

FICTION

(Continued from page 23)

sion into the psychology of a sadist, "Brighton Rock." This is unfortunate, since Mr. Hamilton lacks Mr. Greene's ability to evoke the chilly feeling of evil. He does, however, have a nice tight sense of melodrama and spreads forth his horrors with a nice light touch. "The West Pier" is the opening volume in a series to deal with the life of Ernest Ralph Gorse, a fictional creation dreamed up by Mr. Hamilton to trouble your sleep. Before getting into the first adventure which is the meat of this volume Mr. Hamilton spends quite a lot of time filling us in on the early background of Gorse. It seems that even as a child he had a turn for depravity, though not in the forms he was later to develop—torturing mice, tying little girls up in sheds, the usual kid stuff. His first big adventure comes when, just out of school, he ensnares the affections of a little shop girl at Brighton and sets out to get away from her, her small hoard of savings. How he does so is Mr. Hamilton's story and it is filled out with glimpses of all sorts of nasty perversities that make up his hero's character. These will presumably develop into full-sized perversities as his saga unfolds. Meanwhile, Ernest Ralph Gorse is off to a good start and we can look forward to his career in crime with anticipation.

—EDWARD J. FITZGERALD.

FRASER YOUNG'S
LITERARY CRYPT No. 488

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 488 will be found in the next issue.

FP AFBNC DRGNB

MRAKLHO AFBNC TLB

MRAKLHO NHRQXT. T. Z.

WTRCNLQ

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 487

All are lunatics, but he who can analyze his delusion is called a philosopher.

—AMBROSE BIERCE



—Jacket design for "Dear Emily."

FEMME FATALE: The Emily of Constantine Fitzgibbon's "Dear Emily" (Simon & Schuster, \$3) is by no means a dear. The word is used in the conventional or theatrical sense. Actually Emily is a real nasty piece, and Mr. Fitzgibbon's purpose is to dissect her with sharpness, etch her in acid, and have you see her for just the nasty witch she is. He does this through telling us the story of her relations with two husbands and one lover and one son. Messed them all up she did, though the lover and the first husband were sufficiently self-centered in their own way not to show too many scars. The other husband, who had been something of a genius, she'd driven to drink and worse and that's what she was going to do with the son. Thoroughly unpleasant, as you can see.

This is the kind of portraiture that young writers—particularly British—frequently indulge in at least once. It's completely pointless except as an exercise, but can often be entertaining. This one is mildly entertaining, though at the end you may wonder why Mr. Fitzgibbon wasted all his time and words to no purpose. You will also be annoyed by the way he switches you around in time. But maybe that, too, was for the exercise.

—E. J. F.

THE BAD LUCK OF THE IRISH: It would seem that what happened to Lucian Brewse Burke during the week's holiday he began on his forty-third birthday could happen only with the palliate hilarity of the Irish. He finds himself this day a failure, a leaf for burning, a petty official in a dull Irish village, still defending his "breeding" and his Greek scholar training and muttering anti-clerical and anti-American sentiments. And almost before he knows it he is suddenly, in a whiskey-singing montage, involved with the lives and failures of some old

friends and countrymen: Frank Peebles, failure as a painter and as a suicide, walking to Sligo to Yeats's funeral; Bob McMunn, the county engineer, leading a life of quiet desperation with a wife whose beauty has gone to pot; Senator Trefoil, who remembers his rebel days now from the side of reaction; Doctor Tullabawn, who nurses with one hand what he knocks down with the other; and whining Lorcan O'Friel, who is killed finally in a barroom brawl and buried with hypocrisy.

This slightly mad pack careens across Ireland fighting with themselves and each other until at last Lucian is left alone with Theodora Conroy, an old love, who turns down his proposition. But on his return to work Lucian is shot saving one shilling and eight-pence from a Revolutionary Army raider. For this he is laughed at by his superiors and admired by the raider who, because he claims to recognize good breeding, presents Lucian with a pack of Gold Flake cigarettes.

All of this is related in Merwyn Wall's "Leaves for Burning" (Devlin-Adair, \$3) with the humor of a wake and perhaps the reason it seems it could only happen among the melancholy Irish is that the book reminds me of a watered-down version of the travels of Leopold Bloom and Stephen Dedalus.

—EDWARD PARONE.

AFRICAN MAGIC: Africa is the setting for Christine Garnier's "Fetish" (Putnam, \$3), a tense little tragedy about a doomed love of a Negro nurse for a French colonial official. Doéllé, the nurse, had been the mistress of Dr. Flavien before he imported his wife, Christine, to the colony. Then Flavien, infatuated with the fair Christine, threw over Doéllé. Her sufferings, her attempted revenge, and her final resignation are the story frame on which Mme. Garnier spins out her story of the conflict between the two races. It is a story told in the first person by Doéllé, and while it cannot be said that the author contributes much real understanding to the basic problem, she does provide some nice perceptions into some of its manifestations. This is, the publishers tell us, Mme. Garnier's sixth novel although the first to be translated into English. (The job was done by Naomi Walford.) Her simplicity of style is a real asset, though she betrays some awkwardness in handling the mechanics of her first-person approach, particularly when she has to have something happen away from the presence of the narrator.

—E. J. F.

ROGUES AND REBELS: Robert Neill has supplied plenty of seventeenth-century atmosphere, lots of engaging

characters who talk seventeenth-century dialogue, and a sturdy if somewhat over-complicated plot in *"Traitor's Moon"* (Doubleday, \$3.50). The plot has to do with a dashing young clockmaker, John Leyburne, who gets smitten with Penelope Langley and before he knows it finds himself embroiled with papists, conspirators, and

plotting rebels. How he saves the papists from the persecuting rogues, outwits the rebels, and, of course, gets the girl is Mr. Neill's tale. He is perhaps a shade too leisurely in its telling for some tastes, but that gives him time to get in the period atmosphere, which he makes surprisingly interesting. It also gives him time to develop

Your Literary I.Q.

By Howard Collins

MIND YOUR P'S & Q'S

This odd assortment of characters (contributed by Margaret Thomsen Raymond, of Burlington, Iowa), like Chaucer's pilgrims, have common ends. In this case, their front ends. For the first or last name of each begins with a P or Q. Allowing five points for each correct answer, a score of sixty is par, seventy is very good, and eighty or better is excellent. Answers on page 48.

1. P.....
She tricked a king into believing her master to be the rich Marquis of Carabas and won him a princess for his bride.
2. Q.....
A Polynesian prince who sank his harpoon through four feet of blubber to the vitals of a whale.
3. P.....
His beloved friends offered to die in his stead and so saved both their lives.
4. Q.....
"I wash, wring, brew, bake, scour, dress meat and drink, make beds, and do all myself."
5. P.....
He believed that "All is for the best in this best of all possible worlds."
6. Q.....
Inspector father, detective son, and double-jointed author.
7. P.....
The gates of hell itself opened to let her out.
8. Q.....
A cripple who dominated a cathedral.
9. P.....
Swiss metaphysician who kept a small devil prisoner in the pommel of his sword.
10. P..... & Q.....
Bosom friends, one an idealist, the other an earthy realist.
11. P..... Q.....
The very embodiment of evil—or perhaps only a figment of a governess' imagination.
12. P..... Q.....
His weapon against an armless pirate was an alarm clock.
13. P..... Q.....
Sitting at the clavier, he made a song to beauty.
14. P..... Q.....
A hideous dwarf, cunning and malicious, who ate hard-boiled eggs, shell and all, for breakfast.
15. P.....
With the little red button on top.
16. P..... Q.....
Who killed John Keats? "I!" ... 'Twas one of my feats."
17. P.....
She let us in for lots of troubles—and a ray of hope.
18. Q.....
A Scottish guardsman, who saved his King's life in a boar hunt and won the hand of the Countess of Groye.
19. P.....
Beloved of Francesca, one of the sweet unhappy lovers whom Dante met in Hell.
20. Q.....
Aztec god, whose emblem is a trogon, still shown on the coinage of Guatemala.

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