abic peculiarity of having four difcerent ways of writing every letter (initial, medial, final, and separate) drives him to exasperation—as does English spelling. All over the world the learned classes cherish their archaisms of writing and spelling and their special vocabularies, which serve to separate them from the unlettered.

The learned classes almost everywhere are also contemptuous of the needs of the common people:

The government of Pakistan laid out the curriculum every college has to follow. It was overloaded and lopsided; almost all of it was cultural. There was no effort to teach the practical subjects, like home-making or cooking or child care . . . We found education throughout the Orient unrelated to life, except the life of idle luxury, which only princes were able to live.

Laubach is also much preoccupied with love and equality as instruments of good teaching. The following passage is itself a textbook in educational method, applicable not only to illiterates 'nt to almost all teaching situations:

We prefer to teach one by one so that we may sit down beside our students; a teacher of a class is too much like a superior person. Every illiterate has an inferiority complex-he thinks we feel above him. The very first thing is to remove the gap between us. When we sit beside him we disarm this feeling of inferiority. Then we proceed to treat him not like a student but like a rajah! We try to make ourselves humble and him important. He thinks he is too old to learn. We must prove that he can learn easily, quickly, and delightfully, no matter how old he is. Every step is so short that an ordinary man can take it easily. The chart provides for this; but occasionally the teacher must say just the right thing to help a dull student over a hard spot. There must be no embarrassing pauses, never a question the student cannot answer, no examination to find out what he knows! . . .

On every line of the chart the student finds himself saying something surprising. An atmosphere of expectancy is thus developed; we can see it in the bright, open-mouthed eagerness of our illiterate learner. The chart becomes a Pandora's box of glad surprises, appealing to the emotions and drawing forth peals of laughter.

Laubach has influenced governments all over the world as well as individuals in his literacy campaign. He sees literacy as the basic instrument for improving the lot of the hundreds of millions of the world's underfed and overworked people. He differs from those who would feed them first, then make them literate. "The right way to lift the masses above hunger is to teach them to lift themselves. Your [India's] illiterates have been the victims of educated scoundrels who have kept them in debt all their lives. Literacy is the only road I see to their complete emancipation."

"Thirty Years with the Silent Billion" is the record of a great educator, a great Christian who genuinely loves his fellow man of every creed and race.

## A Heartbeat for Murdered Minds

"Undercover Teacher," by George N. Allen (Doubleday. 192 pp. \$3), reveals what the author discovered about New York schools during the forty-three days that he conducted classes on assignment from a metropolitan daily. Charles Calitri, author of "Strike Heaven on the Face" and "Rickey," has spent the last decade teaching in east Harlem.

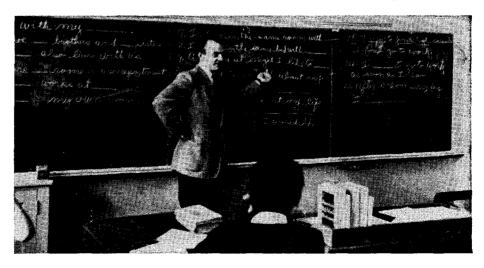
## By Charles Calitri

THIS is a report that reads like a novel It is a pity that George Allen novel. It is a pity that George Allen did not see fit to make it more of a novel, for then we might have been allowed to share deeply the frustrations, heartache, and anxiety that belong to the teacher of children. In some forty-three days the author lived the life of almost every beginning teacher, and the most interesting phenomenon of his report is the realization, by this reader anyway, that Mr. Allen fell into the human trap. He became the teacher, losing almost all identity with the reporter from the New York World-Telegram & The Sun who had been sent out to "get the

story of the New York junior high schools."

No matter what his assignment, one cannot stand before some thirty "adjustment kids" without soon feeling the compassion and the anger, the joy and the hopelessness that are all part of the task. Nor can one ever escape the bitterness of being forced to acknowledge finally that these "kids" need more than the system permits any teacher to give. No matter how critical the investigating eye intends to be as it examines the situation before it, the influence of the heart always remains.

Thus, Mr. Allen, composing, not the newspaper articles which were a sensationalized rendition of his tour, but the more complete and much more satisfying book, must have found himself searching behind the face of things for answers and for understanding. You have to be with these youngsters five days a week, fighting them, loving them, hating them, and desperately trying to find wavs of helping them. to grasp even an inkling of their almost-dead attitudes, their hopeless eyes, their murdered minds, and the sometimes welcome flash of rebellion which indicates that there is still at least a murmur of life in the disturbed thir-(Continued on page 51)



George N. Allen-searched for answers and understanding.



## PICK OF THE PAPERBACKS

**RECENTLY** the National Council of Teachers of English released a report on their national survey of the use of paperbound books in both public and parochial schools. More than 2,300 teachers and librarians, representing 365 secondary schools, responded to the questionnaire. The survey revealed some important findings: that most participating teachers do not use paperbacks to any extent other than as a source of "free reading" or students' book reports; that curiosity about paperbacks in the classroom-how other teachers use them, what books are available in paperback—is prodigious. That teachers want to know more about paperbacks is borne out by New American Library's report that they receive more than 100,000 letters each year from teachers in search of information. Those who have introduced paperbacks successfully into their classrooms cite the economy, the attraction of students to paperbacks, the fact that students can take notes in their books, and the excellent introductions. On the other hand, teachers who do not recommend paperbacks list among their objections small print, objectionable covers, and weak bindings. Publishers, please take note.

SPEARHEADING THE MOVEMENT for paperbacks as classroom texts is the Study Guide Program, sponsored by Pocket Books and its subsidiary, Washington Square Press. Designed for the secondary schools, the study guides are used along with the paperback text to direct the student in his reading. The guide sheet to "Huckleberry Finn," a favorite among students in the tenth to twelfth grades and one of the fifteen books offered in the series, contains a map of the Mississippi for the student to chart Huck's and Jim's adventure, a list of difficult vocabulary, some provocative questions for group discussion, and projects suggested for the individual student. The effects of this program should extend beyond the classroom. Students might well be encouraged by the less formidable paperback format to read other classics and even to discover the fun of collecting their own library.

\* "A UNIVERSITY PRESS should be aware of the new and experimental as well as the tried and the true," writes Thomas E. Parker from the University of Michigan Press, whose paperback ventures include the publication of Waldo Sweet's fresh approach to the teaching of Latin. Michigan is not only interested in providing texts, but collateral reading as well. The four-volume "History of the Modern World," edited by Allan Nevins and Howard Ehrman, supplements studies of Latin American, Russian, and U.S. history. The paper, by the way, is the same high quality used in the hardcover books. . . . Phoenix, the University of Chicago's paperback imprint, is also presenting a handsome set in "The Selected Greek Tragedies," which includes fifteen plays in three volumes at \$1.35 each. The original hardbound edition sold for \$20. . . . "Americans are most history-conscious during February," says John Simmons of Cornell University Press. It follows, then, that this is the publication month for Cornell's library-in-a-box, a set of eight volumes about American history, ranging from Charles Andrews's "Our Earliest Colonial Settlements" on to Dexter Perkins's "The American Way."

**TEACHING THE TEACHER:** Students aren't the only ones who benefit from Rinehart's paperbacks. Rinehart also publishes a series of educational booklets aimed at instructing the teacher. One excellent little book of selfevaluation is entitled "Are you a Good Teacher?" If the answer is no, a closer look into "Teaching Study Habits and Skills" or "Using the Committee in the Classroom" might well be in order. PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.OR<sup>B.W.S.</sup>

ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

## FICTION

By the turn of the century, Henr James had embarked upon the las and greatest phase of his career. "Th Ambassadors" (Premier,  $50^{\circ}$ ) is th earliest of his last three great novel: Essentially, the story is a simple one Lambert Strether, a New England ed tor, past middle age, travels to Parto rescue his benefactress's son fror the enthrallment of Europe and ir stead becomes himself a captive. Th depth of character, the subtlety of relationships, and the difficult but ur excelled Jamesian prose turn this seinto one of the enduring masterpiecs of English literature.

James's contemporary, Joseph Conrac began work on "The Rescue" (Anchor \$1.25) in 1898 but not until twent vears and many novels later did h finish it. It's an adventurous tale abou Europeans who intrude into the affair of South Sea islanders yet, in charac teristic Conradian fashion, the here an English sea captain, is eventuall faced with a grave moral decision.

Another novel which ponders a phil osophical question is André Gide' "Lafcadio's Adventures" (Vintage \$1.25), in which the idea of an unmo tivated crime, a gratuitous act agains society, is explored. For all the seriou Dostoievsky-like implications of the theme, the book and reckless youn; Lafcadio Wliuki lead the reader on a merry chase through most of Europe

For sheer reading pleasure there i nothing like a Graham Greene enter tainment or a Josephine Tey mystery The late Josephine Tey's "The Singing Sands" (Berkley,  $35^{\circ}$ ), while full c surprise and suspense, is highly styl, witty, and always literate. In this stor, Inspector Alan Grant catches up with his claustrophobia and a murderer a the same time. Graham Greene in "Ou Man in Havana" (Bantam,  $35^{\circ}$ ) wryly investigates international intrigue in  $\varepsilon$ droll portrayal of a mild Englishmar who tries his hand at the spy business.