

FICTION

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satirists, and one feels that Herbert is too genial a man to attack his target as it deserves. But no doubt it is a mistake to try to decide on the merits of psychological examinations from a book like this; one should accept it as first-rate entertainment, and be grateful. Certainly the scene in which we see how differently associations with words can lead three different minds is one that made this reviewer laugh aloud, and go off to find someone to read it to. And Lord Caraway and Stoke, the retired naval officer who determines the position of his house every night by the stars (and sometimes comes within half a mile of being right), is a figure in the great tradition of my Uncle Toby, Commodore Trunnion, and Mr. Wemmick; just as Sir Alan Herbert, with his enthusiasm for renaming the stars for modern heroes and for establishing Greenwich Time all over the world, is a figure in the great English line of riders of hobbyhorses, who have generally deserved better of posterity than all the hard-working civil servants.

Fiction Notes

LUCY, or THE DELAWARE DIALOGUES. By Babette Rosmond. Simon & Schuster. \$3. In a superficial novel about life in the suburban outpost of Westchester Babette Rosmond records the conversations of an unfailingly articulate couple, Lucy and Gene Delaware, with their assorted relatives and friends. Perhaps chatter is a more accurate word than conversations, for a novel told in dialogue becomes a mere exercise in volubility unless marked by brilliant wit or satire, which this book lacks. It reads like watered down Ivy Compton-Burnett.

The Delawares exchange sallies with their offspring, their righteous sister-in-law Patty and her patient husband, George, their stuffy mother-in-law, and their collection of hard-drinking friends. They voice self-consciously unconventional opinions on everything from sex and child psychology to housekeeping and culture. A thoroughly young woman, Lucy sandwiches an experimental love affair with Patty's ex-husband between shopping trips to town. But she returns with relief to Westchester's serenity, punctuated by her husband's amiable banter and by squabbles with Patty over their children's squabbles.



—Marcus Bleckman.

Babette Rosmond—"stream of talk."



—Virginia F. Stern.

Damsey Wilson—"ardent feminist."

This inconsequential plot is merely a peg for the constant stream of talk. "Lucy, or The Delaware Dialogues" may be an effort to convey the tedium of marital life in suburbia. In this endeavor it succeeds. —RAY PIERRE.

THE DARK MARE. By Damsey Wilson. Doubleday. \$3.50. An obviously ardent feminist, Damsey Wilson here has us live through that momentous day when a woman is for the first time elected President of these United States. This is to occur, if the author's apocalyptic vision is correct, sometime during the 1950's, which must mean 1956 unless this year holds more surprises for us than now appear likely.

Miriam Hall Bradley, the President-to-be, is considerable of a woman. She runs her large household—three children, a husband, two retainers, and a secretary—with enormous efficiency and a rather frighteningly calm ability to "take things in her stride." She has also run a newspaper, taught college courses in political science, written books that outsold Wendell Will-

kie's "One World," and been a highly successful president of a university. Politically she is a New-Deal, or Roosevelt, Democrat and is especially strong for World Federalism.

Despite a determined effort on the part of the author to humanize this paragon—she even almost has an illegitimate baby in her youth, which is going pretty far—she remains a rather cold puppet in a thesis tale, with an annoying habit of causing people to fall on their faces by propounding some of the more obvious clichés of political liberalism. Every politician wishes it were that easy. In fact the main trouble with Miss(?) Wilson's novel is that she has made the solution of all her character's problems appear too easy. Like those recipes in the back pages of the women's magazines, which never do seem to turn out quite like what you had expected.

—EDWARD J. FITZGERALD.

THE CITADEL OF THE LAKES. By Myron David Orr. Dodd, Mead. \$3. Mr. Orr's third novel recalls the years when John Jacob Astor's American Fur Company took to robbing and murdering the independent traders and trappers of Mackinac Island. Their own Government's unconcern with Astor's terrorism caused most of the islanders to hope for British conquest. This was finally accomplished, without bloodshed, when war broke out in 1812. But the trappers' joy was all too brief. Although the British Northwest Company refrained from cutting their throats, it cut the price of pelts far below that which Astor's agents had been paying—when they paid. And despite British occupation American Fur continued its criminal operations.

This is the story Myron David Orr has reconstructed after twenty-five years of research into the history of Mackinac Island, Citadel of the Great Lakes. Against a background of historical detail the author outlines his one-dimensional figures: Eric, brash American spy in love with Marie, desirable and enigmatic ward of kindly Dr. Hurd, closest friend of Bunyanesque Mike Blakeman, who crosses into whichever camp best suits his purpose. Although the end of the tale doesn't see Astor's expulsion from the territory, a happy ending is accomplished by the reunion of Eric and Marie and the discovery of her father's murderers.

For the author the writing of this book was apparently a labor of love. Reading it is labor. In scene after scene the reader is baited into believing some genuine excitement will appear on the very next page, but he remains an anticipant to the end.

—JOSEPH M. GRANT.

In Paper Covers

The Saturday Review's Guide to the Best New Reprints

<i>Title and Author</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Critics' Consensus</i>
BUTCHER'S DOZEN (ABRIDGED) <i>John Barlow Martin</i> (Signet: 25c)	Six stories based on actual criminal cases of our own day, all but one of them laid in the Midwest.	Homicides handled with intelligence, style, and restraint.
THE GREAT SNOW <i>Henry Morton Robinson</i> (Pocket: 25c)	How the family of Ruston Cobb, a patent lawyer living in the Hudson River Valley, managed to survive when a three-week blizzard buried the Eastern U. S.	An absorbing tale whether read as an allegory or as a tense chronicle of man vs. nature.
GUARD OF HONOR <i>James Gould Cozzens</i> (Permabooks: 35c)	The commanding officer of a huge Florida Army airfield copes with a near race-riot, the death of a group of paratroopers, and other vexations during three days in 1943.	Pulitzer Prize winner. The finest work of one of the ablest living American craftsmen of the novel.
THE HAPPY TIME <i>Robert Fontaine</i> (Dell: 25c)	Stories of a Canadian boyhood spent in a two-family house crowded with relatives, each of whom was a character in his own right.	Gay reminiscence recounted with wit, charm, and warm understanding.
JACKSON MAHAFFEY <i>Fred Ross</i> (Bantam: 25c)	The adventures of a young North Carolina farmer, a Mike Fink, Paul Bunyan, and Robin Hood rolled into one, who proves that the wages of sin is total triumph.	Vastly amusing fantasy.
JEFFERSON (ABRIDGED) <i>Saul K. Padover</i> (Mentor: 35c)	Biography of an extraordinarily versatile man, emphasizing the conflict between his desire for a quiet scholarly life and his service as governor, ambassador, cabinet member, and President.	Compact, attractive synthesis of the available scholarship, written by an admirer largely in Jefferson's own words.
THE LITTLE PRINCESSES <i>Marion Crawford</i> (Bantam: 25c)	The girlhoods of Queen Elizabeth II and Princess Margaret Rose of England told by the woman who was their governess for seventeen years.	Fascinating, intimate, but discreet picture of palace life.
THE LOYALTY OF FREE MEN <i>Alan Barth</i> (Pocket: 35c)	A <i>Washington Post</i> editorial writer discusses how to battle Communism effectively without adopting totalitarian measures at home. Loyalty programs, treason trials, and the FBI are among the subjects covered.	Sane, dispassionate inquiry into one of the crucial problems of our time.
MOULIN ROUGE <i>Pierre La Mure</i> (Signet: 50c)	Novelized biography of the colorful nineteenth-century French painter and lithographer Toulouse-Lautrec.	Melodrama, sex, and sentimentality played up in a popular introduction to the career and work of a tortured genius.
A SHORT HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION (REVOLUTION 1776) <i>John Hyde Preston</i> (Pocket: 35c)	A "revisionist" account of the War of Independence, highlighting battles and personalities.	Style always slashing and incisive, occasionally vulgar; facts and characterizations generally accurate.
THE TURNING WHEELS <i>Stuart Cloete</i> (Permabooks: 35c)	The 1836 trek of Boer farmers from Cape Colony to the Transvaal, and in particular the tragic influence of attractive young Sannie van Reenen on three men who loved her.	An epic tale, crowded with color, turbulence, suspense, and humor, recounted with rare magnificence and insight.
WILLIAM JAMES <i>Edited by Margaret Knight</i> (Penguin: 35c)	Twenty selections from "The Principles of Psychology," "The Varieties of Religious Experience," and other works arranged to provide a compact, connected account of James's psychological teaching. Biographical and critical notes by the editor.	Invaluable introduction to the thought of one of America's greatest philosophers.

—RAYMOND WALTERS, JR.



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