

bleday, \$5), is the second of two English versions that have appeared in the past twelve months of this most satisfactory chronicle of Spain's first great feats in the New World. (For the first, see *SR* March 10, 1956.) This latest translation represents an effort, largely successful, to rescue the earlier English version of A. P. Maudslay, first published in England in 1908-1916, from "fusty Victorianism . . . and convey in the language of today the spirit of the times in which Don Bernal lived and wrote." It contains a more ample portion—some 80 per cent—of this remarkable story, including in particular "various observations" on the sexual habits of both the native Mexicans and the conquering Spaniards that were "either deleted or treated euphemistically in earlier translations" but are not expected to shock the public in a period of "more sophisticated taste and understanding."

The qualification "largely" is employed here for two principal reasons. Mr. Idell fails to give the reader the benefit of the editor's intimate knowledge of Bernal Díaz del Castillo's life. Half of the career of the great chronicler, the years 1492-1514 and 1521-1584(?), is almost completely blank. A bright light might have been reflected on the later period by adding a translation of the chronicler's account of a later expedition into Honduras and Guatemala.

Moreover, Mr. Idell's language is not at all points precisely that of the present day. For example, in several places the word "chickens" is used to describe some sort of native fowl. But unless anthropologists and other scholars are mistaken, there were no chickens in America until they were introduced by the Spaniards and the Portuguese. The word used by Don Bernal may have been *pollo* or its plural—Idell unhappily seldom reveals the Spanish words he translates or what copy of the work he is following for the particular passage.

The tremendous epoch which Díaz helped in his humble way to inaugurate may be nearing its end, but neither the wonderful and violent four centuries nor the chronicles he wrote about them are likely ever to be forgotten.

—J. FRED RIPPY.

SPAIN'S GOLDEN AGE: History contains few more dramatic epochs than the one distinguished by Spain's explorations and conquests of the sixteenth century. Jean Descola, a Frenchman who has lived close to the Spaniards and imbibed the spirit of those golden decades of grandeur, has made full use of its potentialities in *"The Conquistadors"* (translated by Malcolm Barnes; Viking, \$5).

No writer since Prescott has written so thrilling an account of Spain's remarkable overseas achievements during her *Siglo del Oro*. Starting with *Terra Incognita*, Descola moves rapidly and smoothly, making no detours, through this thrilling episode of modern history and ends with a "dirge for the conquerors," in which he describes their character and motivations in a chapter that the gifted Prescott probably could not have surpassed if he had tried. Few of the important participants are neglected. Columbus, Cortés, and the Pizarros are especially emphasized, but others are given adequate attention (possibly excepting Jiménez de Quesada, the conqueror of the Chichas of Colombia, whose exploits Descola seems not to have sufficiently appreciated).

THE major defect of Descola's volume is his failure to append a bibliography and to keep his readers constantly aware of his sources of information. But even this defect may have the merit of avoiding distraction and inculcating an appropriate skepticism.

The details to be mastered in the telling of this story are so immense and many of them so much in dispute that readers may even need to be warned not to accept this fast-moving narrative without comparing it with such works as Samuel E. Morison's "Admiral of the Ocean Sea," Irving B. Richman's "Spanish Conquerors," Herbert E. Bolton's "Spanish Borderlands," and F. A. Kirkpatrick's "Spanish Conquistadores."

If they will take the trouble to do this they will find that Descola is at times a bit too credulous, at times disposed to cling to fancies, and at times in error in respect to minor matters, but never far wrong and never lacking in his capacity to see the great drama as a whole. One may doubt his assertion that Columbus was very likely a Jew and that Jews were prominent among those who supported his first voyage; one may doubt the accuracy of his statements regarding the size of the sailing vessels employed by the great discoverer; one may doubt that any seamen from the British Isles were among those who sailed westward with Columbus from Palos in 1492; one may question the yarn about Columbus and the egg—one may have doubts regarding these and a few other similar details and still insist with this reviewer that Descola has produced an outstanding literary work for which he and his publisher deserve hearty congratulations.

—J. F. R.

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COMMON SENSE ECONOMICS

by L. Albert Hahn

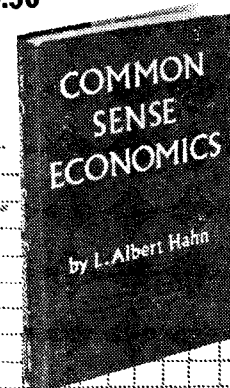
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income and wealth."*

This extraordinary, plainly written book by a banker and economist will not be welcomed by advocates of state economy. It is a remarkable book in the scanty field of anti-Keynes literature—one of the very few essays which gives a presentation of "general theory."

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Reviewers for this issue: Alice Lohrer, Assistant Professor, Library School, University of Illinois; Della McGregor, Chief of Youth Services, St. Paul, Minn., Public Library; Margaret Mahon, Children's Librarian, Greenville, S. C., Public Library; Elaine Simpson, Secondary School Specialist, Young Adult Services, The New York Public Library; and Elizabeth O. Williams, Supervisor, Library and Textbook Section, Los Angeles, Calif., Board of Education.

—FRANCES LANDER SPAIN, Coordinator,
Children's Services, The New York Public Library

THE EMPEROR'S WHITE HORSES. By Vernon Bowen. Illustrated by Hans Kreis. McKay. \$2.75. In war-torn Vienna during the summer of 1945 the training of the fabulous pure-bred white stallions continues even during periods of intermittent air raids. The blood line of these eighty Lipizzan trace back to the time of Caesar.

While Hitler and the Russian armies jockey for position and for the fall of Vienna, Colonel Podhajsky, director of the Riding School Stables, receives word from General George Patton that an American raid through the enemy lines will be made shortly in order to capture the breeding stock of the school. In the hope of insuring their safety, the stallions are to be transported to Czechoslovakia by American troops under cover of darkness.

Although based on actual happenings that took place in Austria, the book is completely fictional. The author has chosen not to limit himself to a literal interpretation of the facts, but rather to portray the spirit of what happened.

Hans Kreis, the illustrator, once owned a Lipizzan stallion. Historical-fiction and horse-story fans will find the book fascinating reading.

—DELLA MCGREGOR.

I IS ONE. By Tasha Tudor. Oxford. \$2.75. Miss Tudor has made this counting book as a companion volume to her "A Is for Annabelle." With flowers and birds, small animals and fruits she has decorated her pages and illustrated the numbers from one to twenty. The delicacy of her colors and

detail of design give an old-fashioned flavor to this book for the youngest.

—F. L. S.

DIPPER OF COPPER CREEK. By John and Jean George. Illustrated by Jean George. Dutton. \$3.50. This is the story of the water ouzel, or dipper bird, a bird that can stay under water for a long time. It is also the story of young Doug and his growing awareness of life around him, of the beauty and cruelty of nature, of the relationships of people, and of his place in society.



—From "Dipper of Copper Creek."

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And above all, it is the story of a summer high in the Colorado Rockies, of the progression of the seasons, and of the response of plant and animal life to its rhythm. Mr. and Mrs. George have again, through text and illustrations, created real animals and people.

—F. L. S.

TOUGH ENOUGH'S TRIP. By Ruth and Latrobe Carroll. Oxford. \$2.75. Beanie Tatum and his family planned a trip from their farm in the Great Smoky Mountains, east across the state of North Carolina, to the Atlantic Ocean to visit their great-grandparents. All of the animals, even Tough Enough, were to be left at home. But when the day for departure came, Tough Enough stowed away in the old truck and was not discovered until too late to take him back. All along the way Beanie and Tough Enough found other animals that needed homes until, by the time they reached their destination, they had a small zoo. Understanding of children, a fine sense of family, and the love for animals that characterizes the other stories about Beanie Tatum are present in this book of his latest adventures.

—F. L. S.

AFTER THE SUN GOES DOWN. By Glenn O. Blough. Pictures by Jean Bendick. Whittlesey House. \$2.50. Here is an invitation to go with the author to The Big Woods after dark. Accept the invitation, for you will not have another one soon that will bring with its acceptance such unique and surprising entertainment. You will hear the whippoorwill tell its name over and over and over again, the bat's high squeak, and the strange singing of the grasshopper. You can observe the habits of many creatures whose activities begin when the sun goes down.

Dr. Blough has made another fine contribution to his science books for seven-to-ten-year-olds. This book will also catch the attention of both older children and adults because of its accuracy and interesting style. The artist has done a good job of harmonizing with, and illuminating, the text.

—MARGARET MAHON.

BALL IN THE SKY. By Esther M. Douty. Illustrated by Douglas Gorsline. Holt. \$2.75. Not only the air-minded youth of today will enjoy "Ball in the Sky" appeal, but so will all who enjoy reading about men of vision and courage. This inspiring biography of John Wise, father of American ballooning, is a book the family can share, though it is written for young readers of eleven and up. Undaunted by failure, apathy, and the ridicule of those around him, John Wise strove with patience and skill to develop a field of scientific endeavor in the then little known area