

commanded them to take the cross; the sea would divide itself before them so that they might march to the Holy Land dry-shod, where they would retake for Christendom the holy sepulchre and the holy places.

The sea did not divide. The French children who reached Marseilles embarked for Palestine, only to be sold into slavery by treacherous merchants; the German children perished by thousands on their way to the southern tip of Italy.

Hugh de Gys, aged twenty-four, hero of "The Devil's Cross," follows the tragic track of the German children. He does so because he has pledged himself to discover what has

become of Count Jorg's sixteen-year-old daughter, Judith, who has been moved by the preaching of Nicholas to join the Children's Crusade. He sets out on this quest for two reasons: to purge himself of a sense of guilt, and to gain the guerdon of a small fief. At Brindisi his quest ends, but along the road he encounters enough adventures to crowd his old age with memories. For there are those who will profit greatly if Judith never returns to her ancestral castle.

"The Devil's Cross" resounds with sword-play and is black with treachery, and Hugh de Gys is an ardent lover as well as a stalwart fighter, who—we are told—can vault into the

saddle while wearing no less than eighty pounds of mail. The climactic scene in which Judith is rescued from a fate sometimes considered worse than death is a well-planned battle-piece. But, despite the violence and the abundance of the action, the author manages to communicate only a minimum of excitement to his reader.

**THE TROUBLES OF DR. REICHENBACH:** In "March the Ninth" (Rinehart, \$4.50) a serious British novelist, R. C. Hutchinson, attempts to do some moral probing while casting his material in the shape of a tale of international intrigue. In fact, he has tried to fashion something no less lofty than a doom-ridden, expiatory tragedy set against the background of lingering hates and blurred loyalties which marked the city of Trieste in 1948.

Dr. Eugen Reichenbach, onetime Austrian surgeon and now a naturalized American working for an international relief organization, is approached by a shady type, formerly a classmate of his Viennese days, to perform an emergency (and secret) operation on an unnamed person with a bullet in his chest. For humanitarian reasons, we are told, Reichenbach agrees. The patient turns out to be Siegfried Zempelmarck, escaped Nazi officer wanted for prosecution as a war criminal for ordering the retaliatory execution of some Yugoslavian villagers on March 9, 1943.

Since Reichenbach is hazily rendered by the author, we do not fully understand his involvement, which ultimately reaches the point of becoming an obsession. Reichenbach, true, is fascinated by the indomitable will of the German's sister, Paula, and is therefore determined to smuggle her brother to Spain, where she can nurse him back to health. He is also drawn to Zempelmarck's wife, the gentle Franziska, who feels that her husband should stand trial and expiate his guilt. But all too frequently Reichenbach muses that he "cannot explain" his attachment to the Zempelmarck party.

Although Hutchinson's ruminative style and loose plotting make him no Simenon or Graham Greene in the suspense genre, the grand scale of his total conception does manage to offer some intimations of catharsis when the group of fugitives, Reichenbach included, are intercepted by the Yugoslavians for a primitive trial at the scene of the wartime atrocity. The final effect, however, is undeniably dimmed because Hutchinson's characters, like figures out of Corneille, lack the pulsing vitality so essential for real tragedy. —GERALD WALKER.

## Your Literary I.Q.

Conducted by John T. Winterich

ALAS, POOR YORICK!



Skulls and related relics of prominent literary people have sometimes suffered unusual vicissitudes. Nan Cooke Carpenter of Missoula, Montana, offers instances. Boneyard on page 22.

1. Author of many works of which the "Summa Theologica" is best known, the "doctor angelicus" (d. 1274) was canonized in 1323; his remains were transferred to the Dominican church at Toulouse in 1369 and removed during the French Revolution to St. Sernin, but his left arm rests in the cathedral at Naples, his right arm in a Dominican church in Rome.

2. Although his bones have not been disturbed (cf. his own verses above his grave, 1616: "Bleste be the man that spares these stones, And cvrst be he that moves my bones"), those of his daughter Susanna, buried near him, were removed to the nearby charnel house in 1701.

3. Buried in Westminster Abbey in 1637, this court poet remained undisturbed until the nineteenth century, when his bones were several times exposed (as new graves were dug next to his); his skull was removed and laid on the coffin of a famous surgeon, where it was covered up and probably still reposes.

4. The great interest in the macabre of this baroque medical man (cf. his "Urn-Burial") was repaid when his coffin was opened in 1840 and his skull sold by the sexton of the Norwich church in which he was buried in 1682.

5. Shortly after burial (1768), the body of this humorist and sentimentalist was "resurrected" by grave robbers, sold to the professor of anatomy at Cambridge, and recognized by a horrified friend in the dissecting room.

6. A century after the death of this brilliant composer in 1791 (his collected letters are an important contribution to literature), his skull was alleged to be resting on a velvet cushion under a glass cover in the possession of a Viennese anthropologist who got it from a sexton who "made up afresh" the common burying ground every ten years.

7. Buried (1809) near Vienna, this musician (whose diary and biographical sketches make interesting reading) was exhumed by order of Prince Esterhazy (when the skull was discovered missing) and reburied in Eisenstadt in 1820; an anonymous skull was buried with the remains but the authentic one was for many years the property of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde at Vienna.

8. Having sailed away from Leghorn in the yacht *Ariel*, this romantic was heard of no more until his body washed ashore weeks later; it was buried on the beach, and afterwards cremated at Viareggio, the skull disintegrating and the brains seething and boiling (1822).

9. After his death in a small Greek town (1824), the lungs of this quixotic nobleman were buried in a church there; his intestines were sealed into four jars, and his body shipped in a tin-lined packing case (enclosed in an alcohol-filled barrel) to England.

10. Since he wished to be buried in Stinsford and universal opinion was for burying him in Westminster Abbey, a compromise was effected whereby his heart was buried in the former place, his ashes (after cremation, 1928) in the Abbey.

## Storytelling Historian

***"The Reformation," by Will Durant*** (Simon & Schuster. 1,025 pp. \$7.50), the sixth part of Mr. Durant's series, *"The Story of Civilization,"* recounts the history of Europe during the turbulent years from Wyclif to Calvin. Our reviewer, Garrett Mattingly, is a professor of history at Columbia.

By Garrett Mattingly

THERE is something about Will Durant's "Story of Civilization" which threatens to silence, perhaps to stun, the critical faculties. Over three million words of it have been written, half an adult lifetime has been devoted to the task, and the story of civilization has been brought triumphantly from the first cities of Mesopotamia and Egypt down to the close of the Council of Trent.

Compression has become more difficult as the work advanced. The first four parts polished off smartly enough the five thousand years or so before 1300 A. D. But Part Five needed more

than seven hundred pages just for the Italian Renaissance from 1300 to 1534, and the present volume, Part Six, only gets the story of the rest of Europe, with a brief bow to Russia and Islam, as far as about 1564 instead of to the goal of 1648, which was originally announced. Yet its pages of text are more than a thousand, and if the narrative continues to broaden and thicken at this rate the next part announced, "The Age of Reason" (Council of Trent to Napoleon I), can scarcely run to less than three volumes. However, even if the events of the last century and a half require six volumes, one can feel sure that the readers who have been with Mr. Durant all along will buy every volume and read every word, for certainly, so far, his peculiar powers show no sign of flagging. He still parades the pageant of history before his readers with the gusto of a museum curator exhibiting his treasures, and he comments on the sins and scandals, the splendors and terrors of his exhibits with a gentle wit and amused tolerance

which is at once intimate and reassuring. Ever since his "Story of Philosophy," it has been Will Durant's special gift to make everyone feel at home and comfortable with great men and soul-shaking ideas. Perhaps that accounts for a popularity so extensive that it is conceivable that, if the dark ages do descend upon us again, the story of civilization up to our time might happen to be known mainly from Mr. Durant.

If that should occur, on the off chance that this page also might survive so far into the future, it is a reviewer's duty to warn the paleographers of the year 5000 A.D. that Will Durant's "Story of Civilization," in its present six volumes or its prospective fifteen, does not represent the state of historical scholarship at the middle of the twentieth century. In fact, although an imposing apparatus of bibliography and footnotes gives this book a superficial appearance of scholarship, and some critics have permitted themselves the term, it is a mistake to talk about scholarship in connection with Mr. Durant's work at all. He has read a vast number of books about history, and has a large fund of information, much of it quite accurate. But scholarship, in historical studies, means the critical examination of evidence and the scrupulous evaluation of sources. In the field of universal history, where nobody can be expected to do all that work for himself, it means, at the least, some discrimination as to the scholarly merits of the secondary works used, and some effort to keep abreast of the latest findings of the specialists. In this sense, there is not the slightest taint of scholarship about this volume. Having read so widely, Mr. Durant has, of course, read some authoritative monographs: but he has neglected far more than he has read, and he has taken his facts, his quotations, and his anecdotes wherever he has happened to find them, so that whole chapters of his book are invalidated for any serious purpose. Even the basic scheme of this volume and of the last previous one is derived from the false dichotomy between the pagan Italian Renaissance and the reactionary, medieval-Christian Reformation which scholars began to reject about fifty years ago.

Mr. Durant's public will care very little about this, of course, and who is to say that they are wrong? Their favorite author may be nothing of a historical scholar, but he is a capital storyteller, a constantly readable expositor, a widely read and highly cultivated man, essentially kindly and well-meaning. Time spent with such a person cannot be time wasted.



A portrait of Edward VI (aged six) by Hans Holbein the Younger.