

THE LITERARY SAMPLER

EXCERPTS FROM NEW AND FORTHCOMING BOOKS

Life at the Top

CCULTURE? Executives do tend to have broader tastes in music, reading, and the like than their less successful contemporaries. But that, as executives themselves concede, isn't saying very much. Most of those questioned were conscious that they didn't read enough good books about something besides business, and some executives went out of their way to berate themselves on that score.

But where, the executive asks, can he find time? Much as he might like to read more history or take in more plays, he looks on this as too marginal, too little relevant to his career to warrant making the time. His judgment is debatable on this point, but that is another story. The fact is that he doesn't see much relationship, and thus, as with the long-deferred project to build a boat with the boys, he will keep on planning that reading he hopes to get around to. One of these days.

Hobbies? Even here the executive applies the yardstick of business relevance. While some executives are genuinely absorbed in a hobby for the sheer creative bang of it, for a larger number the pursuit carries strong therapeutic overtones. For them the hobby is not a joy in itself but simply a means of restoring themselves between rounds. To this end some executives go through an almost compulsive ritual—like watering the flowers at a regular week-end time whether or not it has just rained. To borrow an old phrase, they are never less at leisure than when they are at leisure.

We have, in sum, a man who is so completely involved in his work that he cannot distinguish between work and the rest of his life—and is happy that he cannot. Surrounded by a society ever more preoccupied with leisure, he remains an anomaly. Not only does he work harder, his life is in a few respects more ascetic than the businessman's of half a century ago. His existence is hardly uncomfortable, yet, save for the Cadillac, the better address, the quarter acre more of lawn, his style of living is not signally different from that of the men in middle management. And the fact doesn't concern him overmuch; the aspects of luxury that he talks

about most frequently concern things that are organic to his work—good steak dinners, comfortable hotels, good planes, and the like. No dreams of Gothic castles or liveried footmen seize his imagination. His house will never be a monument, an end in itself. It is purely functional, a place to salve the wounds and store up energy for what's ahead. And that, he knows full well, is battle.

—From *"The Organization Man,"* by William H. Whyte, Jr. (Simon & Schuster, \$5).

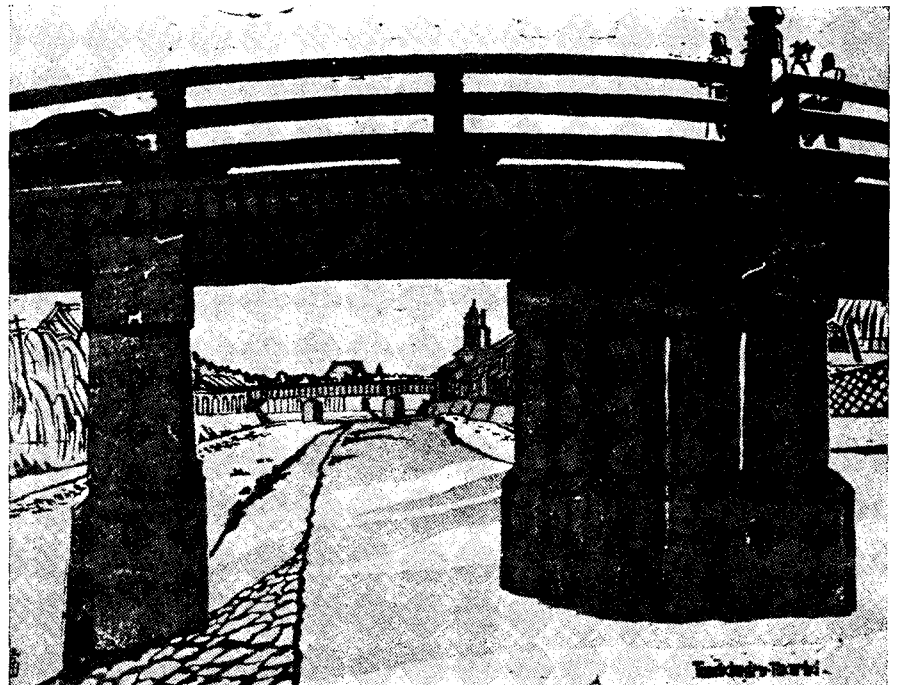
Quaker City Mores

PHILADELPHIA society had a pattern of its own. It was not like New York society, whose walls had often been breached in the old days by the mere weight of money, and whose low modern fences could be jumped if you were mentioned in enough gossip columns. Nor was it like, say, Detroit, which had an assembly-line society that automatically took in all the top people in the automobile industry. You needed more than money or power to win acceptance in Philadelphia. And if you enjoyed the neon glare of the gossip columns you had better stay

out of Philadelphia, which preferred candlelight.

People often made the mistake of comparing the social organization in Philadelphia with that of Boston. Once there had been many similarities. But in Boston they had forgotten to take their cod liver oil. They had forgotten that any society gets anemic if it refuses to admit new members. Boston society had closed ranks against the invading Irish and Portuguese and Italians, so it had no new blood. It had lost the knack of making money. The only thing that kept it solvent was the spendthrift trust, developed to protect the old shipping and manufacturing and banking fortunes; Boston society lived on the interest from money its grandfathers had made. To fit into the Boston pattern you had to come from an old family, and accept the kind of taboos people would call superstitions if they saw a primitive tribe obeying them.

Philadelphia society had long ago worked out a procedure for taking in new members. Money and power were important, but Philadelphia wanted to see if you could produce children and grandchildren who could handle money and power. Marrying well was part of it, but Philadelphia wanted to



—From *"Modern Japanese Prints"* (Tuttle).

"Sanjo Bridge" by Tomikichiro Tokuriki.

find out if the blood lines would run true from generation to generation. Proving that you had poise and balance and culture was part of it, but would your children have the same qualities, or would they be freaks and eccentrics? Philadelphia society didn't care for freaks and eccentrics. It had produced very few of them in its 250 years of existence. Those few had been removed quietly and quickly, the way a gentleman farmer who was proud of his stock might dispose of a two-headed calf.

—From *"The Philadelphian,"* by Richard Powell (to be published January 7 by Scribner at \$3.95).

Bloomers

IN THE hope of setting a new parlor game in motion John Bailey and J. C. and Helen Furnas have selected a number of perfectly respectable English words and asked the question, "What would this word seem to mean if we didn't know different? Here are some choice illustrations of this word game:

exchequer—anybody who used to work in a super market
goblet—a small sailor
hagiology—the science of homely women
tutelage—the noise produced by a flute
delirious—broke in Italy
pig iron—an iron for smoothing off pigs
pillory—a drugstore
ghoulish—cannibal stew
gnome—opposite of yes'm
banshee—a stag dinner

—*"Mr. Webster's Bloomers; Or, English Bashed and Unabashed,"* by John Bailey, Helen Furnas, and J. C. Furnas (Morrow, \$1.95).

First Bull Fight

AS I WATCHED the bull wheel and start to charge, the horrible thought struck me: this was not a friend of mine pushing a mechanical bull—this was a real and vicious wild beast that was charging to kill me. I froze for a fraction of a second. My first reaction was, God, he's going at this cape, so if I clutch it to me he won't see it and then he'll go away and leave me alone! This would have been fatal, of course, as the bull, following the movement of the cape, would have crashed straight into me. My next reaction was, God, he's going at the cape so if I fling it from me he'll attack it and leave me alone! And as I watched the animal bear down on me I thought, Mother help



—From *"Hell of a Way to Run a Railroad"* (Simon & Schuster).

"This is a hell of a way to run a railroad! You call that a dry Martini?"

me, this idea of being a bullfighter was complete insanity! Mother!

But so intense had been my training that my natural reactions were nullified—like those of a well-trained soldier going into combat for the first time. Instinctively, fighting my impulses, I held the cape out properly for the bull and made myself stand straight and as gracefully as possible, as though Maestro Solis were watching to see if I were keeping my back flat against that fence. Then as the horns came almost to my body I somehow swung the cape in front of the animal's nose and guided him past me, the horns just a foot or so away from my legs.

Later I learned that the crowd yelled "Olé!" but I was too absorbed in what I was doing to hear anything. So it worked! It actually worked the way the Maestro said it would. The bull went by without hitting me!

—From *"My Life as a Matador,"* by Carlos Arruza with Barnaby Conrad (Houghton Mifflin, \$4.50).

Lamb on Blake

To Bernard Barton, May 15, 1824

... Blake is a real name, I assure you, and a most extraordinary man, if he be still living. He is the Robert [William] Blake, whose wild designs accompany a splendid folio edition of the "Night Thoughts," which you may have seen, in one of which he pictures the parting of soul and body by a solid mass of human from floating off, God knows how, from a lumpish mass (fac Simile to itself) left behind on the dying bed. He paints in water colours marvellous strange pictures, visions of

his brain, which he asserts that he has seen. They have great merit. He has seen the old Welsh bards on Snowden—he has seen the Beautifullest, the strongest, and the Ugliest Man, left alone from the Massacre of the Britons by the Romans, and has painted them from memory (I have seen his paintings), and asserts them to be as good as the figures of Raphael and Angelo, but not better, as they had precisely the same retro-visions and prophetic visions with themselves [himself]. The painters in oil (which he will have it that neither of them practised) he affirms to have been the ruin of art, and affirms that all the while he was engaged in his Water paintings, Titian was disturbing him. Titian the Ill Genius of Oil Painting. His Pictures—one in particular, the Canterbury Pilgrims (far above Stothard's)—have great merit, but hard, dry, yet with grace. He has written a Catalogue of them with a most spirited criticism on Chaucer, but mystical and full of Vision. His poems have been sold hitherto only in Manuscript. I never read them; but a friend at my desire procured the "Sweep Song." There is one to a tiger, which I have heard recited, beginning:

Tiger, Tiger, burning bright,
 Thro's the deserts of the night,

which is glorious, but, alas! I have not the book; for the man is flown, whither I know not—to Hades or a Mad House. But I must look on him as one of the most extraordinary persons of the age . . .

—From *"The Selected Letters of Charles Lamb,"* edited by T. S. Matthews (Farrar, Straus & Cudahy, \$4).

Beethoven on Reviewers

From a letter by Beethoven to Breitkopf & Hartel, Vienna, April 22, 1801.

Advise your reviewer to show more intelligence and discretion, especially with regard to the products of younger authors, for these reviews could easily discourage men who might otherwise do better work. As for myself, it is true that I am far from having attained such perfection as would exempt me from all criticism, yet at first your reviewer's outcry against me was humiliating. Then, by dint of comparing myself with others, I found it scarcely affected me; I remained quite unmoved and thought, they do not understand it. I was able to remain all the more calm when I observed how, elsewhere, your reviewer extolled men of minor importance who indeed, among the

better artists here, are almost lost, decent and hardworking as they may be.

—From *"Composers on Music,"* edited by Sam Morgenstern (Pantheon, \$7.50).

Soviet Science

WE WHO live in the West do well to face these facts about Soviet science. Its vitality in the future depends on five factors: a supply of high intelligence; an education system which trains this intelligence well and steers it into careers of pure and applied science; a social climate which accords a high prestige to science; a familiarity with the currents of thought among scientists in other countries; and, fifthly, sufficient freedom from interference to enable the Soviet scientist to choose his research project, if not his politics, without interference and to work at it according to his conscience.

The first three of these factors are assured. Is Soviet science likely to deteriorate because the last two are deficient, because Soviet science is isolated from the West and because some scientific theories are outlawed in Russia? There are some who think it will, but personally I doubt it. For, valuable as it is for scientists to have personal contact with one another (and Russians value it as much as any of us), yet solid accomplishment in pure science is measured by what is published, and solid accomplishment in applied science by what is being manufactured. And the Russians have easy access to everything published in the West and a good deal of what is manufactured.

I once had a reader's ticket to the Lenin Library and I used to amuse myself by testing its capabilities. I would ask for a volume of the *Ohio State University Department of Horticulture Nursery Notes*: it came in a matter of half an hour; for the *Journal of the Linnean Society of New South Wales*: it came too; for the *Bulletin of the Botanical Society of Geneva*: it came too. No scientific journal, however obscure, seemed to be missing. Now every qualified research worker in Russia has had to pass a severe test in the reading of two foreign languages; so it can be assumed that all we publish is not only available in Russia but is in fact being carefully read.

Soviet scientists do feel isolated and they resent it bitterly; but they have adapted themselves to their isolation, just as they have to their climate and their police. And as to freedom, one only has to read the papers published

by the Academy to be convinced that most Soviet research is as unconstrained as research in Harvard or Manchester.

So when we in the West take stock of the war potential of the East we can assume some things about Russians and not others. We cannot assume that they live by our values. Freedom means less to them, and the amenities of civilization—hot water, good food, comfortable accommodation—they can readily forego. For generations our tradition has encouraged individuality; for generations their tradition has suppressed it. But we can assume some fundamental similarities between them and ourselves; they are just as intelligent and soon they will be just as well educated. And they have one quality we in the West have lost: a deep inferiority complex which drives them to spectacular achievements.

—By Sir Eric Ashby in *"The Red Army,"* edited by B. H. Liddell Hart (Harcourt, Brace, \$6).

Speakeasy Age

OPEN a book or newspaper of a few years ago and you will seek the term "speakeasy" in vain. It was born of Prohibition. The speakeasy (the name suggests a whispered password) is a clandestine refreshment-

bar selling spirits or wine. They must be visited to understand present-day New York. . . . There are a few in the downtown streets, but they are mainly set up between Fortieth Street and Sixtieth Street; they are usually situated downstairs and are identifiable by the large number of empty cars standing at their doors. The door is closed, and is only opened after you have been scrutinized through a door-catch or a barred opening. At night an electric torch suddenly gleams through a pink silk curtain. There is a truly New York atmosphere of humbug in the whole thing. The interior is that of a criminal house; shutters are closed in full daylight, and one is caught in the smell of a cremation furnace, for the ventilation is defective and grills are prepared under the mantelpiece of the fireplace. Italians with a too familiar manner, or lamp-blue pseudo-bullfighters carrying bunches of monastic keys, guide you through the deserted rooms of the abandoned house. Facetious inscriptions grimace from the walls. There are a few very flushed diners. At one table some habitués are asleep, their heads sunk on their arms; behind a screen somebody is trying to restore a young woman who has had an attack of hysteria. . . . The food is almost always poor, the service deplorable; the staff regard you with the eyes of confederates and care not two pins about you. The sauterne is a sort of glycerine; it has to go with a partridge brought from the refrigerator of a French vessel; the champagne would not be touched at a Vincennes wedding-party.

Yet the speakeasy pervades Manhattan with a fascinating atmosphere of mystery. If only one could drink water there! Some speakeasies are disguised behind florists' shops, or behind undertakers' coffins. I know one, right in Broadway, which is entered through an imitation telephone-box; it has excellent beer; appetizing sausages and Welsh rabbits are sizzling in chafing-dishes and are given to customers without extra charge; drunks are expelled through a side-door which seems to open out into the nether world, as in "Chicago Nights." In the poorer quarters many former saloons for the ordinary people have secretly reopened. All these secret shrines are readily accessible, for there are, it is said, 20,000 speakeasies in New York, and it is unlikely that the police do not know them; they are very popular.

—By Paul Morand (1925), reproduced in *"Mirror for Gotham,"* edited by Bayrd Still (New York University Press, \$7.50).

The Ph.D. Learns About Love

By Stan Steiner

I IS A singular sex
Borne in Supermarkets
In public in Rented
Birth; No Cash Down by the lb.;
Bedded in crowded girls
And men. He trembled
Them and he ran
To sleep where he woke
In love with death
Lain in love's stead
Cold as his naked self.
His infinite discovery
Touched his naked fact
And he dissolved himself,
Was water, and he wed
The daughter of Poseidon
Who said, "Open your window.
Hear the sun." He did.
It sang of faroff lands
Where he who loved best
Was King. His sinews sang
Blessed by sun-blood
That was warm and woman
And he understood—
And he begat children.



BOOKS FOR CHRISTMAS

Three Hundred Suggestions for Holiday Giving

IT WOULD be heartless to mention the rapid approach of Christmas (nineteen shopping days as of today) if we did not have something helpful to suggest. As a matter of fact we have more than 300 suggestions—books so varied in subject matter and style that there should be at least one to appeal to every person on your list from three to ninety-three, volumes new enough that it isn't likely that he's already read them.

All the books reviewed, quoted, or described in this issue have been selected to help make your seasonal chores easier. On the next page begins a list of books reviewed in other issues and which, on the basis of our reviewers' assessments, we believe will make fine gifts. The annotations for the adult books are the work of Rollene Waterman, those for the children's books of Frances Lander Spain and other specialists in the children's department of the New York Public Library.

And, once again, a merry and bookish Christmas to you all!

—RAYMOND WALTERS, JR.

FICTION

AMELIE IN LOVE. By Henri Troyat. Translated by Lily Duplaix. Simon & Schuster. \$4.50.

Birth and death in a French village before World War I and a charming heroine who learns about love.

... **AND THE RAIN MY DRINK.** By Han Suyin. Little, Brown. \$4.

Somewhere between reportage and fiction, this is a picture of wartorn Malaya as seen by a Eurasian woman physician.

ANGLO-SAXON ATTITUDES. By Angus Wilson. Viking. \$4.50.

A motley array of types and attitudes surround the academician-hero with a great abundance of often witty prose.

BANG THE DRUM SLOWLY. By Mark Harris. Knopf. \$3.50.

A touching story of the death of a baseball player set against the same realistic background as "The Southpaw."

BEOWULF. By Bryher. Pantheon. \$2.75.

A poetic study of ordinary people and extraordinary courage during the bombardment of England.

A CERTAIN SMILE. By Françoise Sagan. Translated by Anne Green. Dutton. \$2.95.

A bored young girl meets a blasé older man and, to her surprise, falls in love. Told in fine literary style by the author of "Bonjour Tristesse."

COMPULSION. By Meyer Levin. Simon & Schuster. \$5.

A reportorial novel dealing with the much-publicized Leopold and Loeb case of 1924.

DON'T GO NEAR THE WATER. By William Brinkley. Random House. \$3.95.

A funny book about Navy public relations officers in the Pacific during World War II.

THE DOVES OF VENUS. By Olivia Manning. Abelard-Schuman. \$3.50.

A novel by an English lady about a pretty young girl and an aging beauty who hover around a heartless but nonetheless charming man.

FACE OF A HERO. By Pierre Boulle. Translated by Xan Fielding. Vanguard. \$3.50.

A peculiarly fascinating novel about a public prosecutor who becomes involved in a savage crime.

THE FIELD OF VISION. By Wright Morris. Harcourt, Brace. \$3.50.

The lives of a handful of Americans are sifted as they sit around a Mexican bullring.

FIVE A.M. By Jean Dutourd. Translated by Robin Chancellor. Simon & Schuster. \$3.

The pre-dawn mental tortures of a middle-aged bank clerk portrayed with wit and satire.

THE FLIGHT. By Ruth Stephan. Knopf. \$4.

A biographical novel about Queen Christina of Sweden who renounced her throne and her religion for a life of poverty.

THE FOUNTAIN OVERFLOWS. By Rebecca West. Viking. \$5.

The shabby and artistic, irresponsible and irrepressible Aubrey family in London at the turn of the century.

FURTHER FABLES FOR OUR TIME. By James Thurber. Simon & Schuster. \$3.50.

The animal kingdom has some wise words and witty morals for us mortals, especially as the inimitable Mr. Thurber tells it.

THE GREAT WORLD AND TIMOTHY COLT. By Louis Auchincloss. Houghton Mifflin. \$3.75.

A novel about ideals and integrity in the caverns of a New York law firm, and what young Mr. Colt does about it all.

HOMECOMING. By C. P. Snow. Scribner. \$3.95.

A portrait of the Public Man and his Private Life in an adroit performance by one of Britain's foremost novelists.

THE INSURGENTS. By Vercors. Translated by Rita Barisse. Harcourt. \$3.95.

A novel of metaphysics and politics which ponders the fundamental nature of man through the mode of a poet's weird experiment.

KING OF PARIS. By Guy Endore. Simon & Schuster. \$4.

The life of Alexandre Dumas père told with as much dash as the flamboyant Frenchman could have wished.

THE LAST HURRAH. By Edwin O'Connor. Little, Brown. \$4.

The marvelous figure of Skeffington, one-time mayor and governor, dominates this full-blooded novel of Irish-American political life.

THE LAST OF THE WINE. By Mary Renault. Pantheon. \$4.50.

A historical novel placed in Athens at the close of the Peloponnesian War when Socrates still had things to say.

THE LOOKING GLASS CONFERENCE. By Geoffrey Blunden. Vanguard. \$3.75.

Diplomats and diplomacy are delightfully minced in this satire of a top-level international conference.

THE LOST STEPS. By Alejo Carpentier. Translated by Harriet de Onis. Knopf. \$3.75.

The story of a journey, both real and spiritual, in the South African jungle, and about a man who learns to live without his creature comforts.

THE LOVING COUPLE. By Virginia Rowans. Crowell. \$3.50.

Bordering on caricature, this is an amusing story of a day in the life of a not-so-happily married couple by the author of "Auntie Mame."

MALONE DIES. By Samuel Beckett. Grove. Paperbound. \$1.25.

A strange, symbolic, and always cryptic novel by the author of "Waiting for Godot."

THE MANDARINS. By Simone de Beauvoir. Translated by Leonard Friedman. World. \$6.

An exploration into the milieu of the post-war French intellectual with an assortment of Sartre-esque characters.

THE MERMAIDS. By Eva Boros. Farrar, Straus. \$3.50.

A delicate treatment of love and death in the special world of the tuberculosis sanatorium.

THE NUN'S STORY. By Kathryn Hulme. Little, Brown. \$4.

The story of Sister Luke, her work as a nun in the Belgian Congo and in invaded Belgium, and her own struggles before she rejoins the outside world.

THE SACRIFICE. By Adele Wiseman. Viking. \$3.95.

About a Jewish family that settles in a Canadian town and tries to maintain its cultural traditions.

THE SAILOR, SENSE OF HUMOR, AND OTHER STORIES. By V. S. Pritchett. Knopf. \$4.50.

A collection of short stories by a distinguished British critic who is also a practised hand at fiction.

THE SEVEN ISLANDS. By Jon Godden. Knopf. \$3.

The story, told with delicacy and restraint, of a holy man who keeps a rocky retreat in the middle of the Ganges.

A SINGLE PEBBLE. By John Hersey. Knopf. \$3.

A novella about a group of Chinese and an