

tion to the kindness of humble folk and he never forgot the poverty and misery he came from. Once as a farm boy a farmer had slashed him across the back with a whip for not doffing his cap to his betters. He had taught school and then, for that "odd guinea," he had found his way into journalism. He remained, despite his amazing prevision, a nineteenth-century believer in progress. It is unfashionable to believe in progress now, and we forget some of the thoroughly convincing reasons a man of Max Town's generation—who had known the world before the turn of the century—had for believing in it. As usual, they were very simple, down-to-earth reasons: "People smelt then"—when Max was a boy—"in a way they don't now. Nice people had baths, but the poor just didn't. They washed their faces and hands and they went to bed in their underclothes. I don't know when pyjamas, cheap pyjamas, came in but they didn't exist when I was a boy. Not for my sort anyway. On a holiday night like this the streets were filled with a crowd that stank of stale sweat. . . . You don't realize what a liberation cheap shoes have meant. . . ." Max Town had reason to believe in the future—and hardheaded realism to see that Hitler and the rest were intent on spoiling it.

Naomi did not play fair with Richard, but her husband, Colonel Arthur, did. He made him heir to Marshwood; he gave him his complete trust and friendship. Incidentally he gave the narrator the opportunity to paint the lovely English countryside—as his father gave him occasion to describe the French Riviera and London—simply and movingly.

Beyond Hate

Richard was away from Oxford with some archaeologists when the telegram came from Colonel Arthur. Naomi had abandoned the Colonel, and was divorcing him, to open in a play in New York. "She's an actress. . . ." Richard told the Colonel. "She doesn't exist anywhere else." And then in the room of the great house he was about to leave to go to the war, Richard summed it all up to himself. He passed beyond the hate he had felt for his mother, beyond the excitement and admiration he

felt for his father. He reached the freedom of the grown man. He understood. His mother "was one of the leads round whom the plays of life turned. The curtain had come down on the Marshwood comedy and we, the supers, had to look for other parts. . . . I would be able to choose my own. . . ."

This absorbing novel has a quotation on the title page: "These are long vendettas, / A peculiar people neither forgivers nor forgetters . . ." It is curiously inapposite, for if the narrator does not forget, he most certainly forgives.

Book Notes

START FROM SOMEWHERE ELSE: AN EXPOSITION OF WIT AND HUMOR POLITE AND PERILOUS, by Oliver St. John Gogarty. *Doubleday*. \$2.95.

"Where does the eighteenth century still linger without the squalor and the horror of the period? . . . In Dublin, of course . . ." And it is true enough, as St. John Gogarty remarks, that "the Orangemen who built the town after the Battle of the Boyne had the art, even if it was their only art, of building a beautiful city and making its ways wide." It is true also that no Irishman can ever write a sentence about Dublin or his country without putting a dig into it about somebody or other. In this slight volume Mr. Gogarty is often funny, often superficial and malicious, as when he calls T. S. Eliot "the greatest English poet who ever came out of St. Louis," but ever constant in his attendance at the altar of Irish wit.

NOT THE GLORY, by Pierre Boule. *Vanguard*. \$3.50.

Another short novel by the witty French author of *The Bridge Over the River Kwai*. This one details the adventures of a top-notch German spy in the Second World War who worms his way into the confidence of government officials in London and comes to a sticky but surprising end. As in *The Bridge*, M. Boule pokes fun at the English (" . . . the gentlemen were all red-faced, levelheaded, dull-minded, and dim-witted, while all the ladies, with very few exceptions, looked exactly like the gentlemen"), but as a wartime member of British Special Force in Calcutta,

he has a profound respect for the efficiency of their intelligence services.

GERMINIE, by Edmond and Jules de Goncourt. Introduction by Martin Turnell. *Grove Press*. Hardbound: \$3. Evergreen Edition: \$1.25.

One always sees these two brothers almost smothered in their Paris apartment beneath a mountain of artistic bric-a-brac, meticulously showing one another a Japanese print, endlessly telling one another what so and so had said at a party, and then each day setting to work on their famous and complicated diary. They had the most precious—one would say finicky—good taste, and it is difficult to realize that they were outraged by precious and finicky good taste in the literature of their times. How they managed to find out all there was to know about Germinie, a servant girl destroyed by love, is hard to imagine.

CARTOON TREASURY: PEN AND PENCIL HUMOR OF THE WORLD. Edited by Lucy Black Johnson and Pyke Johnson, Jr. *Doubleday*. \$4.95.

Copious and not overpriced, this excellent selection provides a pleasant occasion to argue once again about whether what is funny in one country is funny in another. Evidence for the One World theory is pretty strong. So, unfortunately, is the evidence that contemporary cartoons in general are ugly to look at—even the funniest of them. There is no Gavarni for style, no Caran d'Ache for charm, no Daumier for caricatures that still show the living form.

MANDARIN RED, by James Cameron. *Rinehart*. \$3.50.

The author, chief correspondent of the *London News Chronicle*, traveled through China in 1954, and if the Communists let him in with the idea of impressing him with their system, they failed. But he did not fail the Chinese people, who must desire more than anything else to have the outer world reminded of their human presence. Our readers will remember Mr. Cameron's article "Are Religions the Opium of the People?" (May 19, 1955).



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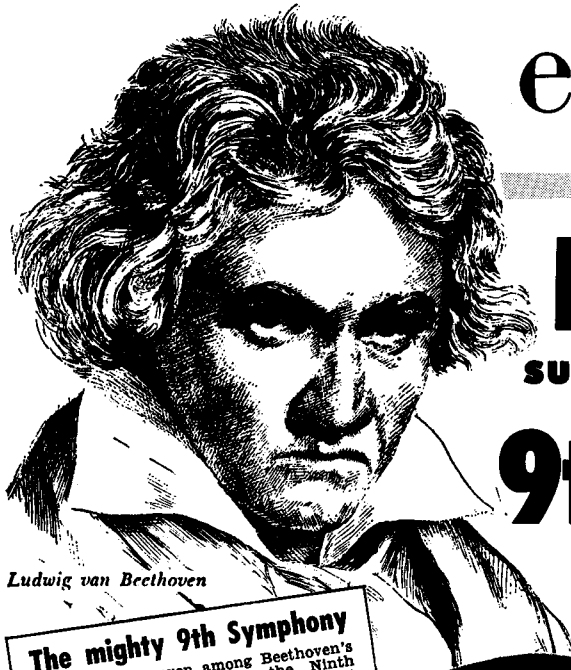
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