

mains objective. Her elaborately executed picture sets the stage for the crisis of Emily's life. There is a cool air about the writing, as after a summer storm; the action takes place before Mrs. Bingham's own mother. Emily's vivacious friend and first editor, enters the scene, and before the unhappy events that have troubled so many scholars and occasioned so much heart-burning, while the great legacy of her poetry and her letters has been subject of such heated controversy—an engagement almost as fierce as that of the ancient heroes over the golden armor of Patroclus.

Mrs. Bingham depicts what she calls "the New England way," and comments upon it. Her contribution

here, as in her similar volumes, is of much value both for interpretation of Emily's own writings and for general social history. If this really be, as seems likely, the last of the long series of books related to Emily Dickinson produced by the two gifted women of the Todd family, now seems the time to write "well done" to a perturbed and almost unprecedented history of literary endeavor—nine volumes in all—extending through a period of nearly seventy years. The temporal has been accomplished. The great poems and the astonishing letters are about to appear in their final forms, leaving us, nevertheless, with deepest obligations to these two able and devoted women.

books of Zola as evil, and added: "It would be better had Zola never been born." All of Zola's works were placed on the Index in 1894 and remained there until 1948. It was therefore a bad joke of fate that placed Anatole France on the same Index in 1922, to remain there to this day.

One of the silliest manifestations of this age of the purge, and one of the most dangerous, is a ruling established by the Post Office in 1931. "Elmer Gantry" had been banned in Boston. The publishers fought back, but Washington retaliated by "upholding postmasters as censors." The New York Post Office then went a step further and banned a catalogue which only listed the book. In 1944 a New York bookseller issued another catalogue, listing 100 books selling at forty-nine cents, and again the Post Office refused to mail it until two titles, "Candide" and "Droll Stories," were blocked out. Yet the customs ban on Balzac had been lifted in 1930! Both books are now freely listed in many catalogues and published in many editions, but there has never been a ruling relaxing the 1931 interdict.

Despite an unquenchable prejudice to the contrary, no book has ever committed a crime. None has, as yet, broken into a bank, pilfered a post, or raped a woman. But men have. And those who busy themselves with such unfriendly conduct rarely read books. They do not have the time, the sense, or the inclination. Why, then, are books banned? Is it to protect such as these from "evil influences"? What is an evil influence? And why, as Morris Ernst asks, are not censors afraid of their own corruptibility? Perhaps a sentence from George Moore will help give us a partial answer: "If all the books objected to by censors as sexually stimulating were swept from the face of the earth, the spring breeze would remain to awaken desires in man and woman."

Miss Haight's book is a revised and enlarged edition of a work first published twenty years ago. In addition to the wonderful introduction by Morris Ernst, who "joyfully" defended many of these books in court, there are 118 pages of informal notes on banned books, an appendix on trends in censorship, with notes on Nazi banned books, overseas libraries, library censorship, comic books, paperback books, textbook censorship, milestone statements on freedom of the press, excerpts from important court decisions, as well as U.S. customs and postal laws and regulations, and a bibliographic checklist. All in all, a source of solid comfort for those of us who believe that books have been pushed around long enough.

The Urge to Purge

"Banned Books," by Anne Lyon Haight (R. R. Bowker, 192 pp. Cloth-bound, \$4. Paperbound, 75¢), is an informal account of trends in censorship from Homer to Hemingway.

By Aaron Sussman

ANNE LYON HAIGHT'S "Banned Books" is a monument. A monument to fear, to hypocrisy, to ignorance, to intolerance, to confusion. But more than that, it is a monument to stupidity. For it is stupidity, in one guise or another, that has caused most of the bannings described in its pages. Here is formidable proof, a chronological inventory of the deadly art of book banning, from 387 B.C. to 1954, with pungent comment along the way on the *what*, the *why*, and the *consequences*. The result is a peppery fascicle as disturbing as it is diverting.

Books have been suppressed for a bewildering multiplicity of reasons. Chief among these, the author points out, are religion, politics, and morality, making the offense one of heresy, treason, or obscenity. But books have also suffered bans for personal, whimsical, or even wistful reasons. Henry VIII, for instance, banned the Tyn-dale Bible, the first book to be so persecuted in England, not because it blasphemed, which of course it didn't, but because he disapproved of what it said about divorce. You can understand why.

The Holy Bible was first suppressed by Emperor Justinian in 553. Since that time, hundreds of editions have been condemned for one perverse rea-

son or another. "The Decameron," which has been banned more often than probably any other single work, was first proscribed by the Index of Rome in 1558. It was later returned to favor by the Pope in an edition that "transformed the erring nuns into noble women, the lascivious monks into conjurors." But as late as 1954 Boccaccio's perdurable treasury of tales was still being heckled in England, where a magistrate's court ordered it destroyed as "obscene," though an appeal court later reversed the decision; and in the United States, where something calling itself the "National Organization of Decent Literature" placed it on their black list. "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" was banned by the public library in Thoreau's home town of Concord. It was labeled "trash, suitable only for the slums."

AS YOU review the record, item by curious item, a heavy perplexity settles over the logic of the censor. There must be some sense in all this somewhere, you tell yourself. But the more you search, the less becomes clear.

Surprisingly enough, though authors have suffered much from the activity of the censor, they have frequently joined with their natural enemy and aided him in his work. In 387 B.C., for instance, we see Plato suggesting that Homer ought to be expurgated for "immature readers." In 66 A.D. Plutarch was attacking Aristophanes for his "obscene comedies." Once Lewis Carroll was horrified because a performance of "Pinafore" was acted out by children. In 1898 Anatole France attacked the

SHOW BIZ



—From "Knight Errant."

Mary Pickford with stepson, Doug Jr.—"most popular actress this country ever produced."

The Sweetheart and The Sliver

"Sunshine and Shadow," by Mary Pickford (Doubleday, 382 pp. \$4.95), and "Knight Errant: A Biography of Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.," by Brian Connell (Doubleday, 255 pp. \$4), are revealing lives of two members of the film's first dynasty.

By Allen Churchill

IN A book season already notable for theatrical biographies and autobiographies (Laurette Taylor, Ethel Barrymore, Gertrude Lawrence, and others have had their whirl), it was inevitable that Hollywood's First Family should have its turn. Now, with the appearance of Mary Pickford's "Sunshine and Shadow" and Brian Connell's "Knight Errant: A Biography of Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.," it does.

Mary Pickford has not appeared in a film since "Secrets" in 1933, a fact which has prevented at least one generation from being aware of the most popular actress this country has ever produced. Since retiring, the lady (who is still in her fifties) has lived quietly in Hollywood, where she is indisputable First Lady. After the break-up of her much publicized

marriage to Douglas Fairbanks, she married Buddy Rogers and since then has devoted herself to such good works as the USO and to raising two attractive adopted children.

Perhaps the proper description of "Sunshine and Shadow" is not autobiography, but the fragments of one. Which is not to say this fails to be a worthwhile book, for in an individual way it is. Miss Pickford has not gone in for much self-analysis, except of a mystic-religious sort, but the portrait she offers of a girl who became an actress in Toronto at four (only because the star boarder happened to be an actor-manager) shows a peculiar personality at work. For one thing she had no real taste of childhood, since on her father's sudden death she immediately joined with her mother to keep the family alive. Not unexpectedly she grew up solemn, a fact about which her debonair brother Jack never ceased to twit her. "I've had a million laughs," he'd say. "You've had everything, Mary, but you've never lived. And you don't know how to play."

But even at age four Baby Gladys Smith (her name until David Belasco plucked Mary Pickford from her family tree) seems to have been ready to assume the full responsibilities of

life. She'd probably have been as successful at selling real estate as at acting. Without being stridently aggressive, the girl who never learned to play moved straight ahead, absolutely convinced that what was good for her was right for all. Only when the occasion demanded did she pull actressy tricks. A child star at eight, she determined at thirteen to act for David Belasco. Unable to get an appointment with him, she finally did a thing distasteful to the prim little lady in her. She stood in his outer office and screamed, "My life depends on seeing Mr. Belasco."

It worked, and the man whose life was masquerade became fascinated by the child whose outlook was all realism. He put her in "The Warrens of Virginia" (where her understudy was a child named Clare Boothe, now a grown-up ambassador). He also delighted in questioning her, chortling with glee at the answers. When he asked why she was so intent on working for him she replied, "Because I am thirteen years old and I think I'm at the crossroads of my life. I've got to make good between now and the time I'm twenty."

Even at this tender age Little Mary was accustomed to refer to herself as "the father of the family," and it was to make money for mother-sister-brother that she went into movies, working first for D. W. Griffith. To make additional money, she also wrote a few—on the backs of envelopes, so simple were plots in nickelodeon days. She also married Owen Moore, an elusive actor who liked his nip. By 1915—quite a few years before she was twenty—Our Mary was America's Sweetheart, playing unhappy, heavily becurled waifs in pictures like "Tess of the Storm Country." Only Douglas Fairbanks rivaled her at the box office, and when the two got married in 1920 the world heaved a happy sigh. Somehow it seemed just right.

But Fairbanks was a problem. On the screen he played the happy extrovert who met life's challenges with the widest of grins. In private life he was a man of unreasoning jealousy who would never let his wife dance with another man, not even the Prince of Wales. He insisted on sitting next to Mary at all dinner parties, and at Pickfair, where the Royal Family of Hollywood entertained almost nightly, Mary sat at the head of the table, with Doug at her right. Once when handsome Latin lover Rudolph Valentino came to pay a courtesy call Fairbanks rudely chased him from the premises.

In 1933 Fairbanks announced that
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