

# TRADE

# Winds

**PADDINGTON EAST**, the terribly clever young book reviewer for the terribly clever weekly *Smart People*, concluded his column with a note on Thomas Pringle's new mystery story. "Tastes in murder stories," noted Mr. East, "have changed five times since Mr. Pringle first began grinding out his



two contributions a year, and since Mr. Anthony Bump began publishing them—but you'd never guess it from the latest exhibit, 'The Case of the Unstriped Zebra.' Here we have not only the same old plot, the same old clichés, the same old worn-out characters—but the English, believe it or not, is even worse than usual. If we excuse Thomas Pringle for the obvious reason that he is in his dotage, what shall we say for Mr. Bump, the publisher of this garbage? Obviously, there are still a few filthy dollars to be ground out of Grade-D whodunits of this type, or the cagey Bump would have been out from under long ago. So long as the publishing business is in the hands of venal, money-grabbing vultures of his description, so long will true literature in America languish...."

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Carter, head of the accounting department of Anthony Bump & Company, put the folders containing the firm's six-month royalty statements into the safe with a heavy sigh. "Mr. Bump is losing his grip," he told his secretary. "There was a day when he really watched his business, and a clunk like old Thomas Pringle would have been dropped from the list so fast he wouldn't have known what hit him. Now Bump has too many other interests, I guess. The last five Pringle books have lost money. The newest one didn't sell two thousand copies. And now even the quarter reprint houses won't touch him. He's through—and everybody realizes it but our precious Mr. Bump. 'Who knows, Carter,' he tells me with a silly smile, 'maybe the next one will hit the jackpot again.' Likely story! What this house needs is new editors—and new blood at the top!"

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Dunkerville is two full hours from New York on the rickety old Putnam

Division, and Anthony Bump was so tired when he arrived that he scarcely could lift the six bottles of Scotch he had bought on the way to the station. "For your birthday, Tom," he cried cheerily, pulling himself together with a mighty effort as he saw Pringle waiting for him by the dilapidated Chevvy. "Very good of you," conceded Pringle grumpily, as he reached for the bottles. "I hope you remembered my partiality for Ballantine's. And don't think that's going to get you off the hook for the terrible job you did on my last book!"

All the way up to the house Pringle enlarged upon Bump's deficiencies as a publisher. No publicity; three miserable ads in the *Times*, *Tribune*, and *Saturday Review*; wrong binding; wrong jacket—wrong everything, in fact. "I've stuck to you for sentiment's sake," he concluded, "but I'm no spring chicken any more, and two other houses are making mighty tempting offers. Next time you're going to have to handle me personally, Tony, or else...."

"Maybe you're right," agreed Bump soberly. "Now put the car away and let me say hello to your good wife, Sarah. We can discuss the next manuscript after dinner."

Sarah Pringle was waiting for Bump in the kitchen. Tears sprang into her eyes when she saw him, and she buried her head in the folds of his tweed coat. "Oh, Tony," she wailed. "You won't give up on him now! Promise me you won't. We have so little saved! That six or seven hundred dollars he makes twice a year out of these horrible pot-boilers he sends you not only enables us to keep this house and the car, but lets him hold up his head as a live, famous author before all the townsfolk here."

"I know, I know," said the embarrassed Tony Bump. "And stop worrying. I'll publish him until he stops writing. Now wipe your eyes. I hear him coming."

"It won't be long, Tony," she promised. "Each one is harder and harder for him. But if you ever reject one, he'll die. I'm counting on you!"

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Bump took the last train down. Pringle gave him the new manuscript at the station. "I tell you again," he said before he drove off, "this is positively the last book I offer your house unless you get up on your toes and give it the promotion it deserves."

The eleven-ten was forty minutes late. The station master, who read Homer and Plato in the original Greek, and who recognized Bump from his picture, said, "I couldn't help hearing that old fraud sounding off. I know it's none of my business, Mr. Bump, but couldn't you save money by putting him on a pension and keeping that junk he writes on ice? And think of the abuse you'd avoid from smart-alec critics like that fellow East...."

Anthony Bump smiled weakly. "There are still a few angles of the publishing business," he said, "that even our Mr. East fails to comprehend."

And then, in the cold, badly lit station, just before midnight, with eighty miles to ride before he got home to New York, this venal, money-grubbing vulture closed his eyes wearily, and fell into a fitful slumber.

**BACK TO THE LISTS** come two important novelists who have been missing too long: Walter D. Edmonds, with "The Boyds of Black River" (Dodd, Mead: February 28), and Richard Wright, with "The Outsider" (Harper: March 18) . . . . . Quentin Reynolds's "I, Willie Sutton" (February 25) is the inside story of the man who robbed banks in the mornings, escaped from jails in the afternoons, and studied classics in the evenings. . . . The first entirely new Arnold Toynbee book in over a decade, "The World and the West," is promised by Oxford for March 26. . . . The late Alva Johnston's "The Legendary Mizners," dealing with socialite architect Addison and his rascally but irrepressible brother Wilson, is due via Farrar, Straus & Young on March 19. Clark Gable is championing at the bit to play Addison on the screen—a role that Hollywoodites agree would provide his greatest field day since his swash-buckling portrayal of Rhett Butler. A highlight of the Alva Johnston book is the chapter on the fabulous Florida



real-estate boom of the Twenties. . . . If the ghost towns and mining camps of the early West are your dish, keep your eyes peeled for Muriel Sibell Wolle's "The Bonanza Trail." The Indiana University Press has scheduled it for June. . . . Richard Armour suggests a new name for writer's cramp: authoritis. I'll make rheum for it. . . . Bill Doudna, of the Wisconsin State

Journal, wonders, "With all the gags current about 'Sironia, Texas,' has no one revised the oldie about the midget who committed suicide by jumping



off a copy of 'Anthony Adverse'?'... They have now.

**HEROINE OF THE MONTH** on Publishers' Row is Virginia Kirkus, the clever gal who put the finger on a plagiarist who sold a word-for-word copy of an eight-year-old book as an original manuscript to Little, Brown & Company. In case you missed the story in the daily papers, the culprit was a fellow named Robert E. Preyer, Jr., and since he's already serving a hitch in the Ohio State Penitentiary, there's not much anybody can do to him. He called his novel "Position Unknown," and Little, Brown liked it well enough to advance him \$600 upon signature of a contract. Miss Kirkus, who reads about a thousand books a year and remembers every one of them, smelled a rat as soon as she began skimming through a set of advance galleys. "Position Unknown" was a dead steal from Ernest Gann's "Island in the Sky," published by Viking in 1944. Little, Brown stopped publication of their new "discovery" in the nick of time. Sympathetic fellow publishers mopped their brows and reflected that the same thing could happen to any one of them—at any time.

**TWO OF THE THREE** National Book Awards this year were genuine surprises. It was expected that Archibald MacLeish would win the poetry award, but anybody who had been willing to bet that Hemingway's "The Old Man and the Sea" would be nosed out by Ralph Ellison's "Invisible Man" and that Bernard DeVoto's "Course of Empire" would win the nod over Ben Thomas's "Abraham Lincoln" and Whittaker Chamber's "Witness" could have gotten odds of about fifty to one. The selections, however, are sound, defensible, and a shot in the arm for the book business in general.

The National Book Awards, in their fourth year, have come into their own. With the exception of the Nobel Prize and possibly the languishing Pulitzer nominations, they already get more countrywide attention than all the other literary contests and medal bestowals put together.

—BENNETT CERF.

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# 1953 NATIONAL BOOK AWARD GOLD MEDALS

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## *FICTION*

- **RALPH ELLISON** for **INVISIBLE MAN**

## *NON-FICTION*

- **BERNARD DeVOTO** for **COURSE OF EMPIRE**

## *POETRY*

- **ARCHIBALD MacLEISH** for **COLLECTED POEMS**  
1917 - 1952
- 

*The winner in each field was selected by the following judges:*

### **FICTION**

Saul Bellow  
Martha Foley  
Irving Howe  
Howard Mumford Jones  
Alfred Kazin

### **NON-FICTION**

Francis Biddle  
Julian P. Boyd  
Marchette Chute  
Ralph L. Rusk  
George N. Shuster

### **POETRY**

Leonie Adams  
John Malcolm Brinnin  
Howard Moss  
Oscar Williams  
William Carlos Williams

- The National Book Award is an annual event in which the American book industry has united to honor American authors.





—United Press Photo.

The Trumans, making their final White House exit, greet the Eisenhowers before the inauguration—"public show of good nature."

## *The Trumans Leave the White House*

JOHN MASON BROWN

"I AM just Mr. Truman private citizen, now."

In response to cries of "We want Harry," he had come out of Dean Acheson's Georgetown house to speak to the three hundred people, old and young, rich and poor, white and colored, but most of them misty-eyed, who had gathered there to say good-bye to him.

Twenty minutes earlier a red light at Seventh and D Streets had abruptly reminded those of us following him that Mr. Truman was no longer President. For the first time in nearly eight years an automobile in which he was riding had had to stop for traffic. There were other such stops before he and his little motorcade reached the Acheson home, and on the way other reminders.

Secret Service men, though attending him, were not clustered around Mr. Truman's car. No police escort cleared his way. Few among the hundreds of thousands who a short hour and a half before had waved and called to him, as he rode to the Capitol with General Eisenhower in a black Lincoln convertible, recognized him in the limousine which carried him and his family to the Achesons'

for lunch. Two or three motorists, also going about their private business, even tried to cut into the motorcade as it neared Georgetown, not realizing it was a motorcade and unaware of Mr. Truman's presence.

The listening and the seeing world had heard and watched the proceedings just completed in the Capitol Plaza. No ceremonies which elevate mortals to power are more impressive in their pageantry than these time-honored rites in their simplicity. Compared to the medieval color and pomp of a coronation, they are as plain as the clothes Ben Franklin wore at Louis XVI's court. The spectacle of an inauguration is not a show of wealth or might or temporal grandeur. It is a reaffirmation of principles in which simple dignity replaces ostentation and is in itself a display.

The man driving through Washington unnoticed had ridden up to the Capitol as President of the United States, possessed of all the rights and powers of that office. When he appeared on the temporary platform shortly after noon the Color Guard had raised its flags in his honor and he had been greeted by "Hail to the Chief." Just before he left, less than

an hour later, he had heard those familiar strains again. This time, however, the scarlet-coated Marine Band was saluting another Chief.

During that hour, against the background of the Capitol with its dome topped by the statue of Freedom, America had demonstrated its beliefs and aspirations in ways movingly American. "The Star-Spangled Banner" had been sung by a Negro woman. A Catholic archbishop, a rabbi, and a Protestant bishop had offered prayers for this land, its citizens, its new Government, and especially its new President, beseeching God, in the rabbi's words, to "keep him with great kindness" and permit us as a people "to walk always in the dignity of free men."

The new Vice President had been sworn in. So had the new President, who was as visibly moved as were his wife and the thousands on hand to watch him. Mr. Truman, sitting in front of our other ex-President, Mr. Hoover, had listened intently to President Eisenhower as he delivered his inaugural address. The actual transfer of power from Truman to Eisenhower had taken less than a minute and required a mere thirty-five words in an