

Americana

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expounded are good. However, my husband thinks it's just another soap opera. EXCELLENT." After listening to "The Lone Ranger," one monitor reports: "Good English. GOOD." Of "Superman," Washington, Kansas, says: "How to commit crimes graphically demonstrated. FAIR." The comments range from odd and ambiguous to terse and perceptive. But the debris of variegated taste is all over the place.

The conflict of opinions is even evident in a comparison of the NAFBRAT and ACBB reports, both socially motivated. To the NAFBRAT evaluators the "Pinky Lee Show" is a "child's burlesque show; excessive bad taste." For ACBB a Maryland monitor reports of the same show: "Suitable for children. Just plain funny. Not suggestive or slapstick. GOOD." So here we are at the familiar, self-same door. What's good for the child on radio-TV and what isn't? These organizations are, at least, doing something about the problem—without too much help. And while they grope bravely along a minotaur tunnel, the "crash" research program on a grand scale that will tackle the job at the highest level of our social scientific disciplines still goes begging, while the research moneys pour out abundantly elsewhere.

—ROBERT LEWIS SHAYON.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT NO. 580

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 580 will be found in the next issue.

AEM'X DSGTO SX ZEGXO

BEF OCY SBBPQXSXCEMY:

OP CY EMDZ XFZCMT EM

EMP BSQP SBXPF SMEXOPF

XE BCMA OCY EJM.

—DETS MYVCXO.

Answer to No. 579

A fan club is a group of people who tell an actor he's not alone in the way he feels about himself.—Jack Carson.

have written invaluable sequels to this volume.

The publishers of the new edition, and the accomplished editor, Fletcher Pratt, deserve gratitude for reviving a work so useful historically, so full of fine narrative and descriptive bits, and so entertaining.

Notes

JEFFERSON'S FOREIGN MINISTER: With prodigious industry, painstaking scholarship, and a bit of a chip on his shoulder—no, say a torch in his hand—Irving Brant has been at work for more than a dozen years dissipating the mists that have gathered about the name and reputation of James Madison, replacing shadow with substance.

In earlier volumes he showed us first Madison the active Virginia revolutionist, then the singleminded nationalist, working against odds in the Congress of the Confederation for a strong, stable Government; next Madison as the chief architect of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, the tough-minded political thinker, the real founder of the Democratic Party. He has now reached "James Madison: Secretary of State, 1800-1809" (Bobbs-Merrill, \$6).

One thing Mr. Brant makes crystal clear: Madison *was* the Secretary of State. He was not, as historians from Henry Adams on down have intimated, a mere errand-boy for Jefferson, a timid, vacillating nonentity. Brant shows how that libel got started—an egregious mis-translation by Henry Adams of a characterization by a French diplomat, a careless, off-hand remark by Jefferson himself, Madison's habit of writing "It is the President's wish . . ." when the policy in question was clearly his own. He shows us a Madison firmly in command of every situation, working harmoniously with the President. Jefferson, he tells us, "relied on the Secretary's analytical ability, understanding and judgment, applied to purposes on which they agreed completely. . . ."

Through eight years of dirty diplomatic weather Madison steered a straight course. A too intransigent, too aggressive policy could have brought war with England, France, or Spain—or all three; an irresolute or supine policy could have scuttled the national honor and the national interest. Brant

believes that the Embargo, that ill-starred experiment in economic coercion, was really Madison's policy, though Jefferson agreed with it. He even gives Madison credit for the Louisiana Purchase. One may not accept his case at this point—to me it is more ingenious than convincing—but one cannot shrug off his demonstration—mostly based on diplomatic dispatches hitherto undeciphered or suppressed—that our Minister to France, Robert R. Livingston, deserves precious little credit for that amazing real-estate bargain.

One expects a biographer's documentation to be adequate. Mr. Brant's is overwhelming. From the documents he has given us a new Madison. It is a bigger Madison than we have known. Perhaps it is not quite a human Madison. But it may be the only technique for the job he has set himself—the basic, long-deferred job of clearing away old misconceptions, old misrepresentations, and giving us at last the authentic record.

—FREDERICK B. TOLLES.

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER THEM BY: While an evening spent in a graveyard has not traditionally been considered the liveliest way of passing time, Charles L. Wallis's "Stories on Stone: A Book of American Epitaphs" (Oxford University Press, \$5) may alter our notions. Here is a volume delicately constructed of the most earthy materials imaginable. Humanity, with its loves and hates, humor and piety, faith and cynicism, expresses itself on the enduring slabs marking our ancestors' graves.

One reads, for example, that Andrew Jackson's wife rests under the tribute "A being so gentle and so virtuous slander might wound, but could not dishonor." A Missourian permanently advises ambulant onlookers to ". . . vote for Jennings Bryan." A more recently deceased Minnesotan boasts for his posterity that of his family "None . . . ever voted for Roosevelt or Truman." Thus did America's folk—heroes,

statesmen, inventors, lovers, common citizens—leave a posthumous comment of their times.

The author wisely maintains a neutral air, judiciously permitting the humor and drama to come forth largely unaided. He has divided the volume into logical sections and has supplied well-written background accounts for many of the inscriptions which add to the value of the book. Here is a consistently interesting, frequently fascinating, and intermittently significant collection of Americana.

—HAROLD M. HYMAN.



Fiction

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then that the sensible parish priest took over.

Mr. McLaverty has added to his literary stature in this little gem of Irish storytelling. His Ulsterman's way with the English tongue and the human soul was never more impressive. The reader feels that he has lived all his life in the tidy pastoral community close to the river and the sea. The realism is achieved, in the main, by exquisite economy of detail. With characteristic selectivity, for instance, Mr. McLaverty uses the homely, familiar chestnut tree to convey the pungent flavor of relationships between schoolboy and adult and the march of the northern seasons.

—ANN F. WOLFE.

No

MUSIC FOR THE PARTING: In "The Festival" (Random House, \$3) Lael Tucker has deserted the South, which was the scene of her "Lament for Four Virgins," and has located her story in a remote mountain village in the French Pyrenees (could it be Prades?) where for one week a music festival is being held. It is here that the Old Man (could it be Casals?), once famous as a virtuoso, has consented to direct an orchestra. Since Franco's triumph in Spain he has acquired something of the quality of a legend because of his withdrawal from the world, and musicians young and old have flocked to him, from the Continent, from America.

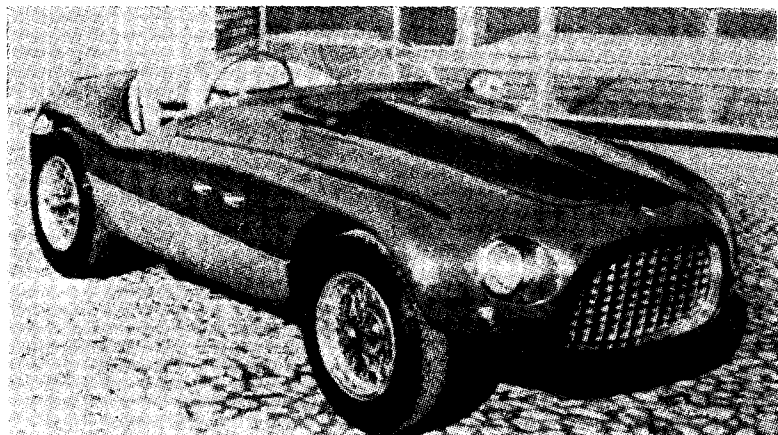
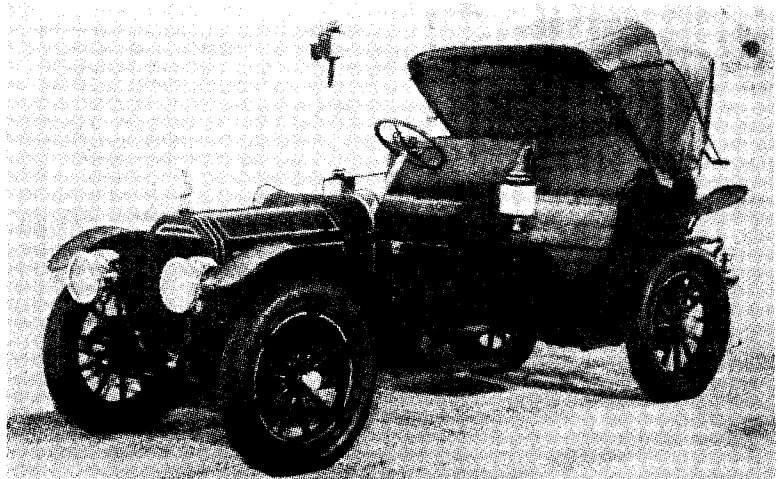
Among them is Joshua Middlebush, of New York-New England descent, a teacher of music, a would-be composer. The story opens as Lutie, his wife, is coming to join him, knowing that for the time of the festival she must, because of the scarcity of accommodations in the village, share with him the *lit matrimonial*. They have had an unconcluded and determinedly friendly parting, and she believes that here, after fifteen years and two children, they will dance as a *menuet* the disintegration and end of their marriage. She believes that it can be done politely and with dignity. Their differences have been many. Lutie, although she has given Joshua much encouragement in his composing, has hurt him in the secret, sensitive places of his creative will, and he has withdrawn from her. Here is an interesting and provocative situation.

But these two have reckoned without the mountain-top perspective they are to acquire, without the effect of

the music they are to hear. For music is the catalyst, and none of the characters that swarm the pages of this book is left unchanged. Joshua and Lutie come to actual physical blows, are unfaithful to each other, misunderstand and hurt each other, and learn.

This is a compactly planned novel, more skilful in design than Miss Tucker's earlier book. But any story covering so short a period of time in

the lives of so many characters, set as this is against an alien background, is automatically one removed from reality. This is a difficulty which the author has not been able to overcome. The reader is left with a sense of frustration, with the wish that Miss Tucker, with her easy dialogue and fluent writing, might have made us care more deeply about her Joshua and Lutie.—CID RICKETTS SUMNER.



Peerless with Victoria (1911)—"elegance and grace," with Ferrari competition roadster (1954)—"masterpiece of engineering."

ANTIQUES AND HOT RODS: Having once owned an ancient and incredibly inefficient Alfa-Romeo, I know full well that car enthusiasts are a happy but lunatic breed. One of the happiest is James Melton, the popular tenor, who has his own museum of antique automobiles. In "Bright Wheels Rolling" (Macrae Smith, \$4.50) he tells entertainingly, in collaboration with Ken Purdy, about his own and other famous old cars. There are plenty of pictures, including more than a few of Mr. Melton himself. In case you get bitten by the bug yourself, the editors of *Popular Mechanics* have compiled a fascinating volume, copiously illustrated, on "How to Restore Antique and Classic Cars" (Popular Mechanics Press, \$2.95). For those whose taste runs to something newer and speedier, there are two new books: "The Modern Sports Car," by Tom McCahill (Prentice-Hall, \$3.95), and "Sports Cars," by Austin Conley (Greenberg, \$3). The photographs are satisfactory, the text not overly technical and generally interesting. "Sport and Racing Cars," by Raymond F. and Brock W. Yates (Harper, \$2) is an excellent primer for teen-age tots whose nerveless little hands itch for the feel of a hot rod. May they rest in peace!

—WILLIAM MURRAY.