

ture and the straight line . . . but is better described as the Mark of Saint or Sage." He could see the image when his visionary faculty was put to work, but he was no seer. He mistook his reveries for speculation. But what is important for his poetry is that he could pass from reverie to vision.

And then I passed beyond these forms which were so beautiful that they almost ceased to be, and having endured strange moods, melancholy, as it seemed, with the weight of many worlds, they passed into that Death which is Beauty herself, and into that Loneliness which all the multitudes desire without ceasing.

This is nothing else than the corniness of the 1890s. And then when we read "The Tomb," which is about alchemy and the rose, we see all these vapors solidify into the gold of poetry: "Pour

wine and dance if manhood still have pride / Strew roses if the rose be still in bloom." We read "Take off that mask of burning gold / With emerald eyes," and we realize that with the curious speculation about the self and the antiself there goes a passion that can become poetry. What a mind this was that ranged all the way from folk belief and pseudo-metaphysics to a poetry that flashes with some startling abstraction! Amongst all the queerness in the later pages of the "Mythologies" are insights that become wisdom.

Active virtue, as distinguished from passive acceptance of a code, is therefore theatrical, consciously dramatic, the wearing of a mask. . . . Wordsworth, great poet though he be, is so often flat and heavy because his moral sense, being a discipline he had not created, a mere obedience, has no theatrical element.

thing imperishable in the face of human agony could, by anyone willing to see it, be perceived after the last, worst card was played.

Disturbing, puzzling, decadent? The first two, certainly; and don't let that last one disturb you. Decadence here is in the eye of the beholder. Forgiveness and majestic love in the unromantic, impeccable sense are also here. As for the disturbance and puzzlement, do, please, give this artful legend a chance. Like anything new, it cannot be absorbed in three hours or three days. In a certain sense it is as old-young as a painting by Marc Chagall. It takes time before the beautifully placed colors and meanings fall into position in skull and spirit. Once there, they will add to your mortal substance.

The story, almost unrecountable, can scarcely be unfleshed and stripped to condensed form. It is not a plot; it is a dark charm which winds up full to the finish. Meanings hang beneath meanings: what, precisely, does it mean to be a father? A husband? A lover? The pretty "home-makers" and "counselors" of our world have immediate answers; this book has none, but although the questions are never explicitly asked, they ring in its waiting air. Could Loris Licia, the mute one, the waiter-in-the-wings, tell you? She could, but not in glib words. Could Adrienne, the favored and slowly smothered daughter, answer that? Not until long after the book, that has a continuing life, is over. Could Edmund tell you? From the grave, at long last, he probably could.

Fantasy and symbol, unmanipulated, implicit, are present as well. So is elegance; a nice antidote to Kerouac and others. So is great pity, controlled, without weeping. And these people—Edmund Choate, Anne, Silvana, Adrienne, Loris Licia, Aunt Clothilde, Jergen Wilson—all have lasting truth that moves from the page. "The Daughters of Necessity" is a brave, resonant, tragic, and burning book.

THE WORLD OF MR. B. It is always a pleasure to read a new book by Paul Hyde Bonner. The contents will have little, if anything, to do with the world as we know it, yet the lure of vicariously participating in the world of Mr. Bonner is certain to cause one to relax and enjoy the evolutions of the author's fantasy.

"The Art of Llewellyn Jones" (Scribners, \$4.50) could be termed a do-it-yourself manual on how to change your name, personality, background, attachments; in short, cut yourself off from whatever life—and wife—might

(Continued on page 50)

Slow Journey Into Murder

"The Daughters of Necessity," by **Peter S. Feibleman** (World. 317 pp. \$4.50), is an enigmatic story, infused with the brooding atmosphere of its setting in the deep South. Paul Darcy Boles, short-story writer and novelist, recently won the Friends of American Writers's Award for "Parton's Island."

By Paul Darcy Boles

PETER FEIBLEMAN's second novel is a slow and haunted journey into murder—murder of soul by possessive love; murder of heart by familial pride; final murder of the flesh. The protagonist in the drama is Edmund Choate, around whose first and second wives and particularly his daughters, Adrienne and Loris Licia, the web is spun. The Southern river-city of the action is also an actor, brooding, oppressive, and spell-binding, by turns seething hot and icy.

Melpomene Drive could be Government Street in Mobile, Alabama (though the author claims it is unique, unlike any other street in the world). Louisiana, Alabama, it makes no difference. The atmosphere is here, intensified for purposes of wondrous subtlety and visionary skill. Readers who enjoy "a nice easy story" are hereby warned. Here is immense cleanliness of purpose with compassion and freshness of a high

order and obscurity that is never wilful but the honest result of stretching as far as it is possible to touch gold.

And the gold is here, too, of a dozen varieties. Under the purring current of a silken style are monsters and devils and—for those who dig for the last rare ounce—rewards of belief in the nobility of the spirit. To those critics whose favorite phrase is, "But the cards are stacked" the only possible answer is, "Read it again; read it carefully." Yes, the cards are stacked as Faulkner used to stack them, sky high, so that some-



Peter S. Feibleman — "immense cleanliness of purpose."

Rule of Law in a World of Strife

"The West in Crisis," by James P. Warburg (Doubleday, 192 pp. \$3.50), criticizes the failures of the free world and makes concrete proposals for resolving the major problems facing the Anglo-American alliance—with which our critic is in almost total agreement. The Right Honorable Arthur Henderson, Q.C., M.P., has been chairman of the British Parliamentary Group for World Government since 1951.

By Arthur Henderson

"THE WEST IN CRISIS" is a penetrating analysis of the dangers and ills that beset our civilization. Mr. Warburg has marshaled his case clearly and succinctly in a survey that is large in range and in scope. He was right, however, to anticipate that "the reader may perhaps feel that the emphasis throughout [his] study lies somewhat too heavily upon Western failures." Over-emphasis was perhaps inevitable since the proclaimed main thesis of his book is that, while the external threat exists, "the mortal danger to Western civilization is not the enemy without but the enemy within the gates." It is, I believe, only possi-

ble to make a partial assessment of causes and effects when the field of survey is so delimited.

I agree with Mr. Warburg's view that we are no nearer to peace than we were when World War II ended and that the specter of World War III looms over the human race more anxiously now than at any time since 1945. But I think there are grounds for believing that in the East as well as in the West there is a clear recognition of this peril, and a corresponding desire to reduce and even to remove this threat of mutual disaster.

Mr. Warburg states that "the Western policy of nuclear deterrence assumes that the risks of nuclear war are preferable to any substantial further expansion of the Sino-Soviet orbit. Underlying this assumption is a tacit belief that race suicide is preferable to a Communist conquest of the world." I do not accept that Western policy is founded on any such tacit belief. On the contrary, the proclaimed and accepted aim of Western nuclear-deterrence policy is to deter—to deter Communist military aggression; and so long as it achieves that purpose, so long as both East and West respect the other's possession of the power of devastating destruction, it not only prevents World

War III, but provides a breathing space for constructive statesmanship and world public opinion to do something about rescuing humanity from the threat of immeasurable disaster.

It is, in my judgment, because this precarious nuclear equipoise has been reached that there may now be a better chance of finding political agreements by negotiation that will lead the world through disarmament to a secure and peaceful future. An agreement at Geneva to ban all future tests would, I believe, not only help greatly to relax international tensions, but would also facilitate other agreements on political problems and on disarmament.

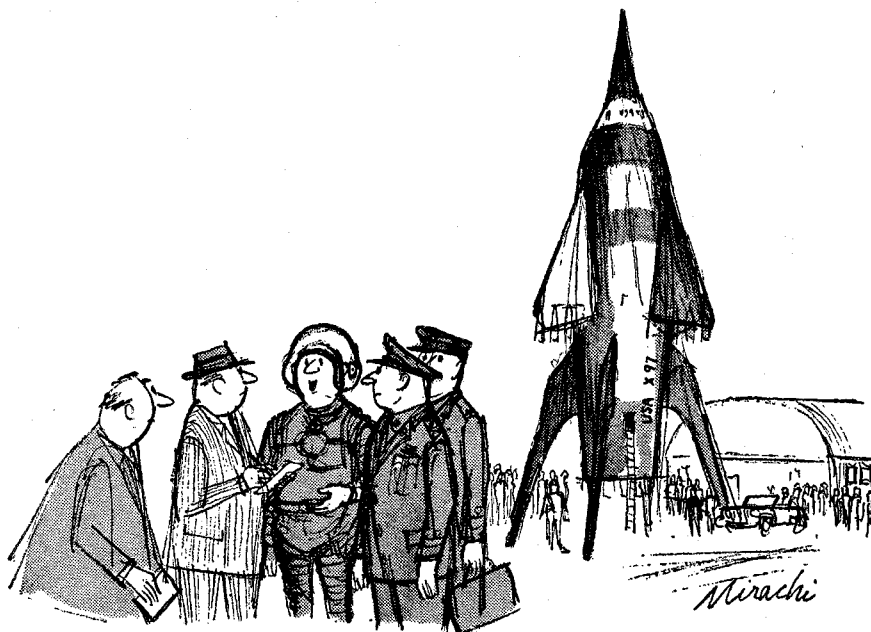
Mr. Warburg puts his finger on the heart of the problem when he asserts that "a world which fails to establish the rule of law over nation-states cannot long continue to exist." It is the nation-states collectively which must establish the rule of law and which must be prepared *individually* to submit themselves to the rule of law. As Mr. Warburg states, war can and must eventually be abolished altogether through total universal disarmament enforced by a world authority responsible for the maintenance of world peace.

THE author deals frankly and forthrightly with mistakes, shortcomings, and missed opportunities which form part of the history of Western policy in the postwar years. It is important, in my view, that policy be reappraised from time to time, and that involves analysis and self-criticism.

However, Mr. Warburg is not content simply to criticize. He is positive and constructive, and he puts forward a series of concrete proposals for resolving the major problems facing the Anglo-American alliance in Europe, the Middle East, and the Far East.

He suggests, and I am in complete accord with him, that there is urgent need for an Anglo-American policy directed at coming to terms with the Chinese revolution. He recommends a liberal trade policy towards Japan and the provision of aid to South-east Asia—especially India—to prove that it is not necessary for Asian peoples to adopt Communism in order to achieve satisfactory social and economic progress. In the light of my personal knowledge of India, Pakistan, and Burma, I can only stress the wisdom of such a policy.

With respect to the Middle East and North Africa, Mr. Warburg holds that Britain and the United States must recognize that it is impossible to fight both Communism and Arab nationalism. Indeed, in my opinion,



"In many ways they're far advanced over us. They've wiped out disease, there's no such thing as poverty, and war has been eliminated. But they've got a nasty parking problem."