

to chart the progress of his art and craft. His earliest printed poem, when he was eighteen, is an elegy on the death of a young nobleman; it is full of grotesque conceits and turgid rhetoric. Each successive poem shows him sloughing off his faults and shaping his line to marmoreal strength and delicacy. His "Heroique Stanzas" on Cromwell, his poem on the restoration of Charles II, and his celebration of England's year of wonders, "Annus Mirabilis," are his most ambitious poems for this period. His translations from Ovid, with the valuable prefatory essay, and the group of sprightly prologues and epilogues conclude the volume. The apprenticeship of the poet is complete; in the next volume we shall see the great master of satire.

This hefty volume will impress all its readers, lay and academic, by its exhaustive commentary. For each poem we are first given a full account of its occasion; setting the poem firmly in its biographical, social, political, and literary matrix is particularly useful for a poet as "engaged" as Dryden. The verse is then analyzed; and finally the annotations explain in impeccable detail all the densely packed allusions. For their commentary the editors have encompassed the literature of Dryden's time and dug through mountains of scholarly monographs and journals. But in purely critical judgments they are too reluctant to recognize what Mark Van Doren calls Dryden's "false lights." They consider "Annus Mirabilis" a completely achieved masterpiece; more justly, perhaps, one may side with Dr. Johnson's opinion that Dryden "seems not yet fully to have formed his versification, or settled his system of propriety."

As with other recent scholarly editions, one is struck by this as a phenomenon of corporate scholarship. It is, to begin with, financed by a university; most of its material comes from university and endowed libraries (the Folger and the Huntington); and its personnel is made up of university teachers. The proliferation of literary scholarship and techniques makes this almost necessary. Here there are eight regular editors, and they, as listed in the acknowledgments, were assisted by many other scholars. If such a collective project lacks the personal flavor of a Saintsbury or a Chapman, it gains in comprehensiveness and freedom from peccadillo.

Dryden is thus being well served. Despite a quibble here and there, there can be no quibble about the two essential questions: that a new edition of Dryden's works is a necessity, and that the one being produced on the shores of the Pacific will be an edifice not of brick but of definitive marble.

AMERICAN WRITING



The periodicals America read in 1900.

—Bettmann.

When Magazines Found the Masses

"A History of American Magazines, 1885-1905," by Frank Luther Mott (Harvard University Press. 858 pp. \$12.50) is the fourth volume in a definitive history. Joe Alex Morris, our reviewer, was once an editor of Collier's and has contributed to many magazines.

By Joe Alex Morris

AS EVERYBODY knows, a writer—unless he has a contract in Hollywood—leads a grim life. Take a fellow named Jack London who sweated out a piece of fiction for *National Magazine* back in the latter years of the nineteenth century. As payment he received five dollars in cash and five free subscriptions to the magazine which, presumably, could be distributed among the butcher, the baker, and the rent collector. It was perhaps worthy of notice that the hero of London's next story seized an editor by the throat and shook him until he managed to collect \$4.60 and a ferry boat ticket. Another young hopeful, O. Henry, had a steady market for his stories in *Smart Set* but he never received more than a cent a word for his efforts or, say, fifty dollars for a short story. When the *Century*, in a burst of generosity, paid John Burroughs \$450 for three articles, he was so stunned that he recklessly told a friend it was "too much." After all, Edward William Bok's sal-

ary as editor of the *Ladies Home Journal* was only \$10,000.

These and many, many more sidelights on famous literary figures of an earlier era are scattered through "A History of American Magazines, 1885-1905," by Frank Luther Mott. The last years of the nineteenth century witnessed the beginning of the modern age of communication, of mass appeal. Advertisers were groping their way toward Madison Avenue. Magazines, which had been published for the carriage trade, slashed their prices to capture the nickels and dimes of the average citizen.


This revolution in the communication of ideas, information, knowledge, and entertainment to all instead of to a few was of great importance during a critical period in the growth and development of the United States. And Dr. Mott, who was formerly dean of the School of Journalism at the University of Missouri, has set it all down in an incredibly comprehensive and scholarly work, into which he has too seldom injected something of his own warmth and wit.

Discussing the changes during this period in advertising technique, for example, he cannot resist pointing out that one woman's magazine primly announced that it would no longer publish articles discussing women's underwear because the subject was "offensive." But it continued to carry advertisements showing sculptured womanly figures draped in unmen-

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The Saturday Review

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The Long Weekend and the Publisher

THE time to write this editorial came shortly after I had served on the *Saturday Review* Awards Committee for distinguished advertising in the public interest, the decision of which was reported in the issue of April 20; and at about the same time I read with interest Walter Reuther's prophecy—or threat—that the four-day working week was just around the corner. It was the combination that gave me a vision of the future in which tired workers on their three-day weekends would spend most of their time reading, listening to, and viewing advertising matter devoted to explaining just how industry's increasing productivity was making the three-day weekend possible.

It would be easy, with this start, to consider politely the problem of the greater leisure that awaits us—the place of books as the occupation of man's leisure and perhaps the particular appropriateness of university press books—and thus round out a very self-satisfying little homily. It is more interesting and difficult to speculate on the place of books and other instruments of inquiry in the economy of abundance.

William D. Patterson of *SR*, in his article commenting on the advertising awards, quoted Professor David M. Potter of Yale as follows:

In a society of abundance the productive capacity can supply new kinds of goods faster. Society in the mass learns to crave those goods or to regard them as necessities. If this new capacity is to be used the imperative must fall upon consumption and the society must be adjusted to a new

set of drives and values in which consumption is paramount.

This is a fancy way of saying that the shorter the work week (assuming that it corresponds to real increase in productivity) the larger the volume of advertising required to maintain a stable economy. (We might call this the Batten, Barton, Durstine & Reuther Law.) We should make no mistake as to what lies behind that innocuous looking phrase "be adjusted" in Professor Potter's statement. It means advertising in the volume and intensity that is required to move the goods. It can be advertising directed either at selling specific products or services, or advertising whose aim is the more general one of conditioning

the minds of men to accept the movement of goods and services as a fine thing in itself.

This is not an attack on advertising. I agree with Professor Potter's thesis that "when abundance prevails, advertising begins to fulfill a really essential function." I agree to the extent of believing that if the Soviet economy ever reached the stage of true abundance, it would probably have to introduce something very like American advertising agencies to move the goods. At the same time it cannot be denied that the picture of American society "being adjusted" to a new set of drives and values looks somewhat like the year 1984 arrived at without wars or revolutions simply through the normal evolution of American economy. Can Western man as we know him survive in that world?

It is not for book publishers to point the finger at advertising men as the sole engineers of this new society. In Mr. Patterson's phrase, advertising is a vast engine of persuasion, but historically books have been the greatest engines of persuasion in the sense of conditioning the minds of men to new drives and values. The decisions of book publishers can still in part determine whether our 1984 is a year of human abundance with human values or the Orwell nightmare.

PERHAPS the key lies in the fact that books can be, as I have indicated, tools of inquiry as well as engines of persuasion. To the extent that publishers can clearly distinguish these two legitimate functions of communication and can encourage a balance between them, they can save the future for human values.

—LAMBERT DAVIS,
 President, Association of
 American University Presses.

Emily Dickinson and Patanjali Examine a New Soul

By Robert Huff

EMILY: Had it been big enough to see
 It might have burned our eyes.

Patanjali: But what the blue-faced body loosed
 Was not of any size.

Emily: He drowned himself, somebody said,
 Because of self-disdain.

Patanjali: I see in it a lack of love—

Emily: Alas, his body's pain!
 That mortal fact made all of us
 Coil close into a ring.

Patanjali: Compassionately circled, it
 Was less diminishing.