

## The Sainly Sell

**"The Treatment Man,"** by William Wiegand (McGraw-Hill, 325 pp. \$4.95), which reports on life in a penitentiary, is the winner of the Joseph Henry Jackson Award for the best novel written on the West Coast. David Dempsey, himself a novelist, is a frequent contributor to SR.

By David Dempsey

THERE IS one thing about "The Treatment Man" which will disarm readers—pleasantly, at that—who may note on the jacket that William Wiegand teaches creative writing at Stanford University: the book is a far cry from the type of novel that usually comes out of universities. Although the setting is institutional, the institution in question is a state penitentiary. Impersonally written, mature in its point of view, technically adept (if at times a bit overcomplicated), as well as fresh in its development of a subject too often presented as either straight sociology or unadulterated melodrama, "The Treatment Man" is a book by someone who can both write and teach.

Wiegand is to be commended for his ability to develop an intricate scale of moral shadings among both his "good" guys (the prison authorities) and the "bad" guys (inmates), without ever once letting us forget that they belong to different worlds. The "treat-

ment" man is the deputy warden, who, as a onetime delinquent, fosters a humanitarian administration. This is the new penology, which Pryor must "sell" to his superiors.

Although there is a frustrating resistance, on the part of the inmates, everything goes smoothly until one of the cell blocks revolts, captures six guards as hostages, and sets about "negotiating" with the prison administration. In the end, after four days of rioting, it is Pryor who formulates their demands for them, and who arranges for the surrender that saves the guards. The "soft" approach, although successful, results in his dismissal. In its deepest sense, the novel is a plea for the value of dealing with prisoner mentality, warped though it may be, with patience and understanding.

The story is narrated alternately by two of the characters: Joe Sharon, Pryor's boyhood friend and assistant, and a prisoner who conveniently records the riot and events leading up to it from the point of view of the inmates. The method has some disadvantages, since it involves a certain repetition of events, but it does give an inside glimpse into prison life from the opposing camps (the inmates' social organization, with the role that homosexuality plays, is particularly well done).

If Mr. Wiegand tends to give his characters too many psychological drives and overtones, he has nevertheless made them real and sympathetic. As a result, he has raised the "big house" novel far above the sensation-mongering level to which we are accustomed.

## Hero at Halftime

**"Short Term,"** by Jay Richard Kennedy (World, 541 pp. \$5.95), depicts the fast-dealing world of Wall Street existing behind the genteel façade. Sloan Wilson's novels include "The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit" and "The Summer Place."

By Sloan Wilson

JAY RICHARD KENNEDY's new novel, "Short Term," starts with a familiar literary figure: an affluent middle-aged man of gentle birth who has grown Tired of It All. Ken Preston, as he is called in this novel, is in a reflective mood at the age of forty-two.

Like a remorseless quarterback on a timeless Monday morning, he saw his score. Zero. He was stuck with his current number, forty-two, on a fading unused sweatshirt. His role had been on the sidelines: the name Preston & Company had not been worth the game. Time! The signals had been all fouled up from the very first skirmish. Still you played in accordance with the rules so rah rah rah for absolutely nothing. Happy birthday. Happy Fool's Day.

At the beginning of the book, Ken is a lonely bachelor. During the war he had been turned down by a French girl he loved. "You are smart and kind and inside you are nothing!" she had said to him. "Because you are not man enough to accept the life at hand. Therefore you are nothing. You think and try always to understand the whole by looking ahead. By breaking it down into all the little pieces. So you are stupid and you are a coward. Yes. You are brave and you are a coward! You are smart and by trying always to see and foresee everything you are stupid."

Apparently taking this somewhat confusing message to heart, a few pages and a good many years later, Ken marries a girl who does not seem calculated to please the conservative. Laurie Dugan is about half his age. She is the mistress of a man who is presented as nothing but a caricature of grossness. Her sister has committed suicide in fear of becoming a Lesbian, and her mother, as the story unfolds, is seen to be an alcoholic tramp who experiments with stray men, sometimes two at a time, in hotel bedrooms. Laurie's father has, understandably enough, left home, and Laurie herself has just returned from an abortion in Havana.

Laurie's charms are never described

## Your Literary I. Q.

Conducted by John T. Winterich

"YOU'RE QUITE A ---"

Here is a group of book titles each of which contains the word "stranger." Helene Nitzsche of Maquoketa, Iowa, asks you to assign the correct authors to these titles. Everybody is friends on page 49.

- |                       |                                   |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. William E. Barrett | ( ) "The Stranger"                |
| 2. William L. Shirer  | ( ) "A Stranger Here"             |
| 3. Dorothy Charques   | ( ) "Not as a Stranger"           |
| 4. Robert Henriques   | ( ) "The Tall Stranger"           |
| 5. Daphne du Maurier  | ( ) "The Dark Stranger"           |
| 6. Walter Sullivan    | ( ) "Stranger Come Home"          |
| 7. Morton Thompson    | ( ) "The Sudden Stranger"         |
| 8. D. E. Stevenson    | ( ) "Letters to a Stranger"       |
| 9. Harold Robbins     | ( ) "Stranger to the Shore"       |
| 10. Kenneth Dodson    | ( ) "The Laughing Stranger"       |
| 11. Elswyth Thane     | ( ) "A Stranger in My Arms"       |
| 12. Robert Wilder     | ( ) "Sojourn of a Stranger"       |
| 13. Mika Waltari      | ( ) "Never Love a Stranger"       |
| 14. Mabel Seeley      | ( ) "The Stranger Beside Me"      |
| 15. Marya Mannes      | ( ) "Kiss Me Again, Stranger"     |
| 16. Albert Camus      | ( ) "Message from a Stranger"     |
| 17. Viña Delmar       | ( ) "Stranger from the Tonto"     |
| 18. Zane Grey         | ( ) "A Stranger Came to the Farm" |

convincingly enough to make the reader believe that Ken would have married her and, from this point on, the book becomes difficult to follow with much conviction. Before meeting Laurie, Ken had planned to retire from business to be a curator of a museum. She talks him into meeting the challenge of Wall Street, and he becomes a dynamic leader in the world of finance. The reader who can accept that sudden change of character has worse blows in store for him. When she fails to conceive a child and is told by a doctor that she is not sterile, Laurie believes Ken is at fault. Because a handsome advertising woman accompanies him on business trips, she thinks he is unfaithful to her. He, in turn, suspects that she is again seeing the man who used to keep her. The novel turns into one of those old-fashioned stories in which everyone believes something untrue about everyone else, and by the time true love is shown to be triumphant, the reader is utterly defeated.

It's too bad, because just as the writer apparently wants to show that the characters are in some way finer than their actions, the novel is better than its fundamentally preposterous plot. The descriptions of Wall Street business and the uppercrust background of Ken Preston would do credit to a book in which the dilemma of a cautious middle-aged man married to a girl from the lower depths were seriously studied. Mr. Kennedy, this reader feels sure, can do much better if only he can give his characters some consistency or some reason for the lack of it. It would help if he let tragedy depend more on facts and less on rigged misunderstandings.

#### FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT NO. 857

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 857 will be found in the next issue.

TRY APBC KEFYL  
KDCLY, EGH YMRC APB  
FEG HDLYPCY YMRN  
EL NBFM EL APB  
OSRELRL.  
—NECQ YXEDG.

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 856

A hangover is something to occupy a head that wasn't used the night before.

—ARCADIA NEWS-LEADER.

#### AMERICAN PAST

## Facade of Our Founding Financier



—From the book.

Elizabeth Schuyler and Alexander Hamilton—An unraveled mystery.

**"Alexander Hamilton: Portrait in Paradox,"** by John C. Miller (Harper. 659 pp. \$8.50), retells in biographical form how our Union was cemented. Daniel J. Boorstin is the author of *"Americans: The Colonial Experience"* and other books.

By Daniel J. Boorstin

THE RECENT growth of interest in American history has produced a vast library of biographies. Many of these turn out to be simply history sold retail instead of wholesale. They wrap up the materials of social, intellectual, and political history in the parcel of an individual life. What they end by giving us is a neat facet of the "life of the time" rather than the mystery of an individual life.

This excellent book about Alexander Hamilton and his times illustrates both the strengths and weaknesses of this way of understanding our past. Strictly speaking, it should be called an "historical biography" for it recounts the political, Constitutional, economic, and financial history of the United States from the American Revolution to that day in July, 1804, when Hamilton was killed in the duel with Burr. The story of the rise of the new nation, of the cementing of the Union, is admirably told. Mr. Miller can write. He is not

afraid to be colloquial or leisurely, to fondle a subject that interests him. He is fluent and yet precise. And he is at home in Hamilton's New York and Philadelphia.

As a work of history cast in biographical form, this book is successful. It would be hard to name another single volume that tells us more about the political and economic issues of that day. The book is organized around the problem of national union, groups of chapters dealing successively with The Union Against Great Britain, The Union Against Chaos, The Union Consummated, and the Union Against Foreign Aggression. No one can read Mr. Miller's book without beginning to appreciate the peculiar problems of military organization, public finance, factionalism, regional jealousy, economic growth, and diplomacy that plagued the nation in its early years. We see how the Schuyler and Livingston family loyalties complicated the political struggles in New York, how the vanity of generals affected the Revolutionary battles and plans for national defense during the Napoleonic Wars. We see Jefferson's own party using slander as the tool of party politics; we see newspapers and newspapermen bought off to spread or suppress party propaganda.

On the great national issues we are taken "behind the scenes" and shown how callow and oversimplified is our schoolbook picture of the "issues" of