



—Marc Foucault.

Jules Roy—"his own tone."

mer, a bad pilot feared by all the crews. He refused to go, pleading nervous exhaustion. Raumer never returned from his mission. Ripault, held as responsible by a severe chief, reminiscent of Rivière in "Night Flight," found solace and tenderness in the arms of the young woman, whom he visited once more.

But love is granted a scant role in Jules Roy's stories: that fleeting encounter with an absolute of tenderness drove him back to the virile absolute of duty exactly conceived. Ripault heard of a pilot who, out of fatigue or fear, could hardly see the ground lights any more. He volunteered on a mission with him over the ball-bearing factory of Würzburg. He fraternally guided the blurred eyes of the pilot. Hit by the flak in the wings, unable to parachute in time, both fell into the void.

As with Saint-Exupéry, the dramatic story is secondary to the psychological portrayal of the characters. The airplane is a mere pretext, which enables men to explore the value of simple feelings like comradeship and a restrained, almost chaste love accepted in the face of death. There is no boastfulness in those aviators, who have all experienced fear. Their words are awkward, hesitant; their gestures betray their lack of assurance and their shyness in presence of women; they do not claim to offer a message. They are expendable and they accept the servitude which fate and the times have laid upon them.

With this artistic short novel, Jules Roy, after Saint-Exupéry and the Belgian Closterman, shows that the writers in the French language, perhaps because of their bent as grave moralists and of their sense for artistic restraint, have remained without peers in a new literary realm: that of aviation.

Notes

OLDEST PROFESSION REVISITED: Harold Robbins's subject in "79 Park Avenue" (Alfred A. Knopf, \$3.50) is almost as old as the novel itself, the honest prostitute who inevitably comes to a bad end. Maryann Flood was born for love. She lived in a slum area in New York with her Polish mother and a stepfather who stayed home guzzling beer while his wife worked at night cleaning offices. The girl was endowed with silver-blond hair, glowing white skin, an opulent figure, good manners, a modicum of intelligence, and a complete lack of chastity. She was forthright and an artist in her adopted profession. She was, as one of her men said, "a special kind of broad, a whore with a code of ethics."

It was inevitable that Maryann should give herself to the neighborhood boys and that she would be manhandled and raped by her stepfather. It was also inevitable that she should be sent to a house of correction for a few months where her first child was born and promptly adopted. She was proficient in the lore of her profession and knew before she was twenty almost every type of man, including the useless son of a wealthy family, an honest cop, and a racketeer who persuaded her to take over a "model agency" at 79 Park Avenue. The agency was, of course, a call house where girls were sent to what used to be called "orgies."

During the seven years Maryann spent in California with the racketeer, until he was killed by the criminals with whom he was associated, she lived in luxury. When she returned to New York the honest cop had become an assistant to the district attorney and it was his disagreeable task to try the only woman he loved on a charge of procurement for purposes of prostitution, for extortion and bribery of public officials. She could have escaped five years of jail if she had been willing to state that the prosecutor who had tried her had been her lover, but Maryann was too noble to do that.

Mr. Robbins's book will live for a while, wrapped in its gaudy paper cover on the newsstands and in the drugstores across the country, easy to read and easy to forget.

—HARRISON SMITH.

SACCHRINITY IN WALES: A sentimental novel in the style of the late Victorian period is Richard Vaughan's second novel "Son of Justin" (E. P. Dutton, \$3.50). Unhappily it possesses all the deficiencies of the genre and none of its virtues. Its characters are lifeless, the contrived situations implausible,

and the heroics involving traditional themes like family feuds, death, suicide, illegitimacy in an archaic and unilluminating manner are infuriating. The setting is Wales, but the Welsh epithets and terms of endearment fail to create any creditable versimilitude; they are as conspicuous as oases in the desert. The values in "Son of Justin" derive from a late nineteenth-century interpretation of Sir Gowain, and are alien to those we have come to associate with the brawling, sensual, matter-of-fact, conniving Welshmen.

—DACHINE RAINER.

PIONEER DAYS DOWN UNDER: Catherine Gaskin's long, old-fashioned romantic yarn, "Sara Dane" (Lippincott, \$3.95), is loosely based on the hectic career of one Mary Reibey, a legendary Australian heroine who overcame the fact that she arrived in her adopted country as a convict and rose to wealth and social eminence in the colony. As such it will tempt some readers from television and will relieve others of their atomic anxieties, for it transports us back to the late eighteenth century, when Australia was a penal colony but when, even then, there were those who saw baronial visions of wealth and power. Among these visionaries was the lady whom Miss Gaskin has called Sara Dane and who, along with a husband whom she met on board the convict ship, helped to develop three sprawling farms, open a store, build a

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT NO. 631

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 631 will be found in the next issue.

SK WCQO JNCP FT

BPTL LCOK LST SNO

QCOVTZKPKQ SK

CO HTF OT.

ARWECECRO OMPRO

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 630
He that mischief hatcheth, mischief catcheth.

—W. Camden.

couple of homes, run a fleet of trading vessels, and buy her way into society. No fragile heroine, Sara manages to balance a ledger as well as to wield a dagger. When her husband is slain in a convict riot she takes hold and consolidates her position by making a second marriage with an elegant Frenchman who is as fascinating as he is rich. She also manages to keep busy right up to the end, with adventures that include skirmishes with floods, smugglers, and convict mobs. All these give Miss Gaskin the chance to draw a picture of an emerging society and an emerging national spirit.

—CHARLES LEE.

TRAGIC HOUSEHOLD: The family has taken such a pummeling in the French novel during the last thirty-five years that one wonders how it still stands. Now Celia Bertin has written a novel about a family dominated by a mother who drives two of her daughters to suicide. An atmosphere of Greek tragedy permeates her *"The Last Innocence"* (McGraw-Hill, \$3.75). Outside the illustrious façade of her grand Riviera villa nobody knows that Mme. Touray has already destroyed her husband, a great poet whose public career she had managed as well as her own prosperous commercial enterprises, and that now, as his widow, she is wrecking the lives of all about her to maintain the fiction of a model family dwelling in harmony. Then, from the supine figures of her children and her children-in-law an Elektra arises in the form of her lesbian daughter Paula to avenge the father and to tell the truth to the world. The action proceeds slowly through episodes and descriptions, sometimes moving backwards to pick up its trail and finally stopping before the broad plains of serenity and happiness which, Miss Bertin implies, stretch out for Paula and for her dead sister's husband, Etienne. Unhappily, instead of catharsis the work produces a malaise of unfulfilment and moral chaos. How can this pair change their skins—this Paula, whose lovers have always been women, and this Etienne, whose love for Paula resulted in his own wife's



suicide? For ethical and psychological reasons, if not esthetic ones, Miss Bertin might have done well to invoke the Erinyes. It is doubtful if Marjorie Deans's translation has improved the original.

—LAURENT LÉSAÛ.

IRIS THE INDOMITABLE: The fact that Margaret Mackay's ninth novel, *"The Four Fates"* (John Day, \$4.50), will occasion no discussion among the Nobel Prize committee need not detain us: it is a generous offering of urbane and adult entertainment. Covering twenty-eight years and five men in Iris Holiday's heavily-rostered life, it ranges in scene from England to France to Connecticut to Texas, in men from Napoleons-of-the-boudoir to exquisites of the art world, and in mood from disillusion to rapture. Iris, the beautiful daughter of a breezy U. S. musical-comedy star, has old-fashioned notions of feminine dependency and her dreams are as bourgeois as a budget vacation. She woos domesticity, she dreams of romping about a charmingly disheveled farmhouse, and she yearns to maternalize a mixed herd of animals and children. By the time she reaches her middle years she achieves one of these ambitions: she gets her herd of children, but the process is long and stormy. It involves enough emotion on her part to satisfy a clinic of psychiatrists and the kind of endurance that is thought to be possessed only by saints and truck-drivers. The men in her life are: Lionel Massingham, a handsome, cigar-scented tycoon; Sir Leslie Fennill, a sardonic esthete; Christopher St. John, an affectionate talker; Lionel's son Monty, an ornithologist; and Bill Bower, a jaunty, leather-skinned Texan. That she appeals to all these—to the old and young of them—is proof of her sovereign beauty. Three of them she marries, and Miss Mackay manages the whole hectic story with an assured and bright garrulity. Outdoors Miss Mackay's scenic touches are lyric; indoors they have the skilled decorator's eyes. Now and again Miss Mackay delivers telling strokes of portraiture and the piquant dramatic situation finds her equal to the challenge: Iris, for example, while staying at Lionel's house receives both her lover and her mother-in-law, proving the appealing character of Iris, of course.

—C. L.

ALSO NOTED: Life begins for five Broadway characters at the Saratoga yearling sales, where they merge assets to buy a gray colt named Penniless. The horse then proceeds to run untrue to his name—bringing to his owners money, fame, and mutual suspicion. Mel Heimer compiles the track record of Penniless and company in *"Penniless Blues"* (Putnam, \$3.50), a cheerfully sentimental narrative somewhere between Damon Runyon and John O'Hara.

To all of us who have dreamed of large-scale embezzlement, Myrick Land's *"Search the Dark Woods"* (Funk & Wagnalls, \$3.50) will provide little comfort. An absconder, implies Mr. Land, is a fellow so overcome with a sense of his own mediocrity that even when he finds himself in Caracas with a valisefull of loot, he isn't really happy. In Mr. Land's imaginative novel of the chase, a thoughtful private eye unravels an embezzler's psyche and thereby gains a greater insight into his own mental subterfuges.

In the winey air of St. Tropez, Lord Edward Wallingford woos Constance, his fey young bride, because he likes the way she throws a bunch of grapes out the window. But once married and ensconced in a hamlet near Geneva, Edward's ardor leaves him and he retreats into a separate bedroom, where he smokes too many cigarettes and keeps a diary. Constance, *Naturkind* that she is, keeps a lover . . . lucky Pierre, the part-time chauffeur. The further adventures of Lady Wallingford's lover are to be found in Christopher Veiel's *"Heads and Hearts"* (Little, Brown, \$3.75), which the publishers hopefully refer to as "a sophisticated novel." Ah well, maybe so.

Graham Holt, a young Boston toff, burns the manuscript of his novel because it bears a similarity to one written by a lady acquaintance. The other manuscript is accidentally incinerated a short time later, but by this time Graham is in the investment business. Graham marries his secretary; the other lady goes to Europe; Graham's father acquires a dog named Colin. If these high spots of *"To Each His Dream"* (Doubleday, \$2.95) seem unpromising, let us remember that Sara Ware Bassett has written forty-odd novels and evidently knows what she is doing. —MARTIN LEVIN.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S
KINGSLEY DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 1113)

COCHRAN:
HALLELUJAH, MISSISSIPPI!

Dad would agree to gamble on the debtor's industry, and ability, and sickness, and the weather, and the price of cotton, and the boll weevil, and the droughts, or too much rain, and just take a big chance on not getting paid his money at all.