

who is in a position to solve the murder and must choose between his sympathies as a miner and his responsibility as a justice of the peace.

Menna Gallie is a lovely writer and she lards her lean story with bright sharp descriptions and rich humor. The following reference to the manager's wife is typical of the humorous touches throughout: "Repressed by good manners, she was like a grate decorated with a paper fan, never meant for a fire. It would be impossible to imagine her in bed."

Mrs. Gallie has a taste for poetic imagery, a gift for description, and a Message as well—a most dangerous combination—yet the book never strays from its course as a novel but is beautifully balanced, open, and quick. The only false note is struck in the last paragraph due to the author's determination to make D. J. Williams a practising poet quite, it would seem, against his inclination.

SHIPBOARD LIFE: Frederick Morton's fourth novel, *"The Witching Ship"* (Random House, \$3.95), is sunk by its prose. Sample: "Before the night was done Frau Schwabauch had loomed a creature elemental in the bar's gloaming. A phenomenon like the storm, she had been inexorable in her roseate powerful shiftings, innocent yet innocence-corrupting, impermissible yet undeniable." The entire book is written in this garbled, opaque language.

The story tells about an eight-day ocean voyage aboard a Dutch ship carrying European refugees and some Americans from England to New York during May, 1940. By voyage's end, a clergyman goes berserk, a former Viennese actress tries her hand at desegregation by romantically hounding a tortured Negro with a black mahogany pegleg, three U. of Michigan grads plot the weirdest sexual conspiracies, a touching romance between two middle-aged Germans blossoms, a balmy film maker holds the "world" premiere of his new movie aboard ship, a brief encounter with a German sub takes place during the costume ball, the captain's telescope is stolen, and the hero of the book, a nineteen-year-old Viennese lad, Learns About Life in his affair with a Nebraskan lady professor of contemporary history. The ship, which serves as the symbolic Earth-hero, has done its duty in transplanting this caravan of cosmopolitan gypsies.

The author's intention is honorable and even poetic: to describe the qualities of transience, anticipation, terror, and courage which a handful of Hitler's *déracinées* undergo. Mr. Morton shows a nice sense of warm, human commingling and occasional comic gifts, but

the unpleasant fact is that his prose is about totally unreadable. Evidence of this was apparent in an early novel of his, *"Asphalt and Desire."* Eight years later, we are still in verbal quicksand.

—DANIEL TALBOT.

CHILD'S-EYE VIEW: Though he has written eighteen novels, including *"Fair Stood the Wind for France,"* an absorbing tale of downed English flyers in enemy-occupied country, H. E. Bates is probably best known for his short stories. The title of an earlier volume of these, *"The Nature of Love,"* might serve equally well for this latest delightful collection, *"The Watercress Girl"* (Little, Brown, \$3.75). The heroes of these thirteen stories are small boys, genuinely young, equipped with few facts and much misinformation; but most of them are confronted here with the sort of choices which adults must make between intense and conflicting emotional demands.

Except for one sixty-six-page adventure in which three children take decisive action in an imminent tragedy involving three strangers, the stories

are brief and lyrical. All are charged with the contradictions inherent in the child's vision, which has a way of magnifying immediate details while viewing larger issues through a mist of myopia. "The larches had little scarlet eyelashes springing from their branches," one child observes. No mole or moustache on an adult face escapes his minute inspection; no nuance of lower-class speech is missed; no look or taste or smell is lacking. But at the same time we share the child's dark wonder, his sense of mystified loss and foreboding, as the fixed patterns of adult relationships shift and break around him, threatening his world.

In one of his literary studies, *"The Modern Short Story,"* Bates says that this art form "can be anything the author decides it shall." Among a great many varieties he presents for a writer to choose from, he suggests "the piece which catches like a cobweb the light subtle iridescence of emotions that can never be really captured or measured." For a happily large proportion of his own stories, this is a perfect description.

—HOPE HALE.



Your Literary I. Q.

Conducted by John T. Winterich

PRESIDENTIAL BACHELORS

The only bachelor President (a bachelor on leaving, as well as on entering, office) was James Buchanan. But he was a bachelor of arts as well. He and other Presidential bachelors by degree are listed in Column Two below. Julie McVay of Raleigh, North Carolina, lists in Column One the names of the educational institutions which the Presidents named attended, and she asks you to assign the right colleges to the right alumni. Answers on page 69.

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. Amherst College | () John Adams |
| 2. Bowdoin College | () Thomas Jefferson |
| 3. Dickinson College | () James Madison |
| 4. Harvard College | () John Quincy Adams |
| 5. Kenyon College | () John Tyler |
| 6. Miami University | () James K. Polk |
| 7. University of North Carolina | () Franklin Pierce |
| 8. Princeton University
(formerly College of New Jersey) | () James Buchanan |
| 9. Stanford University | () U.S. Grant |
| 10. Union College (Schenectady, New York) | () Rutherford B. Hayes |
| 11. Williams College | () James A. Garfield |
| 12. College of William and Mary | () Chester A. Arthur |
| 13. West Point (United States Military Academy) | () Benjamin Harrison |
| 14. Yale University | () Theodore Roosevelt |
| | () William Howard Taft |
| | () Woodrow Wilson |
| | () Calvin Coolidge |
| | () Herbert Hoover |
| | () Franklin D. Roosevelt |
| | () Dwight D. Eisenhower |

Of Ticker Tape and Time

***"The Hero: Charles A. Lindbergh and the American Dream,"* by Kenneth S. Davis (Doubleday, 527 pp. \$4.95), examines the facets that make up the puzzling personality of the "Lone Eagle." Roger Butterfield is an American historian who has written about many prominent contemporaries, including Lindbergh, for national magazines.**

By Roger Butterfield

BOTH the title and subtitle of this book have overtones of irony. The author carefully documents, in his later chapters, the public actions and speeches by which Lindbergh himself destroyed his own hero-image. Throughout the book he makes it clear that Lindbergh, in his personal thinking, had little interest in or kinship with the usual definitions of "the American dream." His story ends with a description of a 1957 cartoon in *The New Yorker* showing a father and his young son leaving a movie theatre where Lindbergh's personal story, "The Spirit of St. Louis," is playing. "If everyone thought what he did was so marvelous," asks the boy, "how come he never got famous?"

Yet, taken as a whole, this is a deeply sympathetic and well-rounded biography. Mr. Davis admires the high courage, the jaunty but cool self-confidence, the magical mastery of mechanics that made Lindbergh the foremost individual flier of his time. (And, perhaps, of all time—for surely no "Lone Eagle" will ever wing through outer space entirely under his own control.) The author sympathizes with his hero's ordeal under the glare of national worship, whipped to a morbid pitch by a sensation-selling press; and he exposes in all its ugliness the injury that was done the Lindberghs in the kidnap-murder of their first-born son.

Mr. Davis obviously disapproves of the "master race" thinking that made such a strong appeal to Lindbergh before and after World War II. But he insists that even as a philosopher Lindbergh is worth listening to, for "here, we feel, is a serious man. He remains



—Wide World.

Charles A. Lindbergh—"A serious man."

unsatisfied by creature comforts and sensual pleasures. . . He demands to know *why*; he concerns himself with essential questions."

Mr. Davis has dug into Lindbergh's family background and childhood more thoroughly than any previous writer. He throws new light on several traits of the youthful Lindbergh that governed his later career: his loneliness and desire for privacy (partly caused by the early separation of his parents); his preference for machines to people (because he could understand what made them tick); his compulsion to court really serious danger, which led him to do many crazy stunts with motorcycles, planes, and parachutes. One of his first nicknames to get into print was "Beans Lindbergh, the Flying Fool," during his barnstorming days at county fairs and circuses.

Others have pointed out the remarkable similarity between Lindbergh's pre-Pearl Harbor course and the career of his father, a Minnesota Congressman. The senior Lindbergh was shot at, driven from platforms, and doomed to political oblivion because of his isolationism during World War I, which he coupled with attacks on Wall Street bankers and Roman Catholic influences in politics, just as his son later became entangled in speeches about "Jewish groups in this country" who were "agitating for war." Mr. Davis points out that the parallel goes back even further: Lindbergh's paternal

grandfather was a frustrated member of the Swedish Parliament who left his country in rage and disgust to become a pioneer in Minnesota when he was more than fifty years old. He built a log cabin and sawmill, where one day he fell against the saw and lost his left arm, but eventually learned to chop fence rails with a specially designed ax and his right arm alone. His stubbornness and courage made a family legend which greatly appealed to his grandson.

This is a fair-minded and even-tempered book, which displays painstaking research; in several places it corrects the recollections of Lindbergh himself in his autobiographical writings. Mr. Davis's intention is not to debunk, but to let the facts tell their own story. He takes his theme from a quotation: "The hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder; fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won; the hero comes back from this mysterious venture with the power to bestow boons on his fellow men." Lindbergh, the author suggests, was enough of a mystic to believe this of himself. But the boons he sought to confer (*i.e.*, peace and co-existence with Fascism and Hitler) were not acceptable to most of his fellow Americans.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT NO. 865

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 865 will be found in the next issue.

STWCAFHFN DHBE W

LEHPM HC RHFT,

HR GAO LWF STWLE

BET LEHPM'C STWCAF

DHBEAOB MTCBSAGHFN

GAOS ADF.

—QAEF XWCAF KSADF.

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 864

Every man is an omnibus in which his ancestors ride.

—OLIVER W. HOLMES.