

being populated by believable people, the novels of Mailer, Jones, and Wouk have that other essential of good fiction, narrative power.

"Far from the Customary Skies" is easy to lay aside. It never seems to move forward; it only grinds. What's more, it is often extremely tiring to read, partly because Mr. Eyster has a fondness for sentences that are as backward and sometimes as pretentious as those that often sprinkle the pages of *Time* magazine. "Ahead," writes Mr. Eyster, "lay Guadalcanal and Tulagi." "This then," he continues, "was the Solomon Islands."

His novel has almost all of the characters we have come to expect in a novel concerned with the Second World War. There is the boy from Brooklyn; he dies. There is the frustrated college man who made an unfortunate marriage; he dies. There is the gentle, ambitious, small-town (and/or farm) boy; he dies. There is the wisecracking gambler, the good-guy lieutenant, the bad-guy, and others equally familiar, including Malone, the excessively competent and unbelievably brave Malone who is also a brute and a cad.

However, there are three completely brilliant passages, one about eleven men given the job of cutting loose from a Jap-held island the drums used for fixed artillery ranges, a second describing the change of morale on the *Dreher* when the men go stale, a third, much shorter, almost too-abrupt account of the sinking.

Mr. Eyster is a first-rate naval historian; he is not yet a good novelist.

Saga of the Daubneys

THE GREEN MAN. By Storm Jameson. New York: Harper & Bros. 762 pp. \$3.95.

By HARVEY CURTIS WEBSTER

IT is possible to call Storm Jameson's "The Green Man" a sensational novel. Matthew Daubney, one of the chief characters, cannot go to sleep at night unless he has used a woman as a sedative. His son, Mark, is a traitor who hates Jews and approves oligarchs. Matthew's illegitimate daughter, Liz, does a lot she shouldn't before she dies in an automobile accident. What may be called a scandalous interest is added by the inclusion of supporting characters that suggest Auden, Bevan, Orwell, and a good many notable Englishmen of our time.

It is impossible to call Storm Jameson's "The Green Man" a sensational novel accurately. Those who have read her admirable "Europe to Let" and "Cloudless May," to mention only two of her twenty-seven good books, know she writes both seriously and well. Though Miss Jameson is neither a fashionable nor a tremendously popular novelist, she has always preserved her integrity and constantly improved her craftsmanship. She writes to illuminate, not to accumulate.

"The Green Man" is a novel in the tradition of Galsworthy and Bennett. Mainly it is about the Daubneys—

Matthew, Richard, and Andrew—their descendants, and friends. It is a family chronicle and a history of the Thirties and Forties. It is also, and more significantly, a mature exploration of one of the central problems of our times: Can the tradition of materialism live compatibly with the tradition that claims right is not might?

The novel's most sympathetic and deeply probed character, Richard Daubney, is an anarchist-idealist. He believes in both people and the people, yet he wants to preserve the older way of living well in one place rather than the newer way of living conspicuously wherever wealth and virtue are equated. He is constantly in conflict with his brother, Matthew, who thinks nothing matters as much as the corporations that should control the nation and considers the people pawns to be manipulated without humane consideration. As one might expect in a realistic novel about the past two decades, Matthew rises and Richard falls. As one might not expect in a novel primarily driving for popularity, Richard, the failure, and those who are like him, seem admirable while Matthew and those who succeed with him seem despicable—though understandable.

Miss Jameson knows her period and her characters. She makes vivid the intellectuals who dramatized the hoping despair of the Marxist Thirties and the proud hopelessness of the Age of Anxiety. Without anger, softness, or sentimentality, she portrays the desperate, the crass, the naive. Mark Daubney, a promising boy made into a Nazi by his sense of guilt, Andrew Daubney, who preferred the simple life to the intellectual and material life his pathetic and brilliant wife preferred, and Troy, the servant of good will and inexorable bluntness, are as memorable as the Forsytes.

The publishers speak of the novel as though it belongs with the books of Howard Spring and Frank Swinnerton, as though it were mainly distinguished by an exciting crowd of incidents. This it is (though not mainly), and I hope the popular elements in "The Green Man" help it to a wide circulation. But Miss Jameson's novel probes deeply and compromises not at all. Strangest and most heartening of all, without being modishly deprecating about those who despaired (Continued on page 32)



The Poet & the Robin

(Seen together on a garden lawn)

By Eric Wilson Barker

THEIR stance breeds silence like a sultry cloud
That all the rain-expectant leaves obey.
A listening attitude enhancing quiet
Like stilted herons in a shallow bay.

Nature provides them with such appetites
That worms will satisfy, or the bronzy sound
Of katydids a branch above the ground.

The cocked heads flow through shadows like a stream.
Oh, they are still as stones. In such a calm
Stood Jericho before the walls rushed down.
A sleeping king from such a garden dream
Was sent to haunt the nights of Elsinore.

The silk of silence straitens to extreme—

A stirring in the grass would set them free,
A red leaf falling from a burning tree.

Harvey Curtis Webster, a member of the English department of the University of Louisville, has written widely on the modern English novel.

Music. Considering the essential role he plays, surprisingly little has been written—in books, at least—on that fascinating re-creative “middleman,” the musical performer, who forms a vital link in the chain connecting composer and listener. In “Music-Makers” (reviewed below) SR’s Roland Gelatt considers twenty-one outstanding musical performers of our time and analyzes the special contribution which each has made to the developing art of music. Recently, another link in the musical chain has come to the fore and assumed great importance: the high-fidelity phonograph. Several books are now available which serve to guide the prospective buyer of high-fidelity equipment in the strange electronic world of “all-triode circuits,” “pre-amplification,” and “horn-loading.” The latest to appear is Edward Tatnall Canby’s “Home Music Systems” (reviewed on page 20). Also reviewed this week are James Husst Hall’s “The Art Song,” which ranges from early Italian airs to the latest offering of Francis Poulenc, and an examination of Mozart’s years in Salzburg by Max Kenyon (page 21).

Larynx, Bow & Pedal

MUSIC-MAKERS. By Roland Gelatt.
New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 286 pp.
\$3.75.

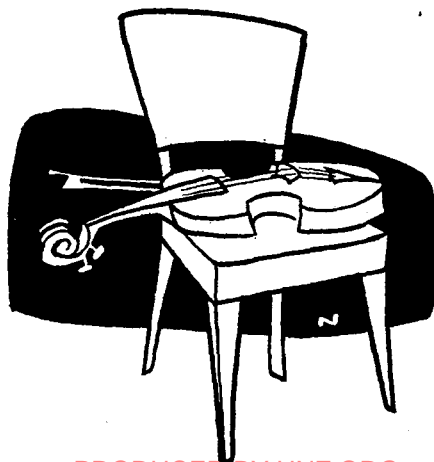
By IRWIN EDMAN

“WE are the music-makers,” wrote the nineteenth-century Irish poet, Edgar Allen O’Shaughnessy. “We are the dreamers of the dreams.” He was, of course, referring to poets and not composers. The title of Mr. Gelatt’s book reminds us that in an important sense, the term music-makers may mean what it literally says, those who by voice or instrument (including orchestra) make music. To the listener it is the performer who makes music and makes it available. One can even argue the position that the musical climate of a period is formed by its performers. What they play and how they play it in large measure determines the course of cultivated taste in an era. The same composer is not the same in different hands; the Beethoven of Horowitz is not the same as that of Paderewski, and Sibelius is appreciated because Koussevitzky repeatedly played him.

Mr. Gelatt has performed an important and amiable service in placing before the reader what he needs to know about the musical personalities who dominate the performing scene in contemporary music. I say *musical* personalities advisedly, for Mr. Gelatt deals with the personal idiosyncrasies

and the private lives of the performers under consideration only insofar as these affect the individual as a musician. This volume is not a collection of blurbs, nor a gossip column in covers. It is a book about musicians and what goes into the performances the public listens to and in varying degrees enjoys.

Mr. Gelatt writes with affection, never too uncritical; he is informed about the particular characters he studies. Above all he is interested in the art of music and has standards in the light of which he considers his subjects. He admires but is not bemused by Toscanini and he distinguishes that maestro’s actual virtues from the pious legends. He tells us about the virtuosity of Segovia, and makes us aware of what that artist has done with the guitar as an instrument of serious music, but Mr. Gelatt makes disarmingly clear that a whole concert of guitar music even at the hands of Segovia is too much for him. Mr. Gelatt has a gift (despite an occasional lapse into the rubber stamps



of musical journalism) of evoking clearly and contagiously the style, the tempo, the rhythm, the special tonality of each musician he deals with; singers as different from each other as Pierre Bernac and Flagstad, conductors as diverse as Bruno Walter and Sir Thomas Beecham. He has given us in an easy and readable fashion a vivacious and enlightening survey of those who may be described as crucial in the music-making world of our period. Among conductors there are Toscanini, Walter, Mitropoulos, Ansermet, Munch; among pianists, Gieseking, Myra Hess, Rubinstein. There is Landowska, who is responsible in no small measure not only for the revival of the harpsichord but of Bach in our time; Szigeti, Pablo Casals, the Budapest String Quartet, and Reginald Kell are some of the other instrumentalists he discusses. And there is a fine retrospective chapter on Lotte Lehmann.

Mr. Gelatt would probably be the last to insist that this selection is definitive or that any generalizations made from these persons would not be modified if he had chosen other subjects. But no one could claim for anyone considered in this book anything less than major status. Nor for all Mr. Gelatt’s modest eschewing grandiose conclusions can one avoid noting that there are certain interesting and important morals to be drawn. The virtuoso for virtuosity’s sake, or for the sake of bedazzlement of the audience, has on the whole vanished. Szigeti is a musician rather than, for all his virtuosity, a dazzling fiddler. He is a musician whose instrument is the violin. Casals, too, earns a tribute for a dedication to the art of music that is only matched by his dedication to human freedom. Those nearest to “pure” virtuosity, it is interesting to observe, stand in these pages as the most irresponsible or the most naïve about human responsibility in the larger sense; e. g., concerning Gieseking and Flagstad, Mr. Gelatt handles with delicacy and firmness their defects as citizens as over against their talents as musicians. The most serious artists seem to be those whose culture is not all in their finger tips or in their larynx. The most profound music is made, it would appear, not by those who know only their *musical* business, but by those who are themselves profound spirits. Ansermet and Casals are great musicians partly because they are great men, and errors of taste turn out often to be limitations of moral perception, and depths of effect, as in Landowska, a function of a wide human culture. These and many other reflections are prompted by this humane and musicianly book about musicians.

Irwin Edman is Johnsonian professor of philosophy at Columbia University and the author of “Philosopher’s Quest,” “Arts and the Man,” and other books.