

preciate a certain type of between-the-lines, allegorical, or cryptographic writing which was not uncommon in Italy during the last years of Fascism (cf. the already-mentioned "In Sicily," or some of the allegories in Moravia's collection entitled in Italian "I sogni del pigro," not to mention his novel "The Fancy Dress Party," or the definitely cryptographic "Man Is Strong," by Corrado Alvaro).

What readers outside Italy wanted they found in the only Italian writer who had attained a wide American reputation between Pirandello and the present revival of interest, Ignazio Silone. Italians generally, as is well known, find it hard to grant Silone a high place in the history of their recent literature; his character-drawing seems shallow and *passé*, his writing and his dialogue clumsy, his situations scarcely persuasive however noble the spirit that animates them. Nor did success seem to help him; his first novel, "Fontamara," possessed an intensity and a vernacular forcefulness not to be found in the succeeding and more ambitious ones. Since his return to Italy from exile he has written little; he has been most active as a wise and influential member of one branch of the Socialist Party. "A Handful of Blackberries," his only novel to be published here since "The Seed Beneath the Snow" in 1942, will appear this year.

While Italy did not develop a Fascist literature of apologia and celebration, and on the other hand could not develop one of topical satire and invective as long as the dictatorship lasted, we should recall that during those years most of her writers did manage to maintain what seems an essential premise for the existence of any sort of literary civilization: the sense that literature is one of the arts. By art I suppose we all mean not only something emphatically different from documentary information or propaganda but also something which, as a form of knowledge and a record of experience, is infinitely more relevant, subtle, and mature than those forms of communication; and also, incidentally, more entertaining. There is nothing exceptional about such notions yet I suppose Italian writers have in the ordinary practice of their craft implied them as clearly and naturally as anyone working today.

IN maintaining such artistic concepts of literature, the Italian counterparts of the "little magazines" obviously played their role. In the period following the First World War, besides the already mentioned 900, a considerable importance is attributed to the Roman *La Ronda*, whose function

was a sort of "call to order" in the name of classicism against the noisier and shallower varieties of the *avant garde* on the one side and literary commercialism on the other. Some of the principal exponents of a kind of literature which is most difficult to translate (because it depends on an especially intense and subtle use of linguistic effects) emerged from the Roman circle around that review—Emilio Cecchi, Vincenzo Cardarelli, Antonio Baldini, and the most classical of the recently translated novelists, Riccardo Bacchelli. There was formed, in that and other groups, a kind of *avant garde* which had no longer the aimless bombast of the "futurists" but had, instead, quite subdued and exclusive qualities.

This *avant garde*, especially in its poetic products but also in its prose and criticism, was often accused of ivory-tower preciousness, of lack of real content, of obscurity, of hermeticism. While Fascism lasted some of those accusations were more clearly suspect than they are in other countries, for the critic could conceal within them the recommendation that a specific, propagandistic political coloring be adopted by literature. This did not happen to any important extent, but it is only fair to say that in the peculiar situation of Italy the so-called "difficult" writing did contribute to the preservation of certain standards of artistic integrity at a time when language, style (and style is, in the last analysis, the concrete sign of a

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT No. 458

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 458 will be found in the next issue.

HTMHJX WZXLENXL H

XNPDEQZKHLF MUD KFYFE

RZKQX RHNTL MZLU

UZX XNAFEZDE.

—IDUK G. GDTTZKX.

Answer to Crypt No. 457

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moral attitude) were daily being degraded by hollow official rhetoric.

Although there is a tendency among the younger postwar writers to disregard their "little magazine" precursors, there can be no doubt about the spiritual and practical role they played in providing, if not a market, at least a meeting place and training ground. Another instance is that of *Solaria* published in the Twenties and Thirties in Florence (Italy, a recently united country, continues its vigorous provincial literary life which is not centralized as is the French), the review which later was transformed into the quarterly *Letteratura* and continues now as *Lettere e Arti*. For example, a writer like Vittorini, often cited among the representatives of the postwar revival, published his first stories in those early magazines, and also his first books, including "In Sicily": the magazines, following somewhat the example of the *Nouvelle Revue Française*, had a publishing firm attached, the typical "new writing" firm.

But other publishers as well, even among the most prominent and most commercially organized like Mondadori, had cordial relations with the *avant garde*. Mondadori's book series, *Lo Specchio*, is largely a new writing series. The distinction between the *avant garde* and other current literature is less sharp in Italy, perhaps, than anywhere else. One reason for this, of course, is also that what I call current literature does not have phenomenally high sales either and never represents a big commercial investment. Costs are much lower, too. In such a scantily industrialized literary scene there are no attempts at "producing" a writer the way studio publicity offices create a star. Perhaps the only relevant exception to this rule is Leo Longanesi, an extremely sharp and successful publisher (he published Berto's "The Sky is Red," a best-seller in Italy, and Flaiano's "Time to Kill," here translated as "The Short Cut"). Longanesi is also possibly the closest thing to an "editor," in the U. S. sense, that Italy has. In general, more scope is left to the Italian author to develop, undisturbed, his own intentions; after all *editore* in Italian simply means publisher, while the very concept of "editor" as literary hand and eye helping the author and representing the firm does not really exist.

THE smaller gap between the *avant garde* and current literature facilitates the existence of periodical anthologies of "new writing"; one of them is *Paragone*, published in Florence and resembling in shape the late *Horizon*;

another and bigger one, in fact one of really international scope, is the Italo-American *Botteghe Oscure* published in Rome.

If we keep this background in mind in considering the recent translations from the Italian, we see that we have here a number of novelists belonging to a long-neglected literature who not only now arouse a certain amount of curiosity and interest but also occasionally reach the best-seller lists and, in several instances, the inexpensive reprint circuit; and they are all writers whose attitude and formation have been artistic and not primarily commercial. At a time when some entertain doubts about the possibilities of literature's surviving as a popular art, this sign, within its limitations, can be taken as a positive portent.

If we look for the places, and for the training grounds, from which the new Italian writers emerge, there is another area we must watch besides the *avant garde* of the little magazines; in fact, a much wider one. This is comprised of a number of weekly magazines (like *L'Europeo* and *Il Mondo*), and by the *terza pagina*, or "third page," of the daily newspapers, traditionally devoted to literary articles and travel pieces. These institutions may have grown out of necessity; for obviously, Italian writers don't live on their books, and they must depend on newspapers and on periodicals that pay, when they don't depend on film scripts or (what is much rarer than in this country) on teaching. Whether the "third pages" and the weeklies grew out of necessity or out of public demand, or both, their literary consequences cannot be overestimated. The standards of a certain type of journalism are greatly raised. Novelists like Guido Piovene, Enrico Emanuelli, or Moravia himself have traveled broadly, and reported on their experiences in a literary tone which is acceptable to the better category of readers, which in fact contributes to the formation of such a category. Moravia's readers know that the *Corriere della Sera* brings them, along with the daily news, his short stories; and that *L'Europeo* brings them his weekly, extraordinarily intelligent film reviews. Flaiano, the novelist, is an editor of *Il Mondo* and its film critic. The daily *La Stampa* carries articles on American literature by Vittorini, on English literature by Mario Praz. The informality of the connection thus maintained by the writer with the public is indicated by a kind of half-literary, half-personal essay which is practically a specialty of the "third pages"; there are writers who keep a sort of public diary, like the novelist Vitaliano Brancati (whose

"Don Juan in Sicily" and "The Hand-some Antonio" are outstanding serio-comic works of recent years).

Examples could be multiplied at will. The weekly magazines are produced according to a formula that includes the article on current political news along with the short story, the society column (often written with obvious tongue-in-cheek) along with the foreign correspondent's reportage or, say, the "human-interest" record of a current trial. These weekly magazines are in rotogravure, about one third of their space occupied by very large and in varying degrees eye-catching or even "shocking" photographs. *Il Mondo* is the most sedate of them, but it has the same general format; and it is in this magazine that Italians, for instance, can read fairly frequently the prose of the nation's venerable philosopher Benedetto Croce. This seems on the whole a sign of vitality.

These magazines, and the "third pages," are then, in spite of a certain flamboyant appearance, *written* products: the use they make of language, the tradition they belong to, are literary. To give one example, the editor (or to use the Italian terminology, the "director") of the extremely popular *L'Europeo* is Arrigo Benedetti, himself a writer of very subtle works of fiction, a man whose origins are in the literary *avant garde*. Practically all Italian writers are connected with one or another of the weeklies and dailies, or with several of them. Eugenio Montale, regarded by many as the leading Italian poet, and by the philistines as the very essence of the ivory tower, is permanently employed by the daily *Corriere della Sera*. The "third page" breaks through the distinction between *avant garde* and popular writing; and taking an optimistic view of things, one cannot think of a better training ground for a type of writing that is both respectably artistic and capable of reaching a wide audience.

The danger, of course, is that the necessary pursuit of such more practical and ephemeral forms of litera-

ture may leave writers little time for the more durable and traditional ones, like the novel. Besides, there is a tendency now in Italy, as everywhere among the younger writers of "high-brow" origin, to take a sort of pride in commercial success; it is a kind of *revanche* against the accusations of ivory-tower obscurity and lack of practical sense which beset them in the past. In Italy this has been more obvious than elsewhere because it has coincided with the restitution of freedom to the writers to handle whatever themes they please, and with the consequent eagerness with which some of them devoted themselves (in stories, films, and most especially in the weekly magazines) to a certain type of "shocking" exposure of realities. The spectacles offered by their age and country were, to be sure, shocking enough and justified them fully; it is regrettable if those manners become mannerisms. But perhaps the "shocking" qualities of certain themes and techniques are the necessary spurious elements without which a literature remains unadvertised and unknown abroad. This is confirmed by the type of success that the recent Italian novels and films have had; Moravia is a serious artist, but there is no doubt that his best-selling success began the day people found out that his eighth novel was the autobiography of a prostitute. There are similar situations in the motion pictures; "Bitter Rice" was advertised, at least in Hollywood, on the basis of the heroine's figure and attire, and it achieved astounding commercial results; while a considerably better film like Germi's "Path of Hope" passed almost unnoticed.

As things now stand, the notion of literature as an art is far from having disappeared in Italy; but it may be seriously threatened by everyday hand-to-mouth necessities. We shall have new novels from Italy if writers have time to write them. As long as they do, it seems fairly certain that such novels will remain the more serious part of their activity. In fact, the echo of whatever international success these writers are having does not seem to represent a danger. In Rome last summer, in the offices of *Il Mondo*, I remember talking one evening with Ennio Flaiano and mentioning several reviews of his book in English which I had read; one of them, in an English magazine, especially enthusiastic. But since it happened that I had flown in from Los Angeles practically the day before, Flaiano seemed more interested to hear about Hollywood than about himself. As for the reviews of his book, he apparently had never seen or heard of them.

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. "Tom Jones," by Fielding. 2. Nora Helmer, in "A Doll's House," by Ibsen. 3. Andrew Undershaft, in "Major Barbara," by Shaw. 4. Harpagon, in "The Miser," by Molière. 5. Hermann, in "The Queen of Spades," by Pushkin. 6. Silas Lapham, in "The Rise of Silas Lapham," by Howells. 7. Isabel Archer, in "The Portrait of a Lady," by Henry James. 8. "Richard Cory," by E. A. Robinson. 9. "Silas Marner," by George Eliot. 10. Antonio, in "The Merchant of Venice," by Shakespeare.

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DOUBLE-CROSTIC NO. 940

Reg. U. S. Patent Office

By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

DEFINITIONS

WORDS

- A. German composer and musical director (1873-1916).
- B. Second word of the rallying cry of French Revolution.
- C. Worthless baubles.
- D. One of the spirits of Prospero ("The Tempest").
- E. Negro of a nation of western Nigeria; also their Sudanic language.
- F. Greek Astarte among Phoenicians and Canaanites.
- G. Plover of Europe, Asia, and northern Africa.
- H. Said; commonly called (French).
- I. The aloes of the Bible, now burned as a perfume by *Oriental*s.
- J. To handle hesitatingly.
- K. A leading character in Shakespeare's "Henry VIII."
- L. A character in "Uncle Tom's Cabin."
- M. To store for preservation or future use (2 wds.).
- N. Reputedly caricatured as Justice Shallow in Shakespeare's "Merry Wives of Windsor."

- $\overline{86}$ $\overline{125}$ $\overline{60}$ $\overline{111}$ $\overline{116}$
 $\overline{19}$ $\overline{97}$ $\overline{155}$ $\overline{4}$ $\overline{34}$ $\overline{167}$ $\overline{118}$
 $\overline{13}$ $\overline{104}$ $\overline{72}$ $\overline{124}$ $\overline{49}$ $\overline{143}$ $\overline{41}$
 $\overline{87}$ $\overline{3}$ $\overline{129}$ $\overline{14}$
 $\overline{74}$ $\overline{173}$ $\overline{79}$ $\overline{165}$
 $\overline{160}$ $\overline{26}$ $\overline{141}$ $\overline{170}$ $\overline{15}$ $\overline{123}$ $\overline{176}$ $\overline{112}$ $\overline{18}$
 $\overline{10}$ $\overline{146}$ $\overline{103}$ $\overline{68}$ $\overline{113}$ $\overline{64}$ $\overline{57}$
 $\overline{7}$ $\overline{63}$ $\overline{17}$
 $\overline{109}$ $\overline{59}$ $\overline{65}$ $\overline{84}$ $\overline{166}$ $\overline{70}$ $\overline{37}$ $\overline{27}$
 $\overline{135}$ $\overline{46}$ $\overline{163}$ $\overline{177}$ $\overline{44}$ $\overline{5}$
 $\overline{154}$ $\overline{43}$ $\overline{35}$ $\overline{76}$ $\overline{174}$ $\overline{110}$ $\overline{52}$ $\overline{147}$ $\overline{181}$
 $\overline{140}$ $\overline{39}$ $\overline{73}$ $\overline{88}$ $\overline{126}$
 $\overline{61}$ $\overline{169}$ $\overline{171}$ $\overline{128}$ $\overline{29}$ $\overline{122}$ $\overline{69}$
 $\overline{178}$ $\overline{33}$ $\overline{81}$ $\overline{157}$

DEFINITIONS

WORDS

- O. Editor of U. S. "Saturday Review."
- P. Author of "Ruy Blas", 1838.
- Q. Unrestrained.
- R. Mongol dynasty in China, 1280-1368.
- S. English-born U. S. painter of famous men, more than 2600 works, among them "Washington Crossing the Delaware", now in Boston Museum of Art.
- T. Hurriedly (Italian music dir.).
- U. The Mind as reason (philos.).
- V. Drama published at the age of eighty by author in Word P.
- W. A dial (astrol.).
- X. First name, original masculine star of "South Pacific".
- Y. A sailor's dance in duple measure.
- Z. Volume of lyric poems, by R. L. S. whose title was borrowed from Ben Jonson.
- Z1. Mountain peak in SW Colorado, 13,585 feet; or a higher one on Swiss-Italian border.
- Z2. Plunges or immerses in any liquid.

- | | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 145 | 58 | 134 | 56 | 82 | 25 | 42 |
| 94 | 117 | 127 | 179 | | | |
| 53 | 11 | 28 | 22 | 38 | 159 | 78 |
| 90 | 101 | 8 | 148 | | | |
| 136 | 71 | 107 | 151 | 99 | | |
| 131 | 16 | 31 | 66 | 77 | 156 | 115 |
| 100 | 114 | 133 | | | | |
| 161 | 172 | 23 | 45 | | | |
| 93 | 138 | 9 | 32 | 2 | 164 | 24 |
| 106 | 50 | 83 | | | | |
| 168 | 67 | 55 | 95 | 108 | 1 | 149 |
| 85 | 36 | | | | | |
| 91 | 47 | 144 | 30 | | | |
| 139 | 119 | 75 | 48 | 121 | 40 | 92 |
| 54 | | | | | | |
| 21 | 12 | 162 | 80 | 102 | 180 | 153 |
| 158 | 6 | 120 | | | | |
| 51 | 20 | 150 | 105 | 62 | 182 | 98 |
| 142 | 175 | 130 | | | | |
| 132 | 152 | 96 | 137 | 89 | 183 | |

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in, you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authorities for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).

										1	W	2	V	3	D	4	B	5	J	6	Z				7	H	8	R	9	V	10	G											
11	Q	12	Z	13	C	14	D					15	F	16	T					17	H	18	F	19	B				20	Z ¹	21	Z	22	Q	23	U	24	V					
25	O			26	F	27	I	28	Q	29	M			30	X	31	T					32	V	33	N	34	B	35	K	36	W					37	I						
38	Q	39	L	40	Y	41	C	42	O	43	K	44	J					45	U	46	J	47	X	48	Y				49	C	50	V	51	Z ¹	52	K							
53	Q	54	Y	55	W	56	O					57	G	58	O	59	I	60	A	61	M	62	Z ¹				63	H	64	G					65	I							
66	T	67	W	68	G					69	M	70	I	71	S					72	C	73	L	74	E				75	Y	76	K	77	T				78	G				
79	E	80	Z	81	N	82	O	83	V	84	I							85	W	86	A	87	D	88	L	89	Z ²				90	R	91	X	92	Y							
93	V	94	P	95	W	96	Z ²	97	B	98	Z ¹							99	S	100	T	101	R	102	Z				103	G	104	C	105	Z ¹	106	V	107	S					
108	W			109	I	110	K	111	A					112	F	113	G	114	T						115	T	116	A	117	P	118	B					119	Y	120	Z			
				121	Y	122	M	123	F	124	C	125	A					126	L	127	P	128	M	129	D	130	Z ¹				131	T	132	Z ²					133	T			
134	O	135	J	136	S									137	Z ²	138	V	139	Y	140	L	141	F	142	Z ¹	143	C				144	X					145	O	146	G	147	K	
148	R	149	W	150	Z ¹									151	S	152	Z ²	153	Z	154	K					155	B	156	T				157	N	158	Z	159	Q				160	F
161	U	162	Z					163	J	164	V	165	E	166	I					167	B	168	W	169	M	170	F							171	M	172	U	173	E				
174	K	175	Z ¹	176	F															177	J	178	N	179	P	180	Z	181	K	182	Z ¹	183	Z ²										

Solution of last week's Double-Croctic will be found on page 29 of this issue.

MARCH 29, 1952

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