

upbuilding of the German armed forces and the expansion in Eastern Europe, "Battle against Time" contains the same careful evaluation of credits against debits. In each case the sacrifice has been enormous.

Can a nation already under such fearful strain withstand the added exactions of a grueling war? In Mr. Hauser's opinion the answer is in the negative. After six years of Nazi rule, the idealistic content of National Socialism has evaporated. A gap has been opened between the omnipotent bureaucracy and the people. Morally and economically the country is on the verge of collapse. Germany will go down to defeat; a bloody revolution may follow. However, the author hopes that their painful absence since 1933 has taught the German public to cherish liberty and justice. Whether or not this is wishful thinking, the book is well worth reading for its insight into the condition of a people which has tasted despair.

D. H. P.

Miscellaneous

GRANDFATHER WAS QUEER. *Early American Wags and Eccentrics from Colonial Times to the Civil War.* By Richardson Wright. Lippincott. 1939. 358 pp., with index. \$3.

Mr. Wright here hangs up his shovel and his hoe and takes the screwballs out of the mothballs. Some of his characters—Lord Timothy Dexter, for example—are familiar figures; others—such as Prince Grippy, the Hag of Plymouth, Henry the Holy Shouter, the brethren of the Society of the Woman in the Wilderness, and the Leather Man—will be novelties to all but the most earnest explorers of the lunatic fringe. There are chapters on the general store, the tavern, and the barber-shop as the center where the lore of eccentricity flourished most hardily. There is a fascinating section on cave-dwellers and solitaries, some of whose members formed a veritable "catacomb aristocracy," in Mr.

Wright's phrase. It all makes most salutary and comforting as well as pleasant entertainment. Every age is likely to think that its own psychopathological exemplars are more egregious than any that have gone before. Praise Heaven, it just isn't so.

J. T. W.

Music

FOLK SONGS OF OLD NEW ENGLAND. *Compiled by Eloise Hubbard Linscott.* Macmillan. 1939. 337 pp. \$5.

THE NEW GREEN MOUNTAIN SONGSTER. *Compiled by Helen H. Flanders, Elizabeth F. Ballard, George Brown & Phillips Barry.* Yale University Press. 1939. 278 pp. \$3.50.

The rather surprising thing about two separate collections of New England popular songs, assembled along similarly catholic lines at about the same time, is that they should be so very different. "Folk Songs of Old New England," to be sure, includes country-dance tunes and singing games neglected by the "New Green Mountain Songster." The more scholarly approach of the compilers of the latter has led them to include certain examples of popular balladry seldom found on the lips of living singers. Yet it is remarkable that of 102 songs in the Green Mountain collection, only three should find their way into that of Miss Linscott; nor would it be difficult for any New Englander to think of half a dozen airs that have been omitted from both — "The Captain with His Whiskers," "Peeping through the Knot-hole" and "The Old Grey Mare," for example.

Perhaps the answer lies in the inexhaustible nature of folk balladry itself, some clue to which is furnished by a comparison of the two volumes. The late Phillips Barry, who did much of the work on the Green Mountain collection, was interested in survivals; never so happy as when he could find one of Percy's Reliques still in circulation, or dredge the memory of an oldest inhabitant for a tune that had fled from every other mind. Miss Linscott, on the other hand, set out to produce "a songbook you can take to the piano" and came out with a collection not only more choral in character, but also more modern in temper.

In what does this modernity consist? On the basis of the two collections presented here, it would appear to be mainly a shift away from the dolorous old one-man songs about dying lovers, murders, and hard-hearted parents, and toward the nonsense song with a jolly good tune. But this is a deduction specialists rather than reviewers will be called on to make. They are both good books, "Folk Songs of Old New England" the better if you wish to sing, the other if you wish to read and ponder.

F. P.

The Criminal Record

In the absence of new detective fiction, the Hon. Judge reverts to his annual custom of relisting the six (count 'em) best of the year.

Title and Author	Crime, Place, Sleuth	Summing Up	Verdict
A COFFIN FOR DIMITRIOS <i>Eric Ambler</i> (Knopf: \$2.)	English detective-story writer in Istanbul, fascinated by corpse fished from Bosphorus, traces its crime-stained past.	Nothing was too wicked for Dimitrios and his investigator's ultimate discovery will make readers' optics bulge.	Master-piece
THE CRYING SISTERS <i>Mabel Seeley</i> (Crime Club: \$2.)	Vacationing Minnesota librarian takes up with blackbrowed mystery man and charming child—thus tangling herself in mass murder.	Mystery-melodrama adroitly handled, with killer's surprising identity revealed in as spectacular a finish as you'll find anywhere.	Grand
STRAWSTACK <i>Dorothy Cameron</i> <i>Disney</i> (Random House: \$2.)	Nurse in Md. home found strangled in burning rick. Young doctor and his sister later succumb. Insp. Chant suspects everybody.	Good characters, breathless "build-up," shivery atmosphere, intricate plot, believable sleuth, and simple but unexpected solution.	Brilliant
OVERTURE TO DEATH <i>Ngaio Marsh</i> (Furman: \$2.)	Pom! Pom! POM!! went Rachmaninoff prelude and acidulous English spinster executant toppled off piano stool dead. R. Alleyn elucidates.	Identity of killer not very deep secret. Otherwise superbly wrought and cleverly contrived yarn with intriguing psychological overtones.	Unexcelled
THE PROBLEM OF THE GREEN CAPSULE <i>John Dickson Carr</i> (Harpers: \$2.)	Meaningless envenomings of English village innocents entangle pretty girl, whose uncle and rejected suitor die fantastically. Enter Dr. Fell.	Most intricate and sinister puzzle in months, worked out step by step with devastating logic. Explanation demands very close attention.	Super-baffler
THE FOOTPRINTS ON THE CEILING <i>Clayton Rawson</i> (Putnam: \$2.)	Poisoned corpse of agoraphobic heiress found in East River island mansion 'neath solemarked ceiling. Merlini unmagicks 3 incredible killings.	Encyclopedically fascinating, with amazing bits about sunken treasure, catalepsy, "the bends," assorted poisons—also gun-play and sky-high suspense.	Immense!
THE SPIDER STRIKES <i>Michael Innes</i> (Dodd Mead: \$2.50)	English thriller-writer plagued by increasingly sinister pranks of his pet character, who unaccountably comes to life. Scotland Yard explains all.	Action-hounds warned off. Lit'r'y folk who appreciate huge erudition, fantastic characters, Beckfordian castles and cerebral thrills most cordially invited.	Caviar—Best Grade

Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

WE are always interested to hear of the progress of the Human Engineering Laboratory (347 Beacon Street, Boston) which now also has branches in Chicago and at Stevens Institute, Hoboken. The laboratory says that with its present staff it should soon be able to test 11,000 persons annually. It now recognizes 13 distinct human "aptitudes," but thinks there may eventually prove to be as many as there are chemical elements, perhaps about 100. The Laboratory's list of publications is worth study; Old Q. finds himself tempted by the report on *English Vocabulary Scores of 75 Executives*, but this was evidently popular; it is out of print. Other titles: *Stimulus Words and Common Responses*; *The Many-Aptitude Student*; *The Tweezer Dexterity Test*; and (this might be misunderstood) *A Two-Year Follow-Up of Graduate Nurses. Unsolved Business Problems* is, quite reasonably, still in preparation. The *News Letter* published by the newly formed College English Association (Burgess Johnson, editor; Union College, Schenectady) prints an admirable letter from Willa Cather agreeing with Henry Canby (and others) that contemporary literature is not desirable as subject matter for college courses. She says with truth, "A fine taste for literature is largely a matter of ear, and is as rare as absolute pitch in music." A good deal of the best reading matter costs nothing except the trouble to ask for it; for instance *Word Study*, the bulletin of G. & C. Merriam Company, which is sent free to any English teacher who requests it. Our own literary education, for whatever it is worth, was mostly garnered from booksellers' catalogues.

Old Q. had the pleasure of a (literally) flying visit to Chicago and Minneapolis a week before Christmas. The weather was malarkey (Chicago for goofy) but in spite of balmy temperatures the Trade was very busy. Old Q.'s greatest personal pleasures, perhaps, were in hearing that Vincent Starrett's volume of *Sherlockiana 221-B* is now definitely scheduled for January 30 (Macmillan); in having a book autographed for him by Mr. A. Kroch, the distinguished bookseller (episode fileable as man-bites-dog or canivorous); and in being allowed to speak at the 50th anniversary dinner for the Minneapolis Public Library. The meeting was specially in honor of the former librarian Miss Gratia Countryman, so Old Q. could not resist beginning his palaver "Friends, Romans,—." Miss Countryman reported, among many other interesting reminiscences, that the first book taken out from the Minneapolis P. L. when it opened in December, 1889, was *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (white collar boy).

We are specially pleased by the article by Frank Jewett Mather, Jr. on *Winslow Homer as a Book Illustrator*, in the *Princeton University Library Chronicle*, edited by Lawrence Thompson. Among other famous cuts Mr. Mather reproduces Homer's illustration for the Charge of the Light Brigade which made a clear impression on us in childhood. Presumably we found it in that famous old illustrated Tennyson from Houghton Mifflin. Not to have been raised on the Houghton Mifflin classics of the 90's was to have been poor indeed. It always amused us to find A. B. Frost, whom we thought of as an Uncle Remus fellow, illustrating Tennyson. To do pictures for Tennyson's poems was tops for all good draughtsmen of the 90's. Philip Duschne's copyrighted checklist, *10 Years of the Limited Editions Club*, makes an interesting chart of the lively printers, designers and illustrators of 1929-1939. One of the few Ltd Edns Club volumes that never had a preface was Chaucer's *Troilus and Cressida*, and that was one of the few prefaces Old Q. would have liked to do himself. Our time-lag is always large; it has taken us five years to get round to the *Columbia University Quarterly* of December, 1934, in which Dr. William H. Woglom wrote a delightful piece about *Mr. Pepys His Eyes*. Dr. Woglom believes that Pepys's eye trouble was far-sightedness plus astigmatism, and he was just 150 years too early to get the right treatment.

Harold W. Thompson's rich and lively collection of York State folklore, *Body, Boots & Britches*, arrives from Lippincott just in time for Christmas. The John Mistletoe Bookshop in Albany celebrated its 5th birthday by dispatching nearly 100 copies of Professor Thompson's book for Christmas stockings in the patroon country. An interesting discovery in early New York cartography appears in the latest catalogue from Wm. H. Robinson, 16 Pall Mall, London. It is Comberford's chart of the Atlantic, on vellum 28 x 39 inches, done in 1650 and giving the New York coast line as copied from the lost map of Henry Hudson. According to the cataloguer this adds a fourth to the three previously known charts copied from Hudson. It is offered at \$250. This is good book browsing season in New England, we always like the sound of Charles E. Tuttle's 150,000 secondhand volumes on South Main Street in Rutland, Vermont. A sleety winter dusk is comfortable for rummaging; we wonder if anyone has discovered that first edition of *Walden* Tuttle lists at \$50. Glad to hear from Clifford Laube that of the 1,000 copies of his home-printed volume *Crags* less than 400 remain; the venture enabled him to print and publish a book of verse

by Jessica Powers, *The Lantern Burns*. Mr. Laube calls his basement workshop The Monastine Press (107-06 103rd Ave., Richmond Hill, L. I.) and says "it has a definite job to do and I am going to be arbitrary about it." That's the right spirit. Old Q. celebrated the recent refreshed interest in Art Young by buying (at the Gotham Book Mart) a copy of Young's admirable little book on Thomas Rowlandson, who was one of Art Young's spiritual forebears. We first became aware of Rowlandson when we were a college freshman and discovered *Dr. Syntax* at Leary's in Philadelphia. We wonder what college freshmen discover nowadays?

Your Literary I. Q.

QUIZ No. 6

By HOWARD COLLINS

10 FAMOUS GIRLS

Described below are ten little girls who never grew up because they were brain children instead of real children. How many of them do you recognize? Allow 5 points for each one that you know by name, and another 5 if you remember the book in which she appeared and the author that created her. Par is 70, 80 is good, 90 or better is excellent. Answers are on page 22.

1. This little girl's chief talents were singing, dancing, lying, and stealing.
2. She was nine years old and small for her age, being not over thirty feet in height.
3. She was fond of bread-and-butter-and-brown-sugar covered with applesauce.
4. A sweet and pure little girl, she wandered about England in the company of her penniless grandfather.
5. This very young actress was continually acclaimed as a most remarkable genius by her adoring parents.
6. A most obedient little girl, she was fond of weeping and of her doting papa.
7. This golden-haired little girl toddled through the snow to take refuge with a friendless miser.
8. A trusting soul, she followed the directions on every bottle with surprising results.
9. She once caused some embarrassment by saying that her mother found her on a rosebush.
10. An orphan, she earned her board and keep by washing dishes, dusting, baking bread, and taking care of other children.

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