trust anybody. Your own gang will insult you. Your own family, they'll call you a jerk. I don't team up with anybody. I'm what you call—here today and gone tomorrow.

We find him at the end, having attained a precariously slight degree of respectability, with a wife and two children, jumping from job to job, trying to learn to read and write because "I want to make something of myself."

THE second man is William Miller, whose mother died five days after his birth and his father six months later, who spent the first fifteen years of his life in orphanages, harboring a morbid fascination for the earth where his parents lay buried, dreaming of the dead and failing at everything in life—jobs, marriage, human relationships generally. Like Johnny, his desperate efforts to get people to like him end mainly in attracting contempt and suspicion.

Experience teaches him little. He is in constant flight from himself and the outside world. His petty thefts bring him jail sentences. Momentary elation, based mainly on unrealistic appraisals of his situation and abilities, culminate in long periods of black despair. He goes blind at forty-one, wakes up one morning six years later to find his sight restored "miraculously," only to wind up in a Southern prison, totally blind again.

The third man, Martin Beardson, unlike the other two, is a well-educated product of a middle-class home disrupted by a six-years' separation of his parents beginning when the boy was two years of age. He hates his father, a self-made businessman, and idealizes his socially-active mother, who is too busy making the rounds of teas and parties to spend much time with him. His life undergoes a steady deterioration from his fourteenth year of life, when his mother dies. He leaves home, turns vagabond, gets involved in homosexual scrapes which occasionally bring him into the coils of the law, works at odd jobs briefly, and restlessly moves from one cheap rooming-house to another, bewailing his circumstance yet doing nothing to improve it. He fails to make a single satisfying personal relationship. His spirits fluctuate between phantasies of grandeur and feelings of guilt. He proclaims Shaw, Nietzsche, and Gandhi as his intellectual models. He keeps a detailed diary of his homosexual experiences, and writes endless narcissistic drivel in a stream-of-consciousness and disorganized manner.

At twenty-five, Martin is working as a part-time messenger, regarding himself as a misunderstood genius unjustly deprived of the social status to which he is entitled: "The idea that I should have to live in these trashy, shoddy surroundings. It has always been that way. Everything—everything I have ever had has been second-rate."

Miss Evans's book had an unusual evolution. Some years ago she did a lengthy feature article on Johnny Rocco for the Sunday section of the late New York newspaper *PM*, which was then developing a form of psycho-social biography that became distinctive. Dr. Gordon W. Allport, professor of psychology at Harvard, was so struck by Miss Evans's treatment of the Johnny Rocco story, that he used it as a model of case-history writing in his classes. Later he had it reprinted in the "Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology," where her William Miller sketch was also published subsequently. Professor Allport encouraged Miss Evans to do other "lives" in the same vein; meanwhile her Rocco and Miller stories—greatly expanded and brought up to date in the present volume—were being used by an increasing number of instructors conducting classes in social work, psychology, and criminology. In his introduction to "Three Men," Professor Allport expresses the hope that the blended literary and scientific approach used by Miss Evans will inspire professionals to improve their own case-writing.

One can only echo his hope, with the added observation that "Three Men" makes absorbing and profitable reading for anyone interested in human beings.

Jim Marugg—"mental victory."

The Crippler Beaten

***"Beyond Endurance," by Ann Walters and Jim Marugg** (Harper. 178 pp. $2.50), is the story of a young man's struggle with polio and of his victory over suffering and handicap. Our reviewer, Ellen Day Patterson, herself had polio and spent a long period of rehabilitation at Warm Springs.*

By Ellen Day Patterson

RECENTLY the distinguished mountain climber, Maurice Herzog, himself painfully crippled in the French ascent of Annapurna, was asked on a television program, "Why do men climb mountains?" His answer was an eloquent and mystical affirmation of this dangerous calling. At the end of it, the moderator said only half-quizzically, "Yes, that's all very interesting—but why do men climb mountains?"

Had this same interviewer asked the various polio victims who have written about their experience with this dread disease, "Why do you do it? Why do you write about such sufferings?" the answer might well elude him in this case also, for it is equally subtle and complex.

Ann Walters and her son-in-law, Jim Marugg, authors of "Beyond Endurance," might give a lucid answer, because theirs is a book which has a message not only for other polio sufferers, but for all those interested in any human struggle with adversity and affliction.

Jim Marugg was a thirty-year-old newspaper sportswriter in California, with a wife and two children, when polio hit him. He was about as critically ill as one can be, and survive. He thus experienced the brush with death and the sudden and utter helplessness which seem to give most polios a new dimension in life, a broader framework of moral and spiritual values, no matter to what extent they afterwards recover.

The physical recovery of the author is far from complete today. When Marugg finally returned to his old job (after a year in the hospital and respiration center, and months of rehabilitation at home) his breathing and left arm were almost back to normal, but his right arm was paralyzed above the elbow, his trunk muscles were very weak, and both legs still virtually useless. Yet his mental victory over this cruel illness is complete as well as inspiring. Not once in this book does he let one feel

(*Continued on page* 33)

The Saturday Review

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Culture in Soft Covers

LACKING a millionaire partner who is allergic to reading balance-sheets, no man with any financial acumen would attempt in these days to launch a book-publishing house with contemporary novels priced at three to five dollars, nonfiction ranging from three-fifty to ten dollars, and an occasional lean volume of poetry at two-fifty. The older, long-established firms can ride through the storm of paperbacks now flooding the country by leaning on the continuing sales of valuable lists of "backlog" books; then there are children's books and textbook departments whose roseate future is based on the astonishing fertility of the American people over the last decade.

Nevertheless, the trade-book department is the heart, if not the center, of a sound publishing house. It must find new writers in the various fields of creative literature, for in a large measure the reputation, the prestige of the firm depends on them. It is often a thankless and a disappointing task for even the most astute editor. He may turn down an author's first book only to have it hit the best-seller lists in the hands of another publisher; the first may have a measure of success and a good press, and the second book may fail, and then there is a question of whether after an investment of a considerable sum of money the third book should be accepted. Discovering new writers is a gamble, though a publisher may parlay his bet by offering the reprint rights of a manuscript to a paperback publisher. But if he does so he is feeding the wolf that is howling at the door of his house.

A publisher inevitably assumes financial risks unknown to the producer of plays, who rarely uses his own money; he has had to be a stout-hearted gambler to endure the dangers which seemed to threaten him during the last thirty years. First it was the movies, then the radio, and worse still, television, for you cannot read a book with one eye and view a flickering screen with the other. He has now overcome his fear of them, only to tremble at the overwhelming proliferation of the paperbacks, selling from twenty-five cents to a dollar and a quarter. Two hundred sixty million copies of them were sold last year under 1,061 titles. During the last two years an extraordinary number of them were republications of fine books which had long been out of print because the original publishers knew that it would not profit them to bring them out at the price they would have to charge. It has turned out to be a goldmine for the paperback houses, for the sales of a great many of them exceeded the most optimistic predictions. Mentor Books' sale two years ago of more than a million copies each of translations of old Homer's "The Odyssey" and "The Iliad" woke the publishers to the fact that there was an enormous and hitherto untouched audience of innumerable Americans who would read, or at least buy, books of the highest caliber on almost every subject, from art, music, science, philosophy, history, criticism, to world politics, belles-lettres, collections of poetry, and other way stations on the route to the hitherto remote fairylands of culture.

Nevertheless, alarming as this may seem to the trade-book publisher, there are two major flaws in this fantastic outpouring of inexpensive books. It is estimated that in 1946 sixty million paperbacks were distributed and from 10 to 15 per cent were returned to the publishers. Last year more than three times as many paperbacks were printed by a larger number of companies and distributed to over a hundred thousand retailers where they have, as everyone knows, cluttered the newsstands and drugstores across the land. A very large percentage of them were only too obviously devoted to novels of suspense, murder, vice, mayhem, sex, and science fiction. But it is remarkable, for example, that Doubleday Anchor Books' reprint of Edmund Wilson's 500-page study in the writing and acting of history, "To the Finland Station," and hundreds of other books of the same caliber could be able to survive in this lush jungle. Knox Burger, an editor of Dell Publishing Co., in a recent symposium of publishers debating the problem of this industry said, "The turnback of paperbooks has risen to proportions that are disturbing . . . There are probably too many titles put out and too many companies in the business. Some time in the future there will be a shaking-down process and some people will get hurt." Actually no one knows the percentage of copies of paperbooks returned in 1953. It may be as dangerously high as 20 per cent.

THERE is another aspect of this invasion not often mentioned. At the present rate of consumption of reprints of trade publishers' books, the soft-cover publishers will have consumed in the next two years most of the books available to them. What will they do when they come to the end of the rich vein they have been exploring? They can, of course, wait for a year and reprint more of the same titles for distribution. But eventually that, too, will come to an end. It has not yet been proved that the soft-cover publishers can successfully bring out first editions, with the exception of the more lurid books often written for them by hitherto unknown writers. And, unfortunately, it is not proved that the public, which has recently purchased in large numbers paperbooks once assumed to be beyond their capacity to enjoy or comprehend, will continue to do so. How many of the two million copies of Homer, for example, were read from cover to cover? But this tremendous and unsuspected audience for cultural books may have emerged from the seven million living graduates of colleges and universities who were subjected to four years of higher education; or, who knows, from a host of truckdrivers, factory hands, and office workers who will take to literature and philosophy as a steady diet?—H. S.