

once collected and exhibited freaks. The afterimage—and so many of Mr. Rudd's stories return to mind with a greater impact than they made on first reading—is one of low-key horror. "The Man on the Trestle" is a story of pain, a wounded pilot's reaction to himself and the men around him. It is written from deep, deep within.

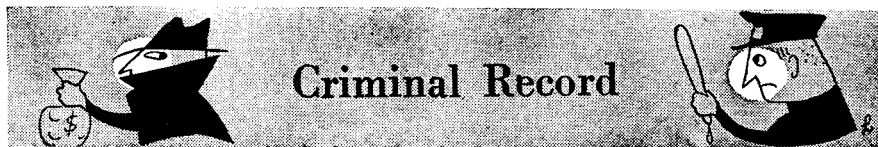
One must himself read Mr. Rudd to discover that special quality he brings to his work—a certain seemingly artless re-arrangement and abridgment of life into neatly contained packages built somewhat along the lines of those cold capsules one sees advertised on television; you swallow them now and they explode later. If there is a complaint to be leveled against *My Escape from the CIA*, it is that the book contains but thirteen events. —HASKEL FRANKEL.



Bowlerized Burlesque: J. I. M. Stewart's *An Acre of Grass* (Norton, \$4.50) is a deliberately mannered novel, the narrator of which is an elderly novelist writing about a famous and even more elderly novelist who has just been buried in Westminster Abbey, but not before completing a last novel (called "An Acre of Grass"), which turns out to contain a vicious caricature of his wife, from whom it must at all costs be kept. The costs, in this case, are the fabrication, by the narrator, of a substitute novel ("An Acre of Grass," yes) to be palmed off on the wife.

Mr. Stewart, who produces detective novels under the name of Michael Innes, handles these intricacies with ease. And his narrator is persistently believable—a man who writes in a kind of Jamesian pastiche, properly convoluted and Latinate, coyly daubed with literary references, and now and again touched with a certain caustic humor. But, not surprisingly, the validity of this unflagging egotist's character is bought at the expense of all dramatic movement and any hint of humanity in the rest of the cast, although they are all achingly self-conscious.

Anyone trying to deal with the dark things that lurked beneath the mask of a great writer is up against Maugham's best novel, *Cakes and Ale*. Mr. Stewart isn't competing there, so it's rather puzzling to know why he should have spent so much care over the portrait of an old literary bore. For his own fun perhaps? Possibly, if you relish long donnish jokes, for yours too. —JULIAN GLOAG.



The Conspiracy of Death. By George Redston and Kendell F. Crossen. Bobbs-Merrill. \$5. This veritable encyclopedia of West Coast crime also contains much material about Mafia-Syndicate operations elsewhere in the U.S. Frightening and fascinating.

Fifteen Clues: True Stories of Crime Detection. By Eugene B. Block. Doubleday. \$4.50. All but three of the cases here narrated are Midwest and Far West; two are French, one English; all are reasonably recent and (more important) not previously written to death. Police work is stressed, as indicated.

Spy: Twenty Years in Soviet Secret Service. By Gordon Lonsdale. Hawthorn. \$4.95. A trapdoor in a kitchen floor, film concealed in a talcum powder tin, documents hidden in a tank in a men's room: these are some of the orthodox tricks of the trade which this notorious Russian agent describes. (What is truth? Just like fiction.)

The Two Assassins. By Dr. Renatus Hartogs and Lucy Freeman. Crowell. \$5.95. This study of the lives of Lee Harvey Oswald and Jack Ruby and of the emotional stresses to which they were subjected is based largely on the record of the Warren Commission, with details from other sources added. A straightforward piece of reporting.

The Double Image. By Helen MacInnes. Harcourt, Brace & World. \$5.75. Yank historian turns amateur security agent after Paris hassle results in the murder of his old professor; scene now shifts to the Cyclades, where lethal violence ensues and peaceful coexistence is severely jarred. Author's thirteenth is usual smooth, fast-action job.

Bazzaris. By Don Tracy. Trident. \$4.95. This colorful chronicle of life and death among Florida's colony of Greek sponge-fishers is not strictly a *roman policier* (though two police chiefs are in the cast), but it has admirable pace, excitement, and verve, plus a fine sense of locality.

The Widow Watchers. By Frank Archer. Crime Club. \$3.50. Was plot to blow up a plane, overheard in a San Francisco bar, real or phony? Detective Joe Delaney wants to know, professionally and personally (his wife is flying to Hawaii). Zooms right along to a smash-eroo finish.

The Anxious Conspirator. By Michael Underwood. Crime Club. \$3.50. Raid on English counterfeiting ring develops sour note when informer who was supposed to "escape" is nabbed with rest of mob; two relevant murders are arranged in Austria. Ingenious baffler.

The Windy Side of the Law. By Sara Woods. Harper & Row. \$4.50. Englishman returning to London from Ceylon with alleged amnesia (real or feigned?) and suitcase full of heroin (real) is in king-size jam; so is his old friend Antony Maitland, barrister; there are violent deaths. Not up to author's previous high standard.

711—Officer Needs Help. By Whit Masterson. Dodd, Mead. \$3.50. Southern California cop who kills in self-defense is thrown off force; he sets out to fight way back, with startling results. Holds up nicely.

Coffin in Malta. By Gwendoline Butler. Walker. \$3.50. The Coffin of the title is Inspector John Coffin of Scotland Yard, who flies to Valetta to solve a rather messy murder. Entertaining picture of island life gives story good support.

Salute from a Dead Man. By Donald MacKenzie. Houghton Mifflin. \$3.95. Industrial sabotage in London area is the theme of this dozenth work by a consistently competent hand. Bittersweet is the word for it.

Girl on the Run. By Hillary Waugh. Crime Club. \$3.95. Philadelphia private eye (why fare so far?) gets summons from New Hampshire village to trail female tagged for anticidic; chase takes in Florida, Panama. (How's for getting back to that fine police chief Fred C. Fellows of Stockford, Conn.?)

Murder by 3's. By Patricia Moyes. Introduction by Anthony Boucher. Holt, Rinehart & Winston. \$5.95. Author's first omnibus includes her memorable *Dead Men Don't Ski* (1960), *Down Among the Dead Men* (1961), and *Falling Star* (1964), all reciting the detection disciplines of Chief Inspector Henry Tibbett, CID, not to mention his wife, Emmy.

Date with Death. By Elizabeth Lington. Harper & Row. \$3.95. Frankster strews gimmicks in path of Hollywood cops trying to untangle double murder; Sgt. Maddox carries the main load. Q&A all the way. —SERGEANT CUFF.



Four Conductors and a Soprano

AS TIME is measured in artistic matters, it is not so long ago—a mere sixty years—since Edward MacDowell withdrew one of his works because it was to be given on an “American” program. The implication was that this categorized it as somehow inferior. Leonard Bernstein’s most recent Philharmonic program conformed to a recognizable pattern in presenting a new symphony, a concerto kind of contemporary work and a recent creation of sufficient substance to be considered “standard.” That all of these went with the names of native-born composers was hardly a cause for complaint, least of all from the creators themselves.

What was, perhaps, even more conspicuous than nationality was the allegiance each asserted to a larger musical community. That is the one in which tonality, if no longer an absolute monarch, at least has constitutional rights. The Symphony No. 2 by Leo Smit is almost consistently in C, Bernstein’s own Serenade relates more than occasionally to A minor, and Copland’s Third Symphony begins in E and reverts to that base with sufficient frequency to define it as, in fact, a base. This identifies them either as musicians who have not heeded the voices that have doomed tonality, or, having heard them, have concluded that it is not quite so dead as the dodo (cacophonists).

Smit’s symphony is another testimonial to the musical juices in this man, who was an able pianist before he acknowledged his basic commitment to composition. The piano has more than a casual part in this work, a fact which is hardly revolutionary. But, unlike its use by Shostakovich in his first symphony for contrast and tonal color, it serves a structural purpose for Smit, as mediator among the groups into which he has divided the orchestra. At one point, in his own words, it is “directing traffic in all directions.” There is reference, in the same notes, to a section “depicting a vast, imaginary frog pond.” Such allusions tend to make one listen for the frogs rather than the music, and suggest that Smit’s considerable musical impulse is not yet channeled in the most productive direction.

The peril of providing a too specific program for a musical work was recognized decades ago by composers otherwise as different as Brahms and Mahler. But it was, also, one to which Bernstein succumbed in his invitation to cogitation called *Serenade for Solo Violin, String*

Orchestra, Harp and Percussion (after Plato’s ‘Symposium’), for which Zino Francescatti was the excellent soloist. When it was first performed here (in 1954) I was so busy attempting to puzzle out which was the lover and which the beloved that I missed the ingenious relationship among the musical elements. This time, under the influence of Jack Gottlieb’s dissertation on the papa-mama-baby generation of the melodic material, the musical finesse as well as the schematic purpose of the discourse was properly apparent. This suggests that, like the scaffolding of a building, a literary program is something that the composer should quietly dismember and, perhaps, burn when it has served its purpose to the only person for whom it has any real interest—the builder himself.

Bernstein showed no more partiality for his own work than for the others of the program, a tribute to good taste as well as to objectivity. This meant, in a natural assessment of values, that the evening-ending Copland was a perilously heavy arch to the slender pillars on which it was supported, but an arch, nevertheless, of imposing proportions as well as substantial design.

The panorama of orchestral events included further performances by the Cleveland Orchestra (under Robert Shaw) in its annual series of Carnegie Hall appearances and a concert by the Minneapolis Symphony under the direction of Stanislaw Skrowaczewski. Each had its interests related less to point of origin than to immutable musical law.

With Shaw it tends to the conclusion that even the very best choral conductor finds it hard to rechannel his basic musical drive. The Cleveland Orchestra Chorus, which he has trained, is a very superior chorus, and its participation in Haydn’s *The Seasons* merits any amount of commendation. But it seemed to me that the orchestra (between Shaw on the podium and the chorus at the back) occupied a kind of limbo in which it was too often overlooked and mostly underencouraged.

Considering the scope of this tonal canvas and the part in it assigned to the instrumental elements, Shaw’s treatment almost excluded the possibility of Haydn’s great tonal mural being realized in all its amplitude. Nor did his metronomic tempi and rather square, blocky phrasing generate the imagery that was lacking in the tonal colors per se. Among the soloists, Phyllis Curtin had the most aptitude for the style,

Cesare Valletti some but not quite as much, and John Reardon very little.

The evening with Skrowaczewski identified him as the embodiment of the intellectual musician, with a clear conception of the relationship of every note to every other note in the music he conducts, but not so keen an awareness of the function of the spaces between them. This was no source of shortcoming in Elliot Carter’s *Variations*, the Hindemith *Metamorphosis on Themes of Weber*, or Szymanowski’s *Symphonie Concertante*, for which Eugene Istomin was the fluent, well-equipped pianist. But in the “classic” work of the program (Debussy’s *Iberia*) Skrowaczewski was more concerned with articulation than evocation, and with the definition of orchestral choirs than the combination of them.

Considering the qualities of knowledge and purpose he brought to Verdi’s *Ballo in Maschera* at his debut, it is by no means unreasonable that the Metropolitan’s newest conducting name should be, in fact, double—Molinari-Pradelli (or with his given name of Francesco, triple). Had it not been for the “cancellation” of 1961, Molinari-Pradelli would be, by now, an old friend, for he was one of those whose services were “lost” by the time the season was reinstated. In addition to shaping the results to a splendid likeness of Verdi’s outline—rhythmic detail sharp, vocal values keenly adjusted to the orchestral sound, and vice versa—Molinari-Pradelli has the professional’s concentration on the problem before him, rather than the dilettante’s concern for the impression he is making on those behind him. Leontyne Price’s first *Amelia* improved as it progressed, suggesting it may become a very good role for her. Mignon Dunn excelled her previous best as Ulrica, in a cast including Carlo Bergonzi (Riccardo) and Robert Merrill (Renato).

Later in the week the Metropolitan’s newest Elvira was replaced by an even newer one when the continued absence of Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (she is not expected back this year) brought on the debut of Pilar Lorengar several days in advance of the *Don Giovanni* to which she had been previously assigned. Lorengar’s qualifications for an operatic career—good looks, a sound voice, and no little temperament—have been well established elsewhere, if not in a role of this one’s particular demands. Save for an occasional phrase here and there which recalled its original quality, the voice sounded overburdened by the dramatic demands of this music. Oddly, Lorengar did best with the florid line of “*Mi tradi*,” though by the expedient of using her original, lighter quality, she sacrificed dramatic impact. The cast under Joseph Rosenstock’s direction was, otherwise, as previously admired.

—IRVING KOLODIN.