

have unusual teachers and unusual students, and perhaps it does: it is in the kind of community that can pay high salaries and that has a literate citizenry. It may also be true that my correspondent, because he profited from his English courses, exaggerates their general effectiveness. But at the very least we must conclude that high school students were given serious and difficult works, that many learned how to read such works, and that some learned to enjoy the best that literature offers.

I am particularly impressed by what my correspondent says about the importance of challenge. Many people suggested books that seemed to them to have the qualities required by the teacher who wrote me in the first place. One person, for instance, suggested J. B. Priestley's *The Good Companions*, and several ardently advocated the works of J. R. R. Tolkien. One, out of her own high school experience, proposed Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, Hardy's *The Return of the Native*, and Conrad's *Lord Jim*, and there were others who set reasonably high standards. But such titles as Owen Wister's *The Virginian*, Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden*, and Jean Webster's *Daddy-Long-Legs* were also recommended. As one high school senior wrote, with special reference to the problem of "foul language" and "prurient sex": "It is high time teachers realized that when most students reach the twelfth grade level, they should be regarded as aware young adults, not naïve young children."

—GRANVILLE HICKS.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT No. 1248

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 1248 will be found in the next issue.

LYZ YFPYZUL HDWOFLFDW DG

ICL FU ICLEZUWZUU.

—YZWCS OITFO LYDCZIB

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 1247

I dislike arguments . . . they are always vulgar, and often convincing.

—OSCAR WILDE.

LETTERS TO THE Book Review Editor



Criterion: Excellence

IN HIS REVIEW [SR, June 17] of *Modern Brazilian Short Stories*, Donald A. Yates opines that an anthology should have "overall controlled form and character." He could not be farther from the truth. In selecting these stories written during or after the modernist movement in Brazil, my criterion was the excellence of the stories themselves. If I had sought to control the character of the selections in some other way, I would have had to sacrifice excellence to similarity (or contrast). This would have been unfair to prospective readers, most of whom, unlike Mr. Yates, are not teachers of literature and are therefore more impressed by the merit of a story than by its conformity to the anthologist's special control criterion.

Mr. Yates says that my translations "are uniformly good." Then, he adds a "suspicion" that I may not have caught the distinctiveness of all the literary styles, "in particular that of Guimarães Rosa." Odd that he should have specified this extraordinary writer, for Guimarães Rosa saw my translation of his story and commented in a letter to me (I translate):

I read it, first, with lively satisfaction. Then I compared it with the original, sentence by sentence, line by line, and I liked it even more. All your solutions were, in my opinion, subtle and wise. Such liberties as you took with the text were extremely effective reworkings of it into English. And now, upon a rereading, I am still more enthusiastic. What you have accomplished is a work of sensibility, competence, and love. May God reward you.

If He does, it will be because, apparently unlike Mr. Yates, He knows the original text.

WILLIAM L. GROSSMAN,
New York, N.Y.

Melville Was First

SINCE DAVID DEMPSEY BEGINS his article "Refurbishing American Authors" [SR, June 10] with an illustration of textual corruption drawn from Melville, SR readers may have been surprised not to find Melville's name in the list of writers being edited under the auspices of the Center for Editions of American Authors of the Modern Language Association. Melville is, in fact, one of that group of authors, and the Melville edition was the first new edition planned at the Center. The editorial funds in this case, however, come from a contract between the Office of Education and Northwestern University. Similarly, the Office of Education supports the University of Iowa textual center in editing the printed works of Mark Twain. These are the exceptions.

The National Endowment for the Humanities, through the Center, supports Stephen Crane, Emerson, Hawthorne, Howells, Irving, the Mark Twain papers, Thoreau, and Whitman.

The Melville edition is being published by Northwestern University Press and the Newberry Library, as their ad in the same issue of SR indicates. The University of California Press is publishing all the Mark Twain volumes.

Much of the collation of printed texts is being carried out at the various textual centers on a Hinman collator. Charlton J. K. Hinman some years ago designed this ingenious machine expressly to catch alterations of the text—including typos such as Hillman for Hinman, Mathiessen for Matthiessen, and works for words which occur in Mr. Dempsey's excellent piece.

WILLIAM M. GIBSON.

New York, N.Y.

Deserving Footnote

I BELIEVE THAT Professor Harrison Hayford, general editor of the Melville edition, deserves at least an editor's footnote of apology.

EILEEN PETERSON.

Berrien Springs, Mich.

Wrongly Credited

IN HARRY T. MOORE'S REVIEW of *The Thousand Hour Day*, by W. S. Kuniczak [SR, May 13], you erroneously credited Professor Moore of Southern Illinois University with the authorship of *Twentieth-Century German Literature*. In reality Professor Moore is the general editor of a series of studies entitled *Crosscurrents: Modern Critiques* and the author of two very informative volumes on *Twentieth-Century French Literature*, published by Southern Illinois University Press. The first of these volumes discusses French literature up to World War II, and the second the postwar period up to the present.

BERNARD M. POHORYLES.
Pleasantville, N.Y.

Dismayed

THOUGH ALL OF US at Lehigh University enjoyed Richard B. Morris's review of Lawrence Gipson's thirteenth volume of his monumental series, *The British Empire Before the American Revolution* [SR, June 17], many of us were dismayed that it was not mentioned that Dr. Gipson is research professor emeritus of history at Lehigh. The university and The Rockefeller Foundation have supported Dr. Gipson's gigantic work for forty-three years. Dr. Gipson, who will be a spry eighty-seven on December 7, 1967, has been honored with several prizes, including the Pulitzer, for his thirteen-volume work.

SAMUEL I. CONNOR.

Bethlehem, Pa.

Flower and Flame of Islam

The Shaping of the Arabs: A Study in Ethnic Identity, by Joel Carmichael (Macmillan, 407 pp. \$7.95), maintains that today's nationalism among the Moslem states was created by the Western countries, and what unity they have by Israel. Edward Wakin, a member of the Fordham University faculty, has traveled widely in the Middle East and written about its problems for newspapers and magazines. He is the author of "A Lonely Minority: The Modern Society of Egypt's Copts."

By EDWARD WAKIN

THEY speak one language, share the same history, experience identical problems in a common geography, pray facing the same direction, and are obsessed with the idea of nationalism. Yet the energizing basis of their unity is a negative one—hatred of Israel. Though there are glaring exceptions to this description, on the whole it sums up the Arabs of today. The paradox of their unity in paranoia and their disunity in everything else is fundamental to any historical study.

Joel Carmichael examines Arab identity from pre-Islamic to present times. The result is an authoritative report on the origins of the present-day Arabs; but, unfortunately, when the author reaches the crucial twentieth century his account lacks the penetration and depth one might expect from so sophisticated and knowledgeable a commentator.

Mr. Carmichael's well-documented thesis maintains that in the beginning there was an Arab people, homogeneous and militant. But Islam, through territorial expansion, was fertilized by conquered cultures, tended by Persians, Aramaeans, and Egyptians, among others, and eventually harvested by Turks. In both its rise and fall the Islamic world was dominated by non-Arabs.

Perfervid nationalists can, of course, change definitions on Mr. Carmichael and make religion, if not language, the common denominator of Arabs, rather than origins in the Arabian Peninsula, thus proving that Arab identity existed over the centuries. Such tiresome arguments aside, Mr. Carmichael's account is comprehensive, though not always

satisfactory because of a wavering between summary and analysis.

When he is summarizing, events race along, producing completeness if not clarity. Too much history in too short a space leaves dates, generals, caliphs, sultans, and battles splattered in some disarray.

When Mr. Carmichael analyzes in essay style he is at his best. Particularly noteworthy are his discussions of the influence of Christianity and Judaism on Islam; he calls the latter "well-nigh decisive." Repeatedly, when he stops to take stock he lights up his material, as in his discussion of the change in meaning of the word "Arab" after the leaders of Islam shifted their capital from Damascus to Baghdad in the second half of the eighth century.

In the final section of his book Mr. Carmichael concludes that today's Arab nationalism was not merely influenced by the West but created by it: "the actual idea of Arabs as a nation, of Arabs as an ethnic entity distinct from the Bedouin of the great deserts, was modeled on the Western view of so-

ciety as rooted in a unifying common language." His observations here are fascinating, particularly his comments that Christianity laid the foundations for Arab nationalism, while Zionism crystalized it. But the author has deprived us of his examination of this process.

Carmichael's treatment of Arabi Pasha (c. 1839-1911)—"creator of the Egyptian nationality as a desirable thing"—illustrates his shortchanging of his own theme. From Arabi Pasha to Gamal Abdel Nasser, from Egyptian to pan-Arab nationalism, there is an illuminating line of development to be pursued. This crucial evolution is not explored, much to the book's detriment.

It may seem a curious complaint, but Mr. Carmichael's study should have been either longer or shorter, either specifically focused or fleshed out to convey flavor and mood, nuance and shade. As it is, history and analysis suffer from a cramped merger.

In the end Mr. Carmichael still leaves us with the problem of the paranoiac hatred for Israel that transforms Arab disunity into unity. That a single stereotyped idea of "the enemy" can produce such a result points to a variety of historical factors at work. In his journey in search of explanations, the author has not pointed out clearly enough the signposts along the glorious road traveled by Islam in the past and her present thorny path.



"Mrs. Farnsworth's ancestors came over on the Mayflower, dear. Show her your rejection slip from American Heritage."