

TRAVELER'S TALES

NEW WORLD CASANOVA: Louis Juchereau de St. Denis, born in Canada, joined the Iberville expedition to Louisiana and two years later was a member of Bienville's exploration party up the Red River. He is now the subject of Ross Phares's "Cavalier in the Wilderness" (Louisiana State University Press, \$3.50). During the next few years Louis engaged in trading, both merchantile and political, along the Texas (that is, Spanish) frontier, was taken by the Spaniards, and put his captivity to good purpose by courting the commandant's daughter. Theirs was a romantic, not a political, marriage. For much of the rest of his life (he died in 1744) St. Denis made his headquarters principally at Natchitoches (pronounce "Nakatosh," please). History—French and Spanish no less than American—has treated him as everything "from patriot to traitor, from saint to scoundrel," declares Professor Phares, who "sees him as a character of rather consistently fixed purposes and principles" and submits a lively, straightforward narrative in support of his case.

—JOHN T. WINTERICH.

LIT'RY SIGHTS: Readers who thumb for a ride will enjoy the affectionate journey Frank Swinnerton is conducting in "The Bookman's London" (Doubleday, \$3.50.) Local color and topography, writers' personalities and publishers, literary homes and haunts—these are the main interests of his informal meanderings through the space of London and the time between Elizabeths I and II. Although he writes with charm and accuracy about the literary men of earlier times, so have many other commentators; the chief value of his book lies rather in his first-hand reminiscences, or those he has heard first-hand, about writers and publishers. His position as writer and editor, along with his keen memory and enthusiasm, are all in his favor, as he shows throughout the very readable book. Some of his critical judgments may seem odd—his high opinion of W. W. Jacobs, for example (whose reputation today rests on a monkey's paw). But there is no harm in our being reminded that literary fashions, like skirt lengths, have their ups and downs. The great number of fresh illustrations in the book, including end-papers, helps to invoke the people and places sketched expertly in prose. A few years ago in these pages I greeted a collection of Mr. Swinnerton's essays with a loud razz; I am happy now to sound a loud huzza.

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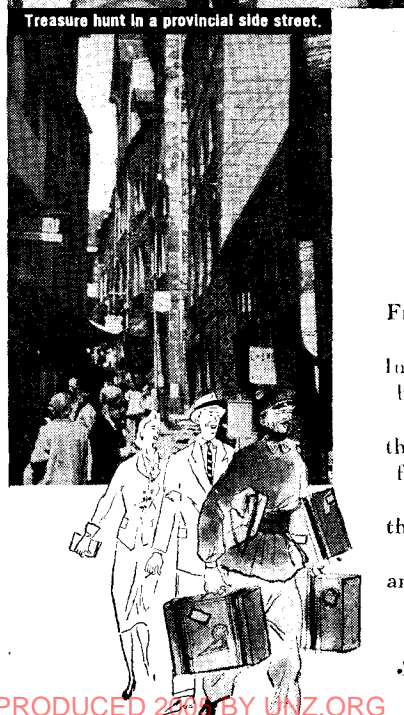
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THE BIRTH AND DEATH OF THE SUN <i>George Gamow</i> (Mentor: 35¢)	An authority on stellar evolution outlines in simple terms the nature of our universe as it is revealed through the latest discoveries and theories of atomic physics.	A first-rate job of popularizing scientific scholarship.
THE CAPTAIN <i>Russell Thacher</i> (Pocket: 25¢)	Realistic story about a youthful LST captain headed for a Japanese island-fortress with a boatload of troubles.	Workmanlike novel that should appeal to fans of "The Caine Mutiny."
THE CARDINAL <i>Henry Morton Robinson</i> (Pocket: 50¢)	A long biographical novel about Stephen Fermoye, born in a Boston suburb of working-class parents, who rises from parish priest to prince of the Roman Catholic Church.	Colorful subject and skilfully handled narrative combine to make absorbing reading. Some Protestant reviewers objected to the exposition of Catholic doctrine; some Catholic reviewers felt that complex subjects were handled too glibly.
THE FOREST AND THE FORT <i>Hervey Allen</i> (Dell: 35¢)	Salathiel Sabine, captured and raised as a chief's son by the Pennsylvania Shawnee tribe, returns to the white man's world, but discovers, during the siege of Fort Pitt in 1763, that his heart belongs to the red men.	Mr. Allen's poetic style and deep knowledge of history and humankind applied to a unique character and a series of exciting events results in a commendable novel.
THE GOLDEN ASS OF APULEIUS <i>Walter O'Meara</i> (Pocket: 35¢)	A fine new translation by Robert Graves of the second century A.D. satirical adventure tale about a young man who is accidentally metamorphosed into an ass.	A classic of ribaldry from which Boccaccio and others borrowed.
THE GRAND PORTAGE <i>Walter O'Meara</i> (Bantam: 35¢)	Spurned by his Canadian lady-love, young Dan Harmon becomes a Northwest fur trader in the 1800's. Eventually he overcomes his reluctance to the ways of the frontier and marries a beautiful half-breed.	Fine, moving chronicle that approaches real distinction in latter chapters.
IVANHOE <i>Sir Walter Scott</i> (Pocket: 35¢)	Ivanhoe, back from the Crusades, clears the way for the return to England of King Richard I, in a tale filled with knights and fair ladies, conspiracies and counter-attacks, tournaments and castle-stormings.	Attractive edition containing the complete text of this stirring romantic classic.
THE ROMAN SPRING OF MRS. STONE <i>Tennessee Williams</i> (Signet: 25¢)	A wealthy, aging American actress adrift in presentday Rome, comes a cropper with a handsome young gigolo. The distinguished playwright's first essay at the novel.	The manner is admirable, the substance somewhat repelling. A failure as a novel, but interesting nonetheless.
SOUTH SEA TALES <i>Jack London</i> (Lion: 25¢)	Eight short tales of white men and natives laid in the early years of this century.	Good yarns, though not London at his best.
THORNDIKE-BARNHART HANDY POCKET DICTIONARY (PermaBooks: 35¢)	An abridged version of the "Thorndike-Barnhart Comprehensive Desk Dictionary," containing 36,000 entries, guides to grammatical usage, forms of address, etc.	If you've need for a good pocket-sized dictionary, this should do the trick.
THE WITCH DIGGERS <i>Jessamyn West</i> (Bantam: 35¢)	A "poor farm" in southern Indiana where her father is the superintendent provides a Gothic-like background for this story of Cate, who is undergoing the tortures of young love.	Written with the ear of a gifted poet, and the hand of a skilled craftsman.

—RAYMOND WALTERS, JR.