

she appears in English as "an economist." The word "poncif" has consistently baffled Mr. Moncrieff, who thinks it means "typical." "Décavés crapuleux" does not mean "alcoholic wasters," nor is a person who is said to be "d'un vaseux" "too sticky for words." "Detrimental" is a strange rendering of our old friend "fin de siècle." If Mr. Moncrieff ever tells a very chic Parisienne, whose latest creation makes "un effet boeuf," that it is a "bovine effect," unless she realizes that he does not know French she will be insulted. If she further decides to "faire la punaise," she will be amazed to hear that she has "put her foot in it." When Bloch said that Legrandin was "très bien," he meant something quite different from "he's a bit of all right." Mr. Scott Moncrieff's misfortunes with "barbante," "barbifiant," and "raseurs" are worthy of a place in a collection of schoolboys' "howlers." The slang meaning of "ostrogoth," the force of "youpin," and the simple meaning of "belles madames" also escape him.

The English version of Proust, then, is not the world's greatest translation, nor is Proust himself, for that matter, the greatest French prose writer of the age. He is, however, a fascinating and interesting chronicler and psychologist, with no sense of form, repetitious and careless, yet, the author of a work which promises to be for its epoch what Saint Simon's Memoirs were for the age of Louis XIV. There is no more delightful section than "Within a Budding Grove," with its memorable portrait of Bergotte, the marvelous satiric sketch of the diplomatist M. de Norpois, its picture of the Swann ménage as seen by a child, and the remarkable analysis of the boy's love and jealousy of the little girl, Gilberte. To those with the absolutely essential knowledge of France and French manners, Marcel Proust will always be irresistible.

ERNEST BOYD

A Rolling Stone

Since Leaving Home. By Albert Wehde. The Tremonia Publishing Company. \$3.

ALBERT WEHDE came to this country from Germany in 1885 when he was sixteen years of age, and was routed straight through to St. Louis. Since then he has wandered far and wide, and this volume is the story of his adventuring

After about a year of St. Louis he and another boy did a Huckleberry Finn trip down the Mississippi as far as some place in Arkansas, where the other lad made off with the boat, leaving Wehde high and dry with no other assets than a large turtle, which he sold for \$1.15 net. From there he wandered some years around Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, and Texas, working at odd jobs and enjoying the most extraordinary adventures, including the shooting of a bad man, for which act of public spirit the local grand jury declined to indict him. Eventually his wanderings brought him to Galveston, where he stowed away on a freighter bound for Bluefields, Nicaragua.

The next ten years Wehde spent in Nicaragua, Honduras, and Guatemala, for the most part painting signs and prospecting for gold in unknown and remote places. He found little gold, but found much beauty and adventure, and succeeded in getting himself condemned to death in connection with a little matter of a revolution. However, he escaped, tried to enlist in Mr. Roosevelt's Rough Riders in the Spanish War, and eventually joined his relatives in Chicago in 1900.

From that time until 1914 he lived uneventfully in Chicago creating hand-wrought jewelry until the outbreak of the World War set his love of adventure on the move again. He had become a naturalized American, but the cause of Germany stirred both his imagination and his affections, and he became an agent for the German Government in the Far East. While so engaged, he tried to maintain a scrupulous regard for the laws of the lands in which he operated and apparently was

fairly successful in doing so. When America entered the war he severed his German connections and came home, where, to his naive surprise, he was indicted and convicted under the neutrality statutes. Although I do not believe he intended to violate a federal statute, there seems little doubt that he did so, and, in any case, his activities must certainly have created resentment and have led to prosecution, as he might have expected. He spent nearly a year in the penitentiary at Leavenworth and found it a vile place, his experience confirming what is familiar to those acquainted with prison conditions generally. In one respect he made an important discovery while in jail—that fingerprints can be forged. He worked in the fingerprint office of the penitentiary and did considerable experimentation. He asserts that any good photo-engraver can forge fingerprints in a manner which defies detection and his statements on this score are so lucid and plausible that they call, I think, for investigation by our leading penologists, and, if true, for revision of the law in regard to fingerprint evidence.

His book, while not important, is an interesting story and will repay the reader with several hours of good entertainment.

ALBERT DESILVER

The Negro

The Negro from Africa to America. By W. D. Weatherford. George H. Doran Company. \$5.

THIS is a scrap-book of 487 closely printed pages in rather small type. It gives evidence of extended research and hard work, but from the very nature of the author's method the general reader will find it an almost impossible book. It has no style or literary plan, but is made up of quotations long and short or of transcriptions of authors' meanings. Yet Mr. Weatherford's book is not merely a doctor's thesis. With all its cumbersome content and slavish use of authorities it has a central thesis.

To those who can discern the meaning of things it is clear that a new light is dawning. Men are coming to desire a larger knowledge of all other men. Wise men realize that each group has a contribution to make to the world's civilization, and the sooner all groups can be brought to efficiency the sooner will the whole world be blessed with such contributions. Neither individuals nor races work out their destinies alone, but in cooperation.

The book is poorly balanced; slavery overweights it, political development is almost absent, and while there is much economic information, economic interpretation is often lacking. Mr. Weatherford's main authorities are unfortunately Weale's "The Conflict of Color" and Stoddard's "Rising Tide of Color," which latter he regards as "one of the most thoughtful books." A good book like Ellis's "Negro Culture in West Africa" he disparages. His comment on Woodson's "Negro in Education" is done in two words, while Stoddard gets a whole page. The Atlanta University studies which have to be mentioned are quoted without comment, while the silly studies of the Negro done by the Phelps Stokes Fund are spread out in large type. Even Mr. Weatherford, however, can find nothing to say for them.

The net impression of Mr. Weatherford's scheme of treatment is that of a well-meaning man who in spite of himself is oleaginous and patronizing. He starts, for instance: "I am interested in the Negro, not because he is a Negro but because he is a man. He has a personality just as I have and is capable of becoming a growing and progressing person." What could be better? And then he ends with this: "I have known some Negroes whose character was above reproach. Every Southern white man has known at least one such Negro!"

There is no doubt that Mr. Weatherford really represents an advance over the conventional Southern attitude. He is distinctly liberal toward the Negro and he believes in liberal Southern movements. But beneath the whole argument, old

assumptions, old beliefs continually persist. His chapters on Africa, for instance, are painfully inadequate and misleading and leave us with the ancient idea that the black man inherited "a loose moral life," no economic "efficiency," and that his "laziness" and "emotional nature" are something to be got rid of. Havelock Ellis is not one of his authorities. On the other hand, he has made some researches in American slavery that are of value, as, for instance, his stressing of the fact that the first Negroes brought to Virginia were not slaves but servants.

Mr. Weatherford is painfully careful throughout his book to say very little about Reconstruction and the right to vote. Only seven of his five hundred pages are given to this great matter, and here he regards the enfranchisement of the Negro as a "colossal blunder." He lays the lack of present "understanding" between the races to the ballot:

It was just here that Reconstruction did its most deadly work. By setting the white man and the black man in the South in political opposition there were antagonisms aroused which broke down all confidence and hence destroyed all mutual understanding.

Has the world ever known "understanding" between masters and forcibly emancipated slaves? After this tribute to the conventional Southern perversion of history he admits that it is impossible to stem the rising tide of democracy, and his brilliant suggestion is higher property and intellectual qualifications for the ballot, in order to eliminate "a great majority of the Negroes and, of course, many of the whites. This is only right!"

The book lacks frankness; it is often double-faced and contradictory; sometimes it is merely mushy; seldom is it strong; it is afraid of conclusions; it continually walks up to some wall of difficulty and then, turning nimbly, sheers off into vague phrases, meantime apparently losing sight of the wall entirely. In his interpretation of the Negro Mr. Weatherford is continually at fault. He has difficulty in understanding the self-determining, intelligent black man who stands on his own feet. He is continually quoting the smoother phrases of the late Booker Washington and the present Dr. Moton.

Yet the net verdict on Mr. Weatherford's work must be favorable. It does not represent the heights of Southern white emancipation, but the average stay-at-home effort of the new "inter-racial" class. As such it is the best thing the white South has produced. Here and there the author has a word, a sentence, or a paragraph which shows that he realizes more than he always says:

As never before in his history, the Negro is finding self-expression. In music, poetry, art, in books, and in the press he is saying what he thinks. He is no longer the silent, suffering, cringing person we once knew. He is boldly speaking his mind, and it behooves the American people to give earnest heed to his voice.

W. E. BURGHARDT DUBOIS

American Music via Europe

By HENRIETTA STRAUS

ONE must go abroad, it seems, to find the American composer; for where, in his own country, he is still writing like the European composer, who, in turn, is trying to write jazz, in Europe he appears bent upon ridding himself of this imitative role. Whether it is that constant impact with an older culture has unlocked race memories; whether the influences which moved him from afar have become merged in a subconscious nostalgia; or whether it is both, one finds him no longer substituting a false activity for ideas. Instead, his inspirational sources begin to bear the stamp of authenticity.

Thus, in Paris, I found Ezra Pound writing medieval music based on a medieval text; while his friend George Antheil was writing, not jazz but music resolved to its essence. Pound, of course, is a poet whose spiritual haunts have long been those of the troubadour and trouvère. As their spiritual

comrade-in-arms, therefore, it was perhaps natural that he should turn to music. "Music and poetry," he points out, "had been in alliance in the twelfth century. With their divergence," he adds, "the rhythms of poetry grew stupider," and "melodic invention declined simultaneously and progressively," with the result that "the horizontal construction (or mechanics of music) had gone or was, with increasing rapidity going, to pot."

With this "alliance," therefore, as his basic principle, he has taken the "Testament" of François Villon, and used it, in all its ribaldry and lyricism, as the text for an opera. He has not "set it to music," in our ordinary sense of the term, but rather has developed the melodic line from the intonation and accent of the spoken word. The few instruments called for by the simple scoring are used mainly to reinforce the voice; and while technically Pound is often at fault, for he is not a musician in the technical sense of the word, fundamentally his effects ring true. Aside from their movement and color, they seem medieval in *spirit*—not the pseudo-medieval atmosphere evoked by a twentieth-century mind, but the inevitable mate of the text. It is, on the whole, a most interesting experiment, though not solitary of its kind, as Januček, in Prague, has also, it seems, been writing music derived from the spoken word; but whatever its aesthetic value may prove to be, it will always have the distinction of being one of the first original musical experiments that any American has yet dared to make.

The most far-reaching experiments, perhaps, by an American, or any other just at present, are those being made by George Antheil, whom one is tempted to call a genius. Born in Trenton, New Jersey, of Polish parents, he seems to have spent about half of his twenty-three years in Poland, and half in America. He went back to the latter country when he was fourteen, and during the seven years he was there studied with Von Sternberg and Bloch. What was even more important, perhaps, was that, during these same seven years, he was playing and experimenting with Negro orchestras, inventing, so he claims, many of the piano and percussion effects now used in presenting jazz. Today he has gone even farther, for the jazz he is writing now is not the jazz we know in America—he is right when he says he is three or four years ahead of that. It is, rather, music stripped of all "atmosphere" and nuance, such as Stravinsky has made, but more sensitive even than Stravinsky's to what Antheil calls "time space." By this he means that we are living more swiftly today, in an age when machinery has entered men's imaginations, and to express this "new propulsion of time spaces" we need a new music. Vertical music will not do it, because vertical music is too static, having reached its climax in Schönberg, whom he characterizes as "Mendelssohn with false notes." Resorting, therefore, to the only alternative, and carefully avoiding all "improvisation" (an unpardonable weakness, to him), he has definitely worked out a series of time-locked intervals of rhythm, or, to use his own term, musical "mechanisms," now pounding loudly, now whirring softly in space, with the regularity and precision of machines. The scoring of his jazz opera, for instance, is confined mainly to six or seven (I forget which) electric pianos. One can, indeed, think of no better analogies to his music than those which have already been made: the "ice-blocks" of Picasso, the "Timon" designs of Lewis; for Antheil, too, is a "primitive." In his first sonata for violin and piano he still clings to race memories, and Slavic rhythms alternate with those of the African savage. In his second sonata he discards the Slavic altogether for the African. When he now seeks inspiration he no longer goes to the Negro orchestras, but to Morocco itself; and so he gives us the concentrated essence of what one might call the spirit of America, with all its terrific energy, its speed pressure, its machine rhythms, by the Slav out of Africa. This musical phenomenon, which we still call jazz, for want of a better name, Paul Whiteman demonstrated last year to be the first authentic music to come out of America. What George Antheil is proving, however, is that it is the most significant music of today.