correspondence with every prospect still living, from Pirkheimer and Dürer to E. D. French and Fred Goudy. Only two of them seem to scorn these fascinating little book-markers—Bernard Shaw and Christopher Morley. The latter writes, "Can you imagine

any good book-lovers, say Charles Lamb or Sam Johnson, wasting their time that way?"

But Mrs. Jones can, for she has the plates of Eugene Field, Frederick-Locker Lampson, Edmund Clarence Stedman, Cobden Sanderson, William Morris, and hundreds of others, and the exchange of letters with Morley makes one of the liveliest chapters in this very readable book.

Mrs. Jones also has her own philosophy about the part an extra-curricular activity plays in our lives which she defines with the word *elsewhere*—italicized wherever mentioned. That is the dream world which we make out of our heart's desire and strive to realize. It may be books or bookplates or any of a hundred hobbies.

She also points out that many bookplates reveal in their design some pre-occupation, interest, or passion, some achievement, pride of ancestry, trade, or profession, as the Shasta daisies on Luther Burbank's, the court jester on Francis Wilson's, or the intertwined telephones of Bayard Kilgour, an executive of the Bell System.

Many plates are reproduced; too much reduction of size for the more detailed ones is the only flaw in this charming book. It will be enjoyed as good reading by almost anyone, no matter how remote his interest in the ostensible subject; he will be both entertained and informed.

*Earnest Elmo Calkins founded and until 1931 was president of the New York firm of Calkins & Holden, often described as "the first modern advertising agency."*



## Treasury on the Nile

THE ALEXANDRIAN LIBRARY. By Edward Alexander Parsons. Houston, Tex.: Elsevier Press. 468 pp. \$7.50.

By C. A. ROBINSON, JR.

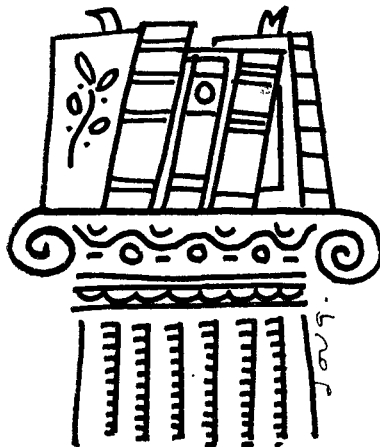
THE immediate effect of the life of Alexander the Great (died 323 B.C.) was the birth of a vast and strange world that was occupied and exploited by myriads of Greeks. In the new Hellenistic Age, when Hellenism or Greek culture became widespread, some of Alexander's ideas took root slowly, such as his insistence on cooperation between peoples, but his conception of the inhabited world won instant approval. Now man thought of himself more and more as a member of a world society, a society in which there might be (and were) sharp differences, but in which a common Greek culture nonetheless acted as a natural bond.

One of the striking features of the new day was the growth of cities, the greatest of which was Alexander's own foundation, Alexandria in Egypt, the metropolis of the civilized world. Its landmark was the lighthouse by Sostratus of Cnidus, 400 feet high, while the population of the city itself eventually grew to about a million, a motley conglomeration of Greeks, Egyptians, Persians, Jews, Syrians, Anatolians, Arabs, Indians, Negroes, and Italians, who were ever ready to riot in the streets.

The mental attitude of the Hellenistic Age was essentially an appreciation of the past. In order to master and cultivate the immense intellectual treasures a library and museum were founded at Alexandria, and here we catch the bid of the ruling Ptolemies to foster a sort of university center, rivaling Athens and giving some glamour and substance to a government which, at heart, was sordid. The best scholars, scientists, poets, and artists of the day were invited to live in Alexandria at public expense. It is interesting to observe that the city had almost no influence on them, for their work was mainly Hellenic and international, rather than Alexandrian. At the same time the world was assiduously searched to create what became the largest and most important library of antiquity. It comprised perhaps 500,000 volumes or rolls; the catalogue by Callimachus, one of the chief librarians and a man of stupendous learning, is said to have filled 120 volumes and included biographies of the authors and critical data.

The author of the latest work on the library of Alexandria is a distin-

guished citizen of New Orleans, a man of letters, lawyer, bibliographer, and builder of a library of some 50,000 books, manuscripts, and historical documents. According to the jacket, Mr. Parsons spent seven years in the writing of his book, which I can well believe. He has produced a large and attractively illustrated volume, which commences with the libraries of Old Greece, Pergamum, and Antioch, and



proceeds to a description of Alexandria. We are then told of the founding and conduct of the museum and library, and finally of the library's destruction early in our era.

Mr. Parsons has amassed a large body of material, but his rather ponderous presentation of it will not, I fear, attract the layman nor will the scholar applaud his uncritical methods. Ten pages are devoted to Caesar and Cleopatra—to cite a typical example of discursiveness—on the excuse that the library was damaged during Caesar's visit to Alexandria. Mr. Parsons lists hundreds upon hundreds of books in his bibliography, though most of them have no particular connection with his subject. The hundreds of footnotes refer to modern works of varying worth at random. Two definitions of the word "founder"—from the "Oxford English Dictionary" and the "Century Dictionary"—are actually set out in the text, so that we may embark soundly on a precise, or rather labored, recital of the library's foundation. And "for those archeologically minded we append short cartographical comments on interesting plans of ancient Alexandria." But the four plans were drawn in the nineteenth century and merely demonstrate the growth of knowledge during that time.

Mr. Parsons is as enthusiastic as he is industrious. James Westfall Thompson's "Ancient Libraries" is more satisfying, however. In less than 100 pages of graceful text the entire subject of ancient books, libraries, format, cataloguing, bookselling, etc., is there authoritatively reviewed.

## On & On & On

A SHORT-TITLE CATALOGUE OF BOOKS PRINTED IN ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, IRELAND, WALES, AND BRITISH AMERICA, AND OF ENGLISH BOOKS PRINTED IN OTHER COUNTRIES, 1641-1700. Compiled by Donald Wing. New York: The Index Society. 3 vols., 1945, 1948, 1951. \$55 the set.

By CARL PURLINGTON ROLLINS

ATALLY of all the books which have been printed since "the Gothic sun set behind the gigantic presses of Mayence" would be a labor to daunt the most ambitious and persevering bibliographer. In the first fifty years of printing there were published an average of about 800 titles a year. The printing press was invented to speed up the production of books, and the acceleration has been so great that last year some 30,000 titles were issued in England and America alone. Obviously an all-inclusive listing covering the past 500 years is an impossibility. It is possible, however, to compile lists for limited and specific areas of time and place and interest, such as the great German "Gesamptkatalog der Weigendrucke" of books printed before 1501 (40,000 probable titles), or the list of "Scientific, Medical and Technical Books in Print in the United States from 1930 to 1948" (nearly 8,000 titles), or Mr. Wing's monumental work covering the period between 1641 and 1700 (about 80,000 titles). These few examples of the listing of printed books give some idea of the scope of the task.

"A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England" is a continuation of Pollard and Redfield's volume, issued in 1926 and covering the same material from 1475 (the date of Caxton's "Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers," printed at Bruges) to 1640. The size and arrangement of the three new volumes is in general similar to the Pollard-Redfield book. The first volume of Wing appeared in 1945, the second in 1948, and now the third and last volume is published. The preface, which appears in Volume I, should be consulted for valuable information regarding the scope and method of the work.

Mr. Wing's treatment of his material is substantially like that of the earlier Pollard-Redfield volume, but differs in

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Carl Purlington Rollins, printer emeritus to Yale University, edited The Saturday Review's quondam column THE COMPLEAT COLLECTOR.