

slaves, diseased, destitute, but happy in the paradise for which only they are fitted, physically and psychologically. —THOMAS E. COONEY.

CAPRESE CLASSIC: Norman Douglas, who loved Capri and wrote of it in "South Wind" nearly forty years ago, said, shortly before his death, "I thought to have closed up my little writing shop for good and all." Someone showed him a portfolio of pictures of the island by Islay Lyons and he agreed to write the accompanying text for this "Footnote on Capri" (McBride \$2.75). Mr. Douglas rambles through any number of other accounts of Capri from the historical side, the botanical side, the geological side, now agreeing with the experts and now taking issue with them. The result is a discursive memoir on the place followed by a tart postscript wherein Douglas wondered why his quiet isle was becoming a new Hollywood "disgorging a rabble of flashy trippers" in Bikini bathing suits. There follow the photos, which are pleasant, undistinguished, and printed on coated stock. —H. S.

SOLDIERS' WILES: In England, where societies grow like hedgerows, there is a group called the RAF Escaping Society. Its main purpose is not mutual flattery, but the aid of the civilians and partisans still alive who helped RAF men escape the enemy in the last war. Paul Brickhill, a member himself, has written up the adventures of seven fellow members in "Escape or Die" (Norton's \$2.95), a book that proves once again that the English are the toughest elastic made.

The title story is about Edward McCormac, who was impounded and tortured in Singapore by the Japanese. He escaped with fifteen men, and five months later he and one other man landed over two thousand miles away in Australia. If that doesn't impress you, there is Anthony Snell, a twenty-one-year-old fighter pilot who was shot down over Sicily, resisted capture for a few days, and was then caught by the Germans, who tried to execute him as a spy. He escaped with seven bullets and fifteen grenade fragments in him, was caught again, and finally made Switzerland several weeks later by jumping off a hospital train headed for Germany. Cyril Rofe had to escape twice before he eventually made his way through Poland to Russia, where he returned to England by way of Murmansk. The last piece in the book was written by Harry Wheeler, who avoided certain execution by staying, through trickery, in a hospital in Paris until the Allied vanguard arrived. Because Wheeler wrote it himself, it is the most exciting selection Mr. Brickhill gives us.

The author has written his book simply and well, but perhaps these stories are too fragmentary as they now stand. The best of the eight pieces deserve to be expanded into full-length accounts, written by the Society members. Then, the results could be permanently included in the peculiar and distinguished literature of the escape, in company with such memorable efforts as Mr. Brickhill's earlier "The Great Escape," Eric Williams's "The Wooden Horse," and Rene Belbenoit's "Dry Guillotine."

—WHITNEY BALLIETT.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	Crime, Place, and Sleuth	Summing Up	Verdict
BLACK WIDOW <i>Patrick Quentin</i> (Simon & Schuster: \$2.50)	Peter Duluth, N. Y. drama producer, finds dead gal on hands with wife far away; has tough time.	Personnel not convincing; situation implausible; solution good as could be expected.	Doesn't jell
BLONDES DIE YOUNG <i>Bill Peters</i> (Dodd Mead: \$2.50)	Bill Canilli, Phil. eye, falls for Chi. gal, finds her dead, wreaks vengeance.	Hoods and skirts jostle each other as blood, rum, flow in buckets.	New toughie entry
THE CURIOUS CRIME <i>A. E. Martin</i> (Crime Club: \$2.50)	Nephew fingered when aunt is strangled; Australian authorities worry over this one.	Interested parties take turns telling stories (à la the late Browning).	Not too effective
THE QUEEN'S AWARDS <i>Ellery Queen, Editor</i> (Little Brown: \$2.75)	Seventh series under same management—a fixture, and a sound one; sixteen stories in present package.	Names run gamut from brand-newcomers to old China hands.	Good
PRISONER'S BASE <i>Rex Stout</i> (Viking: \$2.50)	Nooses cut off three gals' breaths before Nero Wolfe snags roping artist.	Archie Goodwin and cops work hard to bring this one off.	Good

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THE FINE ARTS

FROM DAVID TO DELACROIX

IT SEEMS astonishing that so little comprehensive, critical material has been published in English lately about French art of the first half of the nineteenth century. Widespread interest in impressionism and post-impressionism, not to mention an engulfing enthusiasm for modern art, has tended to focus research on more recent periods. Nevertheless, the painting created in France between roughly 1780 and the advent of Courbet is of extraordinary interest, both in itself and because of its effect on later artists. This painting is dealt with by the new edition of Walter Friedlaender's "David to Delacroix," first issued in German in 1930 and now admirably translated by Robert Goldwater.*

The book is short but remarkable for the conviction with which it handles its subject. Dr. Friedlaender is a man of immense erudition. He does

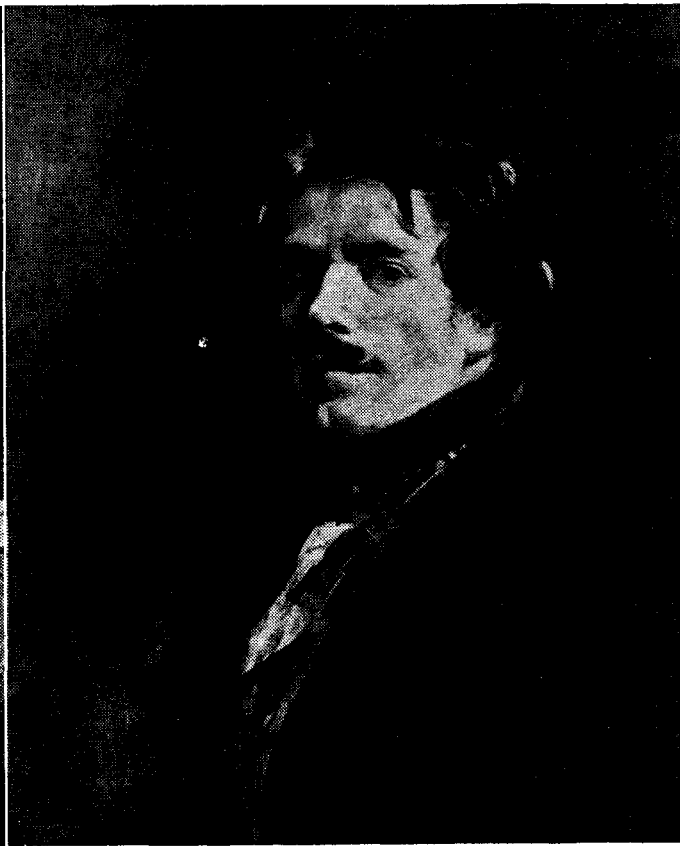
not allow this fact to entangle him in the brambles of literary conjecture that have proved tormenting to many other scholars of the period. He suggests early that the comforting antitheses between "classic" and "romantic" are often imprecise and naive when applied to painting. And, while not neglecting important analogies between the visual imagery of a given decade and that decade's poetic, philosophical, and political currents, he keeps his eye resolutely on stylistic developments. The roots of these developments are deeper in the past than generally supposed; they are also intertwined, as this authoritative book makes apparent, to a degree which must make the pat genealogists of art history despair.

By insisting on contradictions within the art-historical sweep, by confining the discussion to painting's intrinsic vocabulary primarily, Dr. Friedlaender does much to put our knowledge of his subject on a firm basis. This is a book for those inter-

ested in art. Their number is smaller than they or we suppose. But lest I make Dr. Friedlaender's approach sound pedantic, let me say at once that his book is enlivened by acute phrasing. Could any description of a certain kind of late-eighteenth-century French painting be more lively than this? "Everything is haunted by an effete and washed-out rococo which, in ridding itself of overt eroticism, had produced a more painful *volupté décente*, a kind of lascivious chastity. . . . Greuze's innocently voluptuous young maidens are typical examples of this sort of erotic prudery."

Against the decadent late rococo style Jacques Louis David eventually rebelled. Yet David's conversion to classicism was neither so abrupt nor so dogmatic as we sometimes think and, as Dr. Friedlaender points out, the master was influenced by forces alien to the Greeks and the Romans: "Long before the German 'Nazarenes,' David admired Fra Angelico and the sculpture of the Middle Ages. Not only had he studied Poussin, the Bolognese, and Caravaggio, but in his teaching he also praised the artists of an opposite tendency—the Flemish, and above all Rubens, whom he went to Flanders especially to study." Thus we see David, in predilection and training at least, as a distinguished eclectic whose Spartanism has been exaggerated because of its suit-

*DAVID TO DELACROIX. By Walter Friedlaender. Translated by Robert Goldwater. Harvard University Press. \$6.



The painter David, by Langlois, and self-portrait of Delacroix.

—The Louvre.