

pointless quarrel" of Church and State. The Dreyfus Case is treated with studied blandness; the sorry interlude of Vichy is barely alluded to; the passionate strife over Petain is omitted.

In the light of his purpose and intentions, the omissions and the reticence to elaborate the less admirable aspects are understandable enough. One could wish, however, for somewhat less episode and *petite histoire* and somewhat more of persistent and underlying material factors and forces. The pages on the eighteenth-century Enlightenment and the French Revolution are brilliant but written without benefit of the great modern French historians of that period. The sections on the Third and Fourth Republics are skimpy; those on culture, literature, and the arts, too compressed. A non-French reader might grow a little weary of delicate thrusts against ungrateful allies. There is a law of diminishing returns in minimizing French responsibilities for misfortunes that Frenchmen bear with fortitude.

Nevertheless, his story is moving and engrossing, a veritable tour de force. France is a mystery and riddle and enigma to foreigners. From this appealing review of her past, a sympathetic reader, as well as the understanding author himself, may, as he turns from a troubled present, find sources for fresh faith in the France of tomorrow.

SAD PIERROT: In "Selected Writings of Jules Laforgue" (Grove, \$4), William Jay Smith, as editor and translator, has chosen to demonstrate all aspects of Laforgue's work: his poems, prose poems, criticism, chapters from his little-known book on Berlin, and his correspondence. His translations, especially of the poems, are brilliant in their fidelity to the tone and wit of the French poet.

Gradually Laforgue has been assuming a place of real importance in the history of symbolism. There are pictures of Paris in his poems, more localized than Baudelaire's, and cosmological visions. The central image is of the heart—in which the poet comes to read the illusion of life. But no matter how cosmic his vision becomes, he always ends by parodying his own anguish. As far back as the poet can go in his memory, he has been something of a clown, something of a genius *manqué*. Laforgue felt a close affinity with the sad Pierrot, a familiar symbol of the young Parisian intellectual of 1880. He was exactly the type of hero, of artistic-intellectual whose psychology and drama he wanted to describe in his writings: the genius failure.

—WALLACE FOWLIE.

Gourmet's Paradise

"Prunier's: The Story of a Great Restaurant," by Madame Prunier (Knopf, 298 pp. \$5), is a chronicle of the family that has run distinguished eating places in Paris and London for the past eighty-five years. Lawton Mackall, who has been reporting on restaurants for many years, reviews it.

By Lawton Mackall

WHAT do you wish? Notables? Immortals? Celebrated eccentrics? "Prunier's: The Story of a Great Restaurant," Madame Prunier's eighty-five-year-old saga (109 years if you count from the year Founder Emile Albert was born) is studded with them, anecdoted with them. Réjane arriving in a carriage drawn by white mules. The elder Coquelin telling of a sleigh driver in St. Petersburg who, when paid his fare, burst into tears at sight of the actor's well-filled wallet, bemoaning the opportunity missed in not having killed him and lifted that stack of money. Coquelin riposted by giving the fellow a thrashing. Marathon-conversationalist Catulle Mendès, poet, critic, whose dinner had to be heated up again, sometimes twice, before it could be recalled to his attention. Tiger Clemenceau grim over his invariable meal of boiled egg, rib of beef, and bottle of Evian water. Sportive Rus-

sian grand dukes showing up at eight a.m. for a beddy-bye breakfast of oysters and Heidsieck Monople. Yogurt prophet Metchnikoff holding bits of bread over a lamp flame and thereafter heat-treating each morsel of his meal in the same fashion. Premier Briand phoning in to report a panic: his Alsatian cook screaming from atop her kitchen table, terrified by the leaping-alive turbot that a Prunier delivery boy had brought.

But the Pruniers themselves are the story—individualists with iron will-to-independence that made father-and-son relationships a bit edgy. Hurt feelings from a clash of that sort prompted Eugène Prunier, as a boy of thirteen, to quit his village home and trudge eighteen miles to Rouen where his sister, a laundress, took him in, and where he landed a job as glass-washer in a bistro. His Paris break-in—again a bistro, this one in the small tradesmandom of the rue Montholon (near foot of Montmartre)—gained training as cellarer of wines and opener of oysters.

By 1872, having been through the Franco-Prussian War and starved through the siege of Paris, he was ready to open the first Prunier's, in business and matrimonial partnership with a widow, mother of two daughters: she tall, monumental, and thirty-four; he short, stocky, and twenty-four. They began on a small corner of the avenue de l'Opéra with big hopes, only to be ousted by the widening of that avenue. This was luck, for the address they moved to, 9 rue Duphot, has been Prunier headquarters ever since. Son Emile, inheriting at the age of twenty-two, established the elegant rue Traktir Prunier's in the Etoile section, became France's caviar king, reformed the entire oyster industry, and built a trade empire in live fish, even launching a fish-of-the-week club for subscribers.

His daughter, author of this saga, was her father's secretary at seventeen and, like him, fell heir at twenty-two. A woman of feebler fiber might have crumpled under the load, but she, a true Prunier, reached out to the source of some of her best customers by establishing a Prunier's on St. James Street, London, financed by putting up her Paris restaurants as collateral. Characteristically she started work on this extraordinarily interesting book during the



London Blitz when Prunier fortunes were at their all-time low. Her daughter designed the attractive jacket; her son runs the flourishing Traktir.

HAUTE COUTURE: Was it pure coincidence that shortly after the invention of the H-bomb, Paris dress designer Christian Dior launched his famous H-line? According to Célia Bertin, who has written a book about the world of *haute couture* called "*Paris a la Mode*" (translated by Marjorie Deans; Harper, \$4), it was not. "A secret bond," writes Mlle. Bertin, "undoubtedly exists between the *couturier's* ideas and the mood of the moment." Mlle. Bertin, like many of her compatriots, takes her *haute couture* very seriously and her book explores virtually all the facets of the industry from the workrooms where the designer's creations are sewn ("not more than 2 per cent or 3 per cent of the total work is usually carried out by machine") to subsidiary

trades like the designing of shoes or of flower and feather trimmings which are carried out by separate artisans. Finally, there is a section on the designers themselves which includes a brief run-down on such past and present pace-setters as Schiaparelli, Chanel, the late Jacques Fath, Dior, Hubert de Givenchy, and Balenciaga. Unfortunately, the presentation of these personalities is routine and one is apt to feel in "Paris a la Mode" that the main difference between Balenciaga and say, de Givenchy, is that the former was born in Spain and has "a film-star temperament" while the latter was born in France and is well over six feet tall. The rest of the industry—from seamstress to shoe-maker—is better characterized and if one cannot get quite as explosive as Mlle. Bertin about its importance, one can at least appreciate the genuine artistic effort that goes into the creation of an *haute couture* ensemble.

—E. P. MONROE.

The World

Continued from page 20

and translated by Leon Kossar and Ralph M. Zoltan. The author's own pen drawings reveal the mood of those tragic days.

—EMIL LENGYEL.

HOW AUSTRIA REMAINED FREE: Postwar Austria's triumphant fight for freedom is a subject that deserves highly perceptive treatment, and that is just what it receives in "*The Austrian Odyssey*," by Gordon Shepherd (St. Martin's Press, \$6.50). Mr. Shepherd, an English journalist now resident in Vienna, was a history major at Cambridge and an Intelligence officer in postwar Austria. He not only saw the whole show but was in a position to evaluate it from both an historical and human viewpoint. His heartening report, complete with photographs, bibliography, map, and index, is perhaps the best work on Austria that has appeared since the war.

Although the author pays considerable attention to Austria's great past as the heart of an empire and to the First Republic that existed between 1918 and 1938, the most interesting part of his book deals with the double miracle of Austria's economic recovery and battle for independence. At the end of World War II the Russians had the cards stacked against the Austrians. The little Danubian country, laid waste, invaded, looted, and occupied, appeared to have no chance. But the Austrians "gave the world a remarkable proof of their moral toughness." Conservatives and Leftists cooperated unselfishly in the national interest. While next-door Czechoslovakia was surrendering to Communism, Austria was standing its ground. In the end, "the Russians evacuated Austria having failed to produce a single dupe prominent enough to influence the general public."

A geographical and cultural salient of the free world, Austria juts deep into Communist territory. Situated on the uneasy frontiers of Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary, the Austrian Republic is one of Europe's key states.

This delightful volume will both serve the tourist well and prove a valuable guide for the stay-at-home who wants to follow the march of events in Danubia.

—H. C. W.

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

Answers: Column Two should read: 6, 7, 13, 10, 9, 14, 15, 11, 4, 1, 8, 5, 2, 12, 3. Column Three should read: 5, 11, 2, 7, 1, 14, 12, 3, 13, 4, 8, 6, 15, 9, 10.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fact and Fiction

Title and Author	Crime, Place, and Sleuth	Summing Up	Verdict
FIRE, BURN! <i>John Dickson Carr</i> (Harper: \$3.50)	Reconstruction of 1829 London murder by present-day Yarder who goes back in time.	Excellent fidelity to customs, dress, speech of era, with fascinating "Notes for the Curious" appended.	Top period piece.
THE BUSHMAN WHO CAME BACK <i>Arthur W. Upfield</i> (Crime Club: \$2.95)	Insp. Napoleon Bonaparte, Australian ace, looks into outback killing and child's disappearance after mother's murder.	Nice tracking, excellent scenery; killer somewhat wispy as willi-willies blow; pace and characterization professional.	Usual good job.
THE TORTURED PATH <i>Kendell Foster Crossen</i> (Dutton: \$2.95)	Maj. Kim Locke of CIA invites capture by Chinese Reds with view to rescuing brain-washed colonel.	Contains semi-documentary account of prisoner treatment; hero wonder-boy type; villains as expected.	Bang-bang in spots.
CASEBOOK OF THE CURIOUS AND TRUE <i>Francis X. Busch</i> (Bobbs: \$4)	Eight fact jobs, involving much court work; period 1800s to present; Chicago-land plus one Kentucky.	Clarence Darrow makes several appearances; girl's unexplained 1901 death is high point.	Good variety.
WHAT ROUGH BEAST? <i>John Trench</i> (Macmillan: \$2.95)	Learned Amateur Martin Cotterell called to English cathedral town when unknowns badger cleric; fatality precedes unmasking.	Local cops real old meanies; delinquents crowd pages; high Anglican yarn is occasionally wispy but thoroughly pleasant.	Usual high-IQ job.
END OF CHAPTER <i>Nicholas Blake</i> (Harper: \$2.95)	Nigel Strangeways, suave London eye, takes on publisher client to forestall libel suit, but gory murder intrudes.	Upper-bracket job, told with author's customary wit, grace, and aplomb; Yard ace is also on ball; handling deft.	Bell-ringer.
AN AIR THAT KILLS <i>Margaret Millar</i> (Random: \$3.50)	Toronto tycoon vanishes as paternity exposure looms; police activity only incidental (but good).	Background and characterization admirable, as expected; suspense excellent; final scene played in California.	Tops.
MURDER MADE ABSOLUTE <i>Michael Underwood</i> (Washburn: \$2.75)	English barrister conks out in courtroom; Manton of Scotland Yard queries suspects, who include unpleasant judge.	Pleasantly written, and with abundant humor; sourpuss jurist especially well drawn; moves right along.	Bright and crisp. —SERGEANT CUFF.