

Noble), a four-volume work of "unabridged" comprehensiveness. The second unit (*English-German, N-Z*, \$17.50) has just appeared; in all, there are 180,000 main entries in English, occupying 1,800 three-column, 8" x 11½" readable pages. The 150-page appendix to this unimpeachable work includes, *inter alia*, a lengthy glossary of abbreviations, biographical and gazetteer sections, and an unusual table of mathematical equivalents.

The Lilliputians are the revised series of bilingual *Midget Dictionaries* (Macmillan, \$1), pleasantly bound and measuring 2" x 3" x ⅝", each providing equivalents for 25,000 words. The customary implausible but useful dialogues round out the vocabularies.

Even fewer words are treated by Patrick Waddington in *A Basic Russian Vocabulary* (Crowell, \$4.95), but this is a carefully selected group for beginning students. In tabular form, each of 3,300 commonly encountered Russian words is listed with its stress, its style of inflection, its use with predicates and in phrases and idioms, and its English meaning. Alternative senses, in turn, are discriminated in such a way as to eliminate confusion. At the end, the author prints a checklist of the 1,300 words he believes essential "as active vocabulary for students who have completed elementary studies." An English index to the main vocabulary completes this useful and attractive manual.

Here's a new idea in the bilingual realm: *A Book of French Quotations* (Doubleday, \$5.95), compiled by Norbert Guterman, who has supplied most of the accompanying translations as well as the brief biographical notes and, where needed, explanations of the circumstances surrounding the quotation. Since these are the texts with which "every French writer expects a literate reader to be familiar," the book's value should be obvious. The 2,000 verse and prose quotations, which may take one line apiece or a dozen, range chronologically from the eleventh century to Camus, and there are first-line indexes to the originals, the translations, and the authors. Villon and Rabelais are here, Molière and Racine, Voltaire and Amiel, Stendhal and Proust, and Haraucourt's *Partir, c'est mourir un peu*; and so there is *sagesse* or *divertissement* on every page.

For entertaining studies of some of the modern French poets—and scores of other writers of this century—there's *The Concise Encyclopedia of Modern World Literature* (Hawthorn, \$15), edited by Geoffrey Grigson. His contributors, mostly British compatriots, were asked to write about authors they enjoyed, to quote where possible, to

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On the Fringe



IN MY mind—and this should give you a clue to that faulty mechanism—the fact that I was eating Melba toast when the idea behind this column was born is comparable to the day that apple slugged Sir Isaac Newton. Perhaps I'd better explain. I love obscure facts, those bits of useless information that delight the collector of same and bore everyone else. Therefore, when I eat Melba toast I always think of Dame Nellie Melba, the operatic soprano for whom the stuff was named. I was toying with how many people ate Melba toast without ever wondering about its name when I realized that the reference book field is studded with names, famous yet obscure. For example, take Bartlett, Bulfinch, Hoyle, Roget, and Webster. Practically everyone knows what they wrote but not who they were. If this is the case with you, and I readily admit it was with me (as any member of the staff of the Collier's Reference Service—a research bonus available to owners of *Collier's Encyclopedia*—who helped me dig out the facts can testify) the following can supply you with enough conversational trivia to remove your name permanently from all dinner party guest lists.

JOHN BARTLETT (*Familiar Quotations*) was born in Plymouth, Mass., in 1820, and at the age of three was able to read from the Bible, a feat that must have delighted his mother but thoroughly unnerves me. His formal education was limited to public school in Plymouth but his self-education went on for the rest of his life. At the age of sixteen he was employed by the owner of the University Bookstore in Cambridge, and at twenty-nine he owned the store. He was so well read and his mind was so retentive that "Ask John Bartlett" became a Harvard catchphrase for anyone seeking an apt quote or a rare book. As a result of so many people "asking," Bartlett started a notebook of familiar quotations and published the first edition of his now-classic work in 1855, a mere 295-page book. By 1858 he was up to his third edition, a volume of 446 pages. The Civil War took him out of the store and into the Navy, after which he joined Little, Brown & Co., of which he eventually became a partner. John Bartlett

edited his book through its first nine editions. He died on December 3, 1905. His little notebook is currently in its thirteenth edition and contains 1,068 pages of quotations. Horatio Alger, move over!

THOMAS BULFINCH (*The Age of Fable*) was probably a worry to his parents, which was one more than they needed, what with eleven children. Although Thomas (1796-1867)—whose father was the architect who helped complete the National Capitol—had a fine education at the Boston Latin School, Phillips Exeter Academy, and Harvard University, he just didn't seem to have any get-up-and-go. After doing a little teaching and then working in his brother's store, he settled down to thirty years of clerkship in the Merchants' Bank of Boston. The best that can be said for his position was that it left him enough time to produce eight books, two of which are still consulted today. One is *The Age of Chivalry* and the other is, of course, *Bulfinch's Mythology*, the popular name of *The Age of Fable*. As to whatever became of the other ten Bulfinch children—who knows?

JOHN CASSELL (French, German, Italian, Latin, and Spanish dictionaries) entered publishing from out of left field. Despite his romantic-sounding birthplace—Ring o' Bells Inn, Old Churchyard, Hunt's Bank, Manchester—his was not the most carefree of boyhoods, unless you list child labor in a cotton mill and a velvetene factory on a par with hide-and-seek. The son of an innkeeper, Cassell (1817-1865) became a carpenter's apprentice at the age of sixteen and a temperance reformer two years later, the latter presumably as a result of life at daddy's tavern. At nineteen the young carpenter, known in teetotaling circles as "the boy lecturer," took a three-week walk to London, where he became an official agent of the National Temperance Society at a salary that would have forced a drinking man to dry out. He lectured around the countryside for some four years, educating himself along the way and taking on carpentry jobs when his salary ran out. In 1841 he married a lady of some culture and money, and became a wholesale grocer.

Cassell & Co. (the name of the British publishing house today) specialized in tea, coffee, cocoa, and chocolate, all of which the proprietor thought to be adequate substitutes for alcohol. The grocer's desire to advertise and the temperance worker's desire to proselytize led to Cassell's publishing *The Teetotal Times: or Monthly Temperance Messenger*. In 1848 he brought out *The Standard of Freedom*, a weekly paper for "all who are opposed to Intolerance, the Gibbet, Intemperance, and War." Cassell then decided to publish reading matter slanted toward the poorer classes. First there was a penny weekly, *The Working Man's Friend and Family Instructor*, then a monthly that serialized a book of travel. At this point anyone can see how his name worked its way to dictionaries. It's getting from the velveteen factory to publishing that is the tricky part.

HENRY WATSON FOWLER (*A Dictionary of Modern English Usage*) was one of seven sons of Robert Fowler of Christ's College, Cambridge. After taking his B.A. and M.A. degrees at Balliol College, Oxford, Fowler (1858-1933) spent seventeen years as a teacher at Sedburgh School in Scotland, where the pupils nicknamed him "Joey Stinker" because of his choice of tobacco. He left the school in 1899 over a disagreement about the master-ship of a house he felt he should have been offered. A few years later Henry joined his brother Francis on the Isle of Guernsey, and a famous literary collaboration was begun. Between 1903 and the outbreak of World War I, they brought forth an excellent translation of Lucian; *The King's English*, a highly respected guide to correct speech, and the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*. Though the brothers shared the planning of *Modern English Usage*, the work was interrupted by the First World War. Both brothers lied about their ages and joined up. Francis contracted tuberculosis during the war and died in 1918 at the age of forty-eight. Henry Fowler served not as an officer but as a fighting man in the trenches though he was fifty-seven when he enlisted. After the war, he wrote the "M.E.U.," as it is affectionately known, which he had planned with his brother. First published in 1926, the book is still *the* guide to correct English usage and a delight to read.

GEORGE GROVE (*Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*), if you're looking for a conversation-stopper, was an engineer who specialized in lighthouses and bridges. Though he had no formal music training, Sir George (1820-1900) inherited a love for music from

his mother and was an ardent concert-goer and collector of scores. He burnt his bridges (and lighthouses?) behind him when he was appointed secretary of the Society of Arts and then secretary of the Crystal Palace at Sydenham. From 1856 on, he contributed program notes for concerts at the Crystal Palace and did extensive musical research. In 1867 he went to Vienna with Arthur Seymour Sullivan (the composing half of Gilbert and —) and discovered the lost orchestral parts of Schubert's *Rosamunde*. The year 1879 saw the first publication of the dictionary that still bears his name. In 1882, Grove assumed the directorship of the newly founded Royal College of Music and was knighted a year later. Four years before his death he published his last writing, a study entitled *Beethoven and His Nine Symphonies*.

EDMOND HOYLE (*A Short Treatise on the Game of Whist, Containing the Laws of the Game*) was an English writer on games as well as a successful teacher of them. He was born in England in 1672 and died in London in 1769. Aside from that title above, he also wrote manuals on backgammon, piquet, quadrille, brag, chess, and card games. Little is known about his ninety-seven years, but so successful were his works that publishers of rule books on both sides of the Atlantic tacked his name onto their titles; today "according to Hoyle" implies the last word on a subject.

EMILY PRICE POST (*Etiquette, The Blue Book of Social Usage*) was born into Baltimore society in 1872. Life was one big cotillion until 1906, when her marriage to Edwin Main Post ended in divorce. With two sons to support, she turned to writing fiction. Since her fiction was always about well-mannered Americans, she was the natural choice when her publishers, Funk & Wagnalls, decided to bring out a book on etiquette. Mrs. Post was not interested until she read some of the books already in print on the topic. What she read struck her as so foolish that she sat right down and wrote the book that has been *the* American standard on etiquette since 1922. At her death in 1960 she had seen her "Blue Book" through eighty-six printings and repeated revisions. According to the Library Extension Division of the Education Department of New York State, next to the Bible, it is the book most often stolen from libraries. Who could ask for a finer tribute?

PETER MARK ROGET (*Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases Classified and Arranged So as to Facilitate the Ex-*

pression of Ideas and Assist in Literary Composition) gave that long, long title to what we today refer to as *Roget's Thesaurus*. Roget (1779-1869), as did so many others on this list, started out in a direction far removed from that of his current fame. Obviously a bright lad, he earned his medical degree from the University of Edinburgh at the age of nineteen. Though he associated himself with the medical world for the rest of his life, he still found time to do much more. He founded the Society for the Diffusion of Knowledge and wrote popular manuals for it; he invented a slide rule, designed a pocket chessboard, and tried to perfect a calculating machine. And in 1852 he published his *Thesaurus*. Its immediate success sent it into two new editions within the next three years. Today's editions, published by Thomas Y. Crowell, are direct descendants of Dr. Roget's original of 112 years ago.

HENRY MARTYN ROBERT (*Robert's Rules of Order Revised*) is America's authority on parliamentary procedure. His book, which appeared in 1915, was an outgrowth of his *Pocket Manual of Rules of Order*, which he published in 1876 and tinkered with in 1893 and 1904. Aside from these two books, plus his *Parliamentary Practise* (1921) and *Parliamentary Law* (1923), there is nothing in his life (1837-1923) to suggest the man who introduced order into ladies' clubs. Henry Robert was an American army engineer who worked his way up to brigadier-general and chief of engineers. Should you care to read a lesser known work of his, may I suggest *The Water-Jet as an Aid to Engineering Construction*?

NOAH WEBSTER (*American Dictionary of the English Language*) is, of course, world-famous for his two-volume dictionary, but did you know that he also gave the United States its second greatest best-seller (the Bible is first), the *Blue-Backed Speller*, which ran to some 100 million copies in its century? A patriot, Noah Webster (1758-1843) was part of the Continental Army that marched against Burgoyne. As a civilian, he was a teacher, lawyer, lecturer, editor, author, and city judge. From 1800 on he devoted himself mainly to the staggering task of producing his dictionary. During the process he learned twenty-six languages and became the world's first scientific etymologist. He was seventy years old when his dictionary was published. It was a fitting triumph to a life that was all triumph. —HASKEL FRANKEL.

P.S.: I've just sworn off Melba toast for life. It's worn me out.

Cry Against a Decision of Silence

The Deputy, by Rolf Hochhuth, translated by Richard and Clara Winston (Grove, 352 pp. \$5.95), scores Pius XII for failure to intervene directly and unequivocally in the mass murders perpetrated by the Nazis. The theatrical production of the play was evaluated by Henry Hewes in SR March 14. Emile Capouya, who writes the column "The Real Thing," here considers the literary and philosophical merits of the drama.

By EMILE CAPOUYA

THIS interesting play had a stormy reception in Germany and France, and at its opening in New York was picketed by various persons—all of whom had read the play, no doubt, or at least had heard of someone who had read it. We might as well deal at once with the so-called controversial aspects of the drama. I say so-called because I find it hard to believe that they can sustain any genuine controversy, inasmuch as they are either matters of historic record, such as the supineness of the Vatican in its relations with Hitler, or else characterizations of personages in the play (some of them clerical personages) and ascriptions of motive to them—and that, I had always imagined, is the playwright's business.

Since the author deals with historical facts, he has some responsibility to represent them fairly. After all, we don't want him to falsify our sense of reality. Mr. Rolf Hochhuth has exhibited a very German thoroughness in that connection, for the text of the American edition of the play is followed by an appendix, quoting the journals, memoirs, and historical studies upon which he drew in creating his characters and incidents. As it happens, I had occasion to look up some thirty of Mr. Hochhuth's references, and I found that in those instances he quoted very fairly indeed, in no way misleading the reader about the significance of his citations in their original context. The playwright has the further responsibility, in a historical drama, of ascribing motives to his characters that have some relation to the actions chronicled in the historical record. In dealing with his ecclesiastical characters, including the play's hero and martyr, Father Ric-

cardo Fontana, Mr. Hochhuth has fulfilled that responsibility; the persons of his drama are as humanly believable as persons engaged in extraordinary actions can well be.

Audiences, and readers, must certainly wince at the scene in which Pope Pius XII is represented as hesitating between two evils, the sacrifice of the Jews destined to be murdered wholesale by Hitler, and the sacrifice of the Church's worldly interests. In a scene that reminds one irresistibly of Shylock's "My ducats! My daughter!" the Pope is shown dictating a mild and equivocal reproof, addressed to the man who is burning Jews, Poles, Gypsies, Catholic priests, and other undesirable, and then he is shown consulting with his financial adviser about the fate of certain investments threatened by the Nazi reverses in Russia. But the Papal message referred to is, in all its inadequacy, a matter of history. And does anyone suppose that the Church does not have investments? Does it malign the Church to suggest that it pays reasonable attention to its investments? Of course not. Rather, the shock that this scene generates comes from the direct suggestion that the Holy See considered the death of millions of people to be of secondary importance to its

own temporal security, which can be symbolized for dramatic purposes by investments, or in plain English, money. But that is just what the Vatican's historic choice amounted to, and if Pius XII did not in fact take up the two matters of the Nazi victims and the safety of the Church's investments in the course of a single morning, that is, historically speaking, neither here nor there. Dramatically speaking, it is of the first importance that the two activities be represented at the same time, so that we can learn something about the nature of sin.

The reason offered by the Church for its failure to intervene directly and unequivocally in the murders done in the concentration camps—say, by a threat to denounce the Concordat with Hitler, or to excommunicate any Catholic who participated in torturing, gassing, and burning men, women, and children in the camps—is that higher spiritual interests of universal scope demanded that the Vatican put its temporal security before every other consideration. Unfortunately, that is an excellent reason. It is so good an excuse that men resort to it before any other when they wish to justify acting badly in the extreme crises of life. The Church's moral position on this issue is even a little ahead of that of the governments of the United States and Great Britain, which made no real protest to Hitler between 1933 and 1940, and thereafter did only such things as suited their presumed military interests, including the demand for unconditional surrender; those governments have scarcely troubled to justify their position, while the Church has. For that matter, why did Americans not instruct their government to act properly? It's a free country, isn't it? Why did no American Jews threaten an organized protest against their government's indifference? In all these cases, the answer is the same: because they put other considerations ahead of the agony of millions of their fellow human beings.

It has been argued that Mr. Hochhuth has distorted history by concentrating so heavily on the Church's culpability. That is true but impertinent. He has indeed failed to indict all the parties to the concentration camp and extermination camp murders, except in passing and by implication, singling out instead the German nation and the Vatican. But that is already a subject of a size to tax a playwright, and I do not see how he could be asked to expand it to include every guilty person or group. Moreover, by talking about the Germans and the Vatican, Mr. Hochhuth focuses our attention on the moral essence of the problem. He opposes the spirit of murder to the spirit of Chris-



—Friedman Abeles.

James Mitchell and Jeremy Brett, who play the Doctor and Riccardo in *The Deputy*.