

romance; a young wife in Salzburg who feels herself an immature stranger to the soldier she has married; a woman on a cruise who is lost in a world that holds no financial protector; a Canadian schoolteacher caught in a whirlpool of embittering memories.

The best of them is "Going Ashore," the story of a woman of dubious background who, with her twelve-year-old daughter, is a passenger on a cruise ship. Here Miss Gallant not only revealingly captures the emotional insecurity of a woman adrift in a sea that holds no male anchor of personal responsibility but the poignant feeling of a child who desperately hopes for a way of life that is free of an "Uncle." On the cruise she and her mother were "alone, with no man, no Uncle. Anyone to interfere. . . . The new life was always there, just before them, like a note indefinitely suspended or a wave about to break. It was there, but nothing happened." Nothing, except that Mama found a new protector.

"The Other Paris," the title story, holds the sharp bite of contrast between illusion and reality. A young American girl working in Paris becomes engaged to her office superior, also an American, and because it had happened in Paris she was sure that an exciting world of romance and beauty would open up to her. But the man was dull and she was timid and the glimpses she caught of French love she found sordid and mean. But once home in the States she knew, "the comforting vision of Paris as she had once imagined it would overlap reality . . . after awhile, happily married, mercifully removed in time, she would remember it and describe it and finally believe it as it had never been at all."

Like many collections, Miss Gallant's has its low as well as high moments of interest and craftsmanship. A few of the stories—or sketches—emerge as exercises in mood, interesting as emotional explorations but unrewarding as fictional entities. But the best of them, several of which originally appeared in *The New Yorker*, are excellent.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S
KINGSLEY DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 1143)

R. C. HUTCHINSON:

THE STEPMOTHER

Feeling the breath of the house as it moved into spring, she thought of a liner emerging from the rage of northern seas, how it seems to accept with the complacency of old experience the sunlit calm at which passengers are marvelling.



Herbert Gold—"ear for the vernacular."

Notes

LIFE WITH THE CARNIVAL: In "The Man Who Was Not with It" (Little, Brown, \$3.75) Herbert Gold has written one of the toughest, roughest, and in many ways the most nauseating stories of recent times. It is the story of a boy named Bud who ran away from his lonely father and his girl in Pittsburgh to join a carnival in San Diego, and Mr. Gold's account of the ways by which Grack, Bud's boss, cured him of the dope habit is horrifyingly typical. One day Grack rolled up the boy's sleeve, poked the sore places on the veins, and told him he could mash the habit out of him. Then he took Bud up to a cabin in the mountains, slept beside him with a knife on his bare chest, and went to work. Bud's brains turned to soap and came out of his ears, but he was cured. The real question, however, was: Was Bud with it?—with the carnival, that is. He went home to his father, a wretched man, and to the girl, Phyllis. Something of an amateur philosopher, he employs a lingo of his own when he says of Phyllis, "No man can escape the woman he considers too much rused for him; tear her down or run away toward her if he can't meet her head and hind on." Soon, being able to stand the life at home no longer, he heads back for the carnival, where, in a rambling finish, he marries a cute little number who is the daughter of a fortune-teller, and sets off to find Grack, who, when he is located, tries to rape Bud's now-pregnant wife. All of which causes Bud to decide that "he was not the man who was with it" and the reader to decide that Mr. Gold has both a talent for violence and an ear for the vernacular which is alarming but which is also difficult to forget.

—HARRISON SMITH.

SWEET REMEMBERED DAYS: Life, as a very small girl named Liesbeth discovers

in Dorothea Rutherford's "The Threshold" (translated by Moura Budberg and Tania Alexander; Little, Brown, \$3.75), is a matter of sensations and solitary experiences rather than events, although the anticipation of events can be unbearably exciting. To wake up in the sun-fingered, familiar-scented nursery in the lovely Estonian city of Tallinn in the idyllic days before World War I is thrilling; it is a fresh joy every morning. In the magic world outside her home there are open horse-cars to ride in summer, and in snowy winter the cosy sleighs drawn by jingling horses. Then at night, through the dark of the streets, the gas lamps flicker, so different from homely candles that light Mother's piano. Outside is fun, of course, and adventure, too, but home is best of all. There Liesbeth is enfolded in a sense of well-being. It is at home that Mother sings and occasionally scolds and sometimes hugs a child in need of comforting. Home is also Father's kingdom, and Father is the most important of the kings.

Amid delights to be smelled, tasted, heard, and felt the cycle of Liesbeth's year comes full circle. She enjoys summer play at the shore, the wondrous autumn apples in Grandmama's garden, the Christmas bazaar with its bride-doll raffle. Presumably this little exercise in nostalgia is autobiographical. It constitutes, in any case, a delicate revelation of the unfolding of a young child's spirit. In its lyrical and meditative way it is a prose poem to the miracle of childhood.

—ANNE F. WOLFE.

THE RIDDLE OF MARY: The opening chapters of Brian Cooper's short novel "Maria" (Vanguard, \$3) read like any of the countless fictional stories about Nazi atrocities which, popular fifteen and ten years ago, have long since been outdated—and topped in gruesomeness—by factual reports, indeed by the mere files of the Nuremberg trials.

However, Mr. Cooper's book turns out to be a mystery story. It involves a young Cambridge historian (who has done service with the Nuremberg tribunal) and a propertied young patrician widow of great beauty and no less poise, who fall in love with each other almost at first sight and get married after a brief courtship. Soon the circumstances of the death of the bride's first husband, a German, begin to trouble his successor. Two relatives of that man who live nearby—a hopelessly mad woman and her crippled husband—augment the atmosphere of sinister enigma and

(Continued on page 30)

Tammany Window-Dressing

"The Gentleman and the Tiger," edited by Harold C. Syrett (Lippincott, 375 pp. \$6), is the autobiography of George B. McClellan, the son of the controversial Civil War general, who was one of the prominent figures in New York City's politics half a century ago. Professor Louis Filler of Antioch College reviews it here.

By Louis Filler

IN NAMING the autobiography of George B. McClellan "The Gentleman and the Tiger" its editor, Harold C. Syrett, may have had Frank R. Stockton's famous title, "The Lady or the Tiger?" in general view. If so readers will wish to ask themselves whether a question mark is at all appropriate in summoning up the results of McClellan's career and concluding fight with Tammany Hall. Or it may be that the inspiration for the title was Cosmo Monkhouse's limerick ("There was a young lady from Nigger . . ."). In this case Professor Syrett would be saying that McClellan in trying to ride the amiable Democratic coast succeeded in no more than furnishing it a good meal at his own expense.

In either event Professor Syrett has produced a most delightful book out of the 709 pages of typewritten manuscript which McClellan completed be-

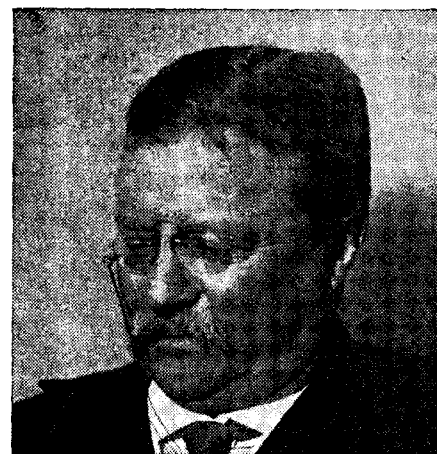
fore his death and presented to the New York Historical Society. McClellan's personality was formed in part by the injustice, official and unofficial, which he imagined had been done his adored father, the controversial Civil War general. He was a gentleman, who was willing to be a firm Democratic organization man at a time when Tammany Hall was the country's symbol for political corruption.

As such he had a relatively short public life, first as president of New York's Board of Aldermen beginning in 1893, at the age of twenty-eight, then as a Congressman from 1895 to 1903, and finally as Mayor of New York until 1909. The rest is silence, except that as a professor of economic history at Princeton University he had some acquaintance (but no particular influence) with some political notables, wrote several works in history, and attracted a bit of notoriety by his effort to get Germany a fair hearing before our entrance into World War I. He died in 1942.

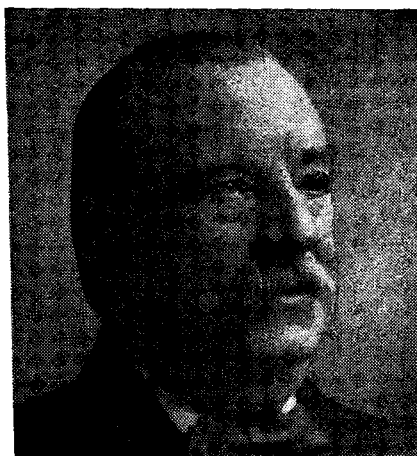
McClellan was, in short, pretty much of a failure in public affairs: little more than a creature of Boss Croker and Boss Murphy for so long as those realistic New York politicians chose to use his name as a key to respectability and tolerate his personal honesty. McClellan lacked the magnetism and wire-pulling abilities which might have helped him build a per-



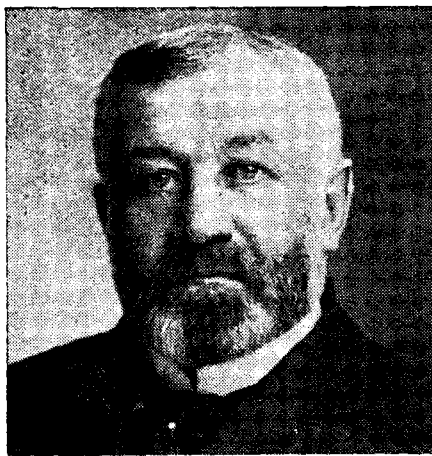
OF WOODROW WILSON: "[He] was the most self-assured, the most egotistical, and the vainest man I ever knew. . . . He once said to me, 'I am sorry for those who disagree with me.' When I asked why, he replied, 'Because I know that they are wrong.'"



OF THEODORE ROOSEVELT [at the unveiling of Gen. McClellan's statue]: "Turning around he faced my mother. 'Madame, you are a good woman. This lady has done her duty and borne children.' Then he delivered an oration against birth control. . . ."



OF GROVER CLEVELAND: ". . . [He] told us a quite banal anecdote, [whereupon everybody began congratulating him in superlatives]. Cleveland stood it as long as he could and, when he could stand it no longer, with great emphasis said, 'Oh, rats!'"



OF BOSS CROKER: "There has always been a certain mystery as to how Croker made his fortune. . . . Before [an] investigating committee . . . he blandly stated that he kept no . . . accounts . . . He added with a smile, 'I am out for my pocket all the time'."



OF MAYOR LOW [after the death of Low's father]: "I was eating breakfast when the nurse . . . told me that Father had passed away. I remember that I had buckwheat cakes. . . . I finished my cakes and, folding my napkin, I went upstairs to Father."