

Understanding Repairman: In *Balloons Are Available* (Atheneum, \$4.50) Jordan Crittenden has written a book about banality which is itself so banal as to thrust beyond the boring into the offensive. Derisive rather than absurd, with a mock-character rather than a mock-hero, the book—stylistically an exercise in non sequiturs—is silliness rather than satire: a performance in notes so hollow that the author sounds patronizing and the reader feels had. Finished, one drops it on the table, half expecting the book will crack.

The fact is, Howard Ormsby, focus of this arch, episodic, pseudo-*Candide*, long-short-story-if-anything is a dimwit, and the people he encounters are dimwits also. In a very few pages it begins to seem much too easy of Mr. Crittenden to have detailed such an idiocy. After page on page of the whimsical irrelevancies which serve weakly for both comedy and point, it begins to seem malicious.

I quote at random:

Howard made his first installation on his own after he had been on the job for a week. The lady of the house gave him an individual-size sponge cake.

On Howard's second call, to repair a clogged jet, the lady of the house suggested he make love to her, which he did as soon as he got the heater working right. Afterwards they talked in calm, thoughtful tones. Howard said, "I'll be wearing a cap with an emblem on it if Mr. D'Angelo can find it."

She said, "You understand me like no other repairman has ever understood me."

But then, that's not the funniest thing in the book. This is:

It was she who urged him to enroll in night school to complete his high school education. "Otherwise," she said, "you'll be haunted by those little advertisements on matchbooks for the rest of your life."

The title derives from W. H. Auden: "... all the modes of transport, litters, ox-carts, canoes, hansom cabs, trains, trolley cars, aeroplanes, balloons are available, but any sense of direction, any knowledge of where on earth one has come from or where on earth one is going to is completely absent." A lovely, lucid statement which in no way deserved the 180 pages Mr. Crittenden has appended to obscure it.

—LOUISE ARMSTRONG.



"I'll buy that."

Checklist of New Books

Crime, Suspense

THE FACE OF THE ENEMY. By Thomas Walsh. Simon & Schuster. \$3.95.

FEAR OF A STRANGER. By Rae Foley. Dodd, Mead. \$3.95.

A LEAVE-TAKING. By George Milner. Dodd, Mead. \$3.95.

MURDER IS ABSURD. By Patricia McGerr. Doubleday. \$3.95.

SLY AS A SERPENT. By Kyle Hunt. Macmillan. \$3.95.

Fiction

THE FEBRUARY PLAN. By James Hall Roberts. Morrow. \$4.95.

DIGGING OUT. By Anne Richardson. McCraw-Hill. \$4.50.

THE FUTILE LIFE OF PITO PEREZ. By José Rubén Romero. Prentice-Hall. \$4.95.

GRANDMIERE. By Viña Delmar. Harcourt, Brace & World. \$4.75.

THE GREAT BONACKER WHISKEY BAR. By Ralph Maloney. Atlantic-Little, Brown. \$4.95.

THE ISLAND: Three Tales. By Gustav Herling. World. \$4.95.

THE MAN WHO STOLE A UNIVERSITY. By Phoebe and Todhunter Ballard. Doubleday. \$4.95.

THE MARKET SQUARE. By Miss Read. Houghton Mifflin. ^4.

MEYER MEYER. By Helen Hudson. Dutton. \$4.50.

THE MIDDLEMAN. By Mark Smith. Little, Brown. \$5.95.

MY LORD OF CANTERBURY. By Godfrey Turton. Doubleday. \$5.95.

REMORSE. By Alba de Céspedes. Doubleday. \$5.95.

THE TIME OF THE HAWK. By Andrew Tully. Morrow. \$4.95.

ULTERIOR MOTIVES. By David Garnett. Harcourt, Brace & World. \$4.50.

U.S.S. MUDSKIPPER: The Submarine That Wrecked a Train. By William M. Hardy. Dodd, Mead. \$4.50.

Government, Politics

THE INTELLECTUAL IN POLITICS. Edited by Dr. H. Malcolm MacDonald. Univ. of Texas Press. \$4.95.

RESPONSIBILITY AND RESPONSE. By General Maxwell D. Taylor. Harper & Row. \$3.50.

International Affairs

PROVINCIAL PARTY PERSONNEL IN MAINLAND CHINA 1956-1966. By Frederick C. Teiwes. Columbia Univ. Press. Paperback, \$3.

Law

THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE RULE OF LAW: Charter Development Through the Handling of International Disputes and Situations. By John W. Halderman. Oceana. \$7.50.

Literary History, Criticism

THE LITERATURE AND THOUGHT OF MODERN AFRICA: A Survey. By Claude Wautier. Praeger. \$8.

THE POET AS CRITIC. Edited by Frederick P. W. McDowell. Northwestern University

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Press. Hardbound, \$4.50. Paperback, \$2.50.

A PRIMER OF IGNORANCE. By R. P. Blackmur. Harcourt, Brace & World. \$5.95.

TOLSTOY AND THE NOVEL. By John Bayley. Viking. \$6.95.

TRADITION AND TOLERANCE IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY FICTION. Edited by David Howard, John Lucas, and John Goode. Barnes & Noble. \$8.50.

Miscellany

GREAT GAMES OF CHESS PRODIGIES. By Fred Reinfeld. Macmillan. \$5.95.

THE MYTHMAKERS. By Mary Barnard. Ohio Univ. Press. \$5.

Personal History

THE BLACK POET: Being the Remarkable Story of George Moses Horton, a North Carolina Slave. By Richard Walser. Philosophical Library. \$3.50.

EPITAPHS OF OUR TIMES: The Letters of Edward Dahlberg. Braziller. \$6.95.

NEGRO MEDAL OF HONOR MEN. By Mary N. Dolim. Morrow. \$4.95.

ON PLAYING WITH LIONS. By Virginia McKenna and Bill Travers. Harcourt, Brace & World. \$3.95.

Poetry

CRY OF THE PEACOCK. By Naomi Lazard. Harcourt, Brace & World. \$3.95.

Religion, Philosophy

ARISTOTLE'S METAPHYSICS. Translated by Hippocrates G. Apostle. Indiana Univ. Press. \$12.50.

BEYOND ANY KIND OF GOD. By Jack Kevorkian. Philosophical Library. \$3.75.

AN INVITATION TO HOPE. By Pope John XXIII. Simon & Schuster. \$3.95.

LONELINESS AND LOVE. By Libert Vander Kerken, S. J. Sheed & Ward. \$3.75.

PERSONAL WITNESS: A Biblical Spirituality. By John Navone, S. J. Sheed & Ward. \$4.95.

THE THREEFOLD SOCIAL ORDER. By Rudolph Steiner. Translated by Frederick C. Heckel. Anthroposophic Press. Paperback. \$1.95.

TRADITION AND TRADITIONS: An Historical and Theological Essay. By Yves M. J. Congar, O. P. Macmillan. \$14.95.

THE UNKNOWN GOD? By Joseph Möller, Herbert Haag, and Gottfried Hasenöhrl. Sheed & Ward. \$3.95.

Science

THE GOLDEN AGE OF SCIENCE: Thirty Portraits of the Giants of 19th-Century Science by Their Scientific Contemporaries. Edited by Bessie Zaban Jones. Simon & Schuster. \$12.

Travel

THE BEHOLDING RUNNER. By Owain Hughes. Morrow. \$4.

FRESH FROM THE LAUNDRY. By Ilka Chase. Doubleday. \$4.95.

—Compiled by NAID SOFIAN.

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

Column One should read: 5, 9, 4, 8, 10, 12, 11, 15, 3, 14, 2, 6, 7, 1, 13.

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ONLY ONE MEAL TODAY

CHUNG HAE KYUNG, KOREAN AGE 6. One of three children. Mother dead. Father TB. Grandmother stays at home to look after her sick son and his two younger children. Eldest sister, 18, sells vegetables in market. Earns \$7 per month, family's only income. Live in one room. Rent \$2 monthly. No facilities. Children always hungry. Winters cold and hard. Insufficient clothing and blankets. Grandmother unable to buy medicine for son and sufficient food for children. Help to Hae Kyung will relieve her grandmother's worries by bringing aid to the entire family.

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SR-2-67



New Works by Josephs, Kirchner, Carter

MAX RUDOLF made the last pair of concerts in the Cincinnati Symphony's seasonal visit to Carnegie Hall memorable by presenting the first performance in New York of Wilfred Josephs's *Requiem*. For it the orchestra brought along the University of Kentucky Choristers (Aimo Kiviniemi, director), the Lexington Singers (Phyllis Jenness, director), and the Lassel String Quartet, all of whom performed on the high professional level of Rudolf and his solo vocalist, Norman Treigle.

Affiliation of a string quartet with a choral work suggests that Josephs's work, which initially attracted attention in October 1965 as first-prize winner in a competition conducted by La Scala, is a *Requiem* with a difference. How much of a difference may be noted from the textual content, which is in Hebrew rather than Latin, and derived from the *Kaddish*, or prayer for the dead. A reaction to the trial and execution of Adolf Eichmann, it began as a work for strings to be called *Requiescant pro defunctis Judeis*, evolving, as Josephs worked on it, to its final, prize-winning form.

Of the composer's involvement with the subject there can be no doubt. It has depth of emotion as well as lofty musical purpose. Some of it makes a noble clamor in the supplications for peace that it implores; the relationship of solo voice to the choral ensemble, and both to the orchestra, often has compulsion, vitality, and a sense of racial identity.

The whole of it, however, is less persuasive than certain of its parts. One accepted the opening string quintet "Requiescant" as a suitably moodful invitation to attention, but the three later "meditations" for the same group could as well have been performed by members of the orchestra. At the least, it struck me that they intruded into the textual development, and, at the most, that they extended the length of the work rather beyond Josephs's capacity to sustain interest. The idiom he has evolved, after a "passing-through" investigation of the twelve-tone method, is supple and intelligible enough. It does not, however, have the variety to command attention over the hour-long span of this *Requiem*. But a composer capable of imagining a work on this scale should also be capable of achieving his purpose fully in time to come.

Rudolf made the occasion doubly productive by beginning with Mozart's beautiful *Vesperae Solennes de Confes-*

sore, a rich tapestry of solo vocal, choral, and ensemble elements rarely encountered in a concert performance of this quality. Its particular pride was the singing of Annie Walker, a young Negro soprano of uncommonly bright, powerful sound. She has not yet the command of ornamentation or the vocal finesse to make everything possible of the opportunities provided by Mozart (especially in the "Laudate Dominum"), but the material she has to work with merits every encouragement. In addition to Treigle, the other soloists in the Mozart were Patricia Berlin, mezzo, and Mallory Walker, tenor.

Leon Kirchner's compositional career took a new turn with the first performance in Town Hall by the Beaux-Arts Quartet of what was described as his Quartet No. 3. By my count, it was a sextet at least, for the live performers were flanked by two *obbligato* (KLH?) speakers for the addition of a taped sound track. Such pieces—and Kirchner's initial venture with a blend of live and prerecorded has been anticipated by more than a few other composers—always give rise to the question: If one such element is prerecorded, why bother with live performers at all? That is to say, the live performers are locked into the time values and dynamic quantities of the prefabricated element and hence become an adjunct of a machine, as a piano to a piano roll. Perhaps there is a way in which a sound track can be conceived as an *extension* of what four string instruments can convey, but Kirchner didn't find it for this work.

The young performers who make up the Beaux-Arts Quartet showed in their performance of an early Haydn in D minor (Op. 9, No. 4) the same qualities of vitality, good sound, and excellent ensemble that have distinguished their recordings. The program (sponsored by

the Naumburg Foundation, which also commissioned the Kirchner work) concluded with the Brahms C-minor Quartet.

It was, altogether, a week of K's with Paul Kletzki, Rafael Kubelik, and Istvan Kertesz as guest conductors. In their guest appearances, Kletzki (with the American Symphony) and Kubelik (with the Boston Symphony) functioned with familiar variations on the theme of orchestral command; for Kertesz, the appearance in Philharmonic Hall with the Philadelphia Orchestra showed that it has taken him about ten years to make the transition from raw promise, as a fugitive from Hungary in the uprising of 1956, to productive mastery. His direction of an uncommon Haydn symphony (No. 67 in F), Hindemith's *Nobilissima Visione*, and the D major (No. 6) of Dvořák qualified him for a solid place among those of the international set who can go any place, conduct any orchestra, and be sure of winning favor from almost any audience. He has musicality, a lucid way of conveying his intentions to an orchestra, and the kind of background that translates into the language (not necessarily of love) that players understand.

Everything Kertesz did within the prescribed perimeter covered the ground thoroughly. He aroused the most convinced response from the players in the Hindemith sequence (drawn from the ballet *St. Francis*), especially in the finale, which almost made the overhead "clouds" quiver in the proclamative peroration by the brass. He showed his musical sophistication in the preceding Haydn, a deft and lovable piece which requires one string player to tune his G string down to F in the Minuet. Kertesz converted it into an inside joke by handing the musician a small card as if to remind him of what was required. Investigation disclosed that the card was, actually, an IOU in payment to the "piper" impersonated by the violinist. It was, in any case, clear evidence of the happy relationship of men and maestro. The Dvořák went, as Dvořák should, straight to the hearts of the audience.

THE kind of talent attracted from world-wide sources by the Dimitri Mitropoulos International Competition produced another group of promising young conductors in this year's showing of winners in Philharmonic Hall. They ranged, in order of appearance before the Philharmonic Orchestra, from Paul Capolongo, Algerian born, French educated, to Enrique Garcia-Asensio, a native of Valencia; Helen Quach, born in Saigon, reared in Australia; and Alois Springer, originally from the Sudetenland, now associated with the Luxembourg Radio.

However, the order of interest, to this
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