

the railroad. The towns through which I pass between Philadelphia and New York make no distinct impression on me. They are like pictures on a wall." Of the future of the American railroad—as of America itself—he was sure: "Fear haunts the building railroad, but it will be American power and beauty when it is done."

This awareness of "American power and beauty" was his while he was still a student in Harvard College. In 1822, when he was nineteen, he confessed to his journal his dream of the greatness of America, his vision of its opening frontiers: "Here . . . new Romes are growing, and the Genius of man is brooding over the wide boundaries of infinite empires, where yet are to be drunk the intoxicating drafts of honor and renown; here are to be played over again the bloody games of human ambition, bigotry, and revenge, and the stupendous Drama of the passions to be repeated. Other Cleopatras shall seduce, Alexanders fight, and Caesars die." Again, in the same year: "This country is daily rising to a higher comparative importance and attracting the eyes of all the rest of the world to the development of its embryo greatness."

Hard and far he had traveled. For more than a decade at the beginning of his career he was to grope his way slowly along a troubled and often uncertain path that was, however, to lead him to his own peculiar and individual niche in American life and thought. The son and grandson of preachers, brother and cousin and

nephew of teachers, he was to preach and teach through all his mature life. But not from any orthodox pulpit nor from any academic classroom. The Phi Beta Kappa address at Harvard in 1837 (more commonly known as "The American Scholar") and the Divinity School address, also at Harvard, barred any progress in church or school. At the outset of his career he plainly labeled himself a non-conformist; he was practising his own doctrine of self-reliance. He had, perhaps not intentionally, burned his bridges. He never was a scholar, in the accepted sense of the word, and all his life he was to endure the carping criticism of those formalists who, having less fire and imagination to plague them, attached more importance to system and regularity than Emerson ever did. (Commenting in his journal on his essay "Self-Reliance," before its publication, he wrote: "My page about Consistency would be better written thus: Damn Consistency!") Nor was he ever a theologian, a "divine" who would conform to the prevailing winds of doctrine.

And he had a living to make. He did not ask much—but he asked more than his friend Thoreau did—and he did not have his friend's salable skill at surveying nor his strength to do odd jobs as a handyman. What to do? He turned, somewhat reluctantly, to the lecture platform, and became America's first professor of adult education a century before the phrase was invented. From the secure, if slight, income of a regular pastorate

to the uncertain rewards of public lectures was a logical but hazardous step. For Emerson it was inevitable. In his journal he noted: "I read my commission in every cipher of nature, and know that I was made for another office, a Professor of the Joyous Science, a detector and delineator of occult harmonies and unpublished beauties, a herald of civility, nobility, learning, and wisdom; an Affirmer of the One Law, yet as one who should affirm it in music and dancing."

**F**ORTUNATELY, for Emerson the time was ripe, and ten years later, when he was to begin his almost annual lecture tours through the Midwest, audiences had been organized to hear him. The first lyceum had been established in 1816 by Josiah Holbrook at Millbury, a village near Worcester. By the time Emerson was ready for the circuit there were almost 100 lyceums in Massachusetts alone, and the movement was spreading to other New England states, to New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, and out across Ohio and Indiana to Illinois and Iowa and Minnesota.

In 1836 he could write Carlyle in England that "my own experiments for one or two winters . . . have led me to think much and to expect much from this mode of addressing men." "In New England," he went on, "the Lyceum as we call it is already a great institution. Besides the more elaborate courses of lectures in the cities, every country town has its weekly evening meeting, called a Lyceum. . . . The audience is of all classes, and its character will be determined always by the name of the lecturer."

Carlyle had written him in 1835 for practical advice about a proposed lecture tour in America—how large an audience might be expected, how much to charge, what would be the expenses, etc., etc. "Nine hundred are thought a large assembly," Emerson told him. "Expenses for rent, lights, doorkeeper, etc., for the hall—about \$12 each lecture. Three dollars is the least that might be demanded for a single course ticket [a course was to consist of fifteen to sixteen lectures]—perhaps \$4; \$5 for a ticket admitting a gentleman and a lady." As to the lecturer's income, he warns him that, except in exceptional and very lucky cases, "the fee to the lecturer is inconsiderable, usually \$20 for each lecture," although a popular phrenologist received "probably \$3,000 for his courses during the few months of his stay."

For more than a year Carlyle toyed with the idea, often asking his American

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## Your Literary I. Q.

Conducted by John T. Winterich

### MARVELOUS MONICKERS

Fannie Gross of Asheville, North Carolina, submits fifteen names which at first blush look like anagrams, but aren't—they are *real* names (real fictional names, that is) of characters who appear in the novels alongside. She asks you to assign the proper characters to the proper books. Everything is straightened out on page 14.

- |                                       |     |  |
|---------------------------------------|-----|--|
| 1. Almus Pickerbaugh                  | ( ) | "The Romantic Comedians" (Ellen Glasgow)                 |
| 2. Crossjay Patterne                  | ( ) | "The Jungle" (Upton Sinclair)                            |
| 3. Darthea Peniston                   | ( ) | "Brave New World" (Aldous Huxley)                        |
| 4. Diggory Venn                       | ( ) | "The Way of the World" (William Congreve)                |
| 5. Edmonia Bredalbane                 | ( ) | "Erewhon" (Samuel Butler)                                |
| 6. Hepzibah Pyncheon                  | ( ) | "Orlando" (Virginia Woolf)                               |
| 7. Jurgis Rudkus                      | ( ) | "Arrowsmith" (Sinclair Lewis)                            |
| 8. Tabitha Bramble                    | ( ) | "Ruddigore" (W. S. Gilbert)                              |
| 9. Mimsy Seraskier                    | ( ) | "The Return of the Native" (Thomas Hardy)                |
| 10. Mustapha Mond                     | ( ) | "Humphrey Clinker" (Tobias Smollett)                     |
| 11. Rashleigh Osbaldistone            | ( ) | "Hugh Wynne, Free Quaker"<br>(S. W. Mitchell)            |
| 12. Ruthven Murgatroyd                | ( ) | "Rob Roy" (Sir Walter Scott)                             |
| 13. Senoj Nosnibor                    | ( ) | "Peter Ibbetson" (George du Maurier)                     |
| 14. Wilfull Witwoud                   | ( ) | "The Egoist" (George Meredith)                           |
| 15. Marmaduke Bonthrop<br>Shelmerdine | ( ) | "The House of the Seven Gables"<br>(Nathaniel Hawthorne) |

## Crime, Giveaways, and Sponsors

By BERNARD HOLLOWOOD,  
Punch's TV and radio critic.

ON September 22, 1955, the Independent Television Authority took to the air for the first time, and the BBC's twenty years of monopoly faded out with bangs and whimpers. Bangs—because the event was greeted by many people with a pyrotechnic display of jubilation: whimpers—because roughly half the country regarded the innovation with ugly foreboding.

Well, the ITA has now been in operation for half a year and it is possible to make a tentative assessment of its achievements. I must point out, however, that the ITA or Channel 9 programs are at present available to only a fraction of the country's viewers. The transmitting station at Croydon has an effective radius of about fifty miles, so that commercial television is restricted to the Greater London Area and the metropolitan fringe. At peak periods it commands an audience of perhaps 1,250,000; the BBC service covers most of Britain and claims as many as 9,000,000 viewers.

So far the ITA has had a very poor press. The amount of space devoted to genuine criticism of its programs is small, even in those newspapers which have a direct financial interest in the companies (known as program contractors) responsible for the material screened and the wooing of advertisers. Some papers, notably the *Daily Express*, mention Channel 9 only to disparage it, and are stepping up their praise of the BBC.

The critics belabor the ITA with several sticks. They maintain—and they are right—that the new programs are top-heavy with items imported from the USA, and they see in this a new threat of "Americanization" in British culture.

Most of the imports seem to me quite deplorable in quality. Under the BBC's monopolistic regime it could be argued that the British screen was too insular and isolationist, that the ration of transatlantic fare—consisting of newsreel scripts, the odd parlor game ("What's My Line?" etc.), and occasional glimpses of Ed Murrow and guests—was inadequate. But since September 22 the pipeline has been in spate, and viewers have been made

dizzy by a kaleidoscopic plethora of American TV films, quiz programs, and double-your-money brawls. The ITA—or, rather, the two functioning program contractors, Associated-Rediffusion and Associated TeleVision—are screening such items as "Gun Law," "Dragnet," "I Love Lucy," "Inner Sanctum," "My Hero," Roy Rogers, Liberace, Hopalong Cassidy, Lassie, "Double Your Money," and "Take Your Pick." And to counter these attractions the dear old BBC has raided the American stockpile for "This Is Your Life," "I Married Joan," "The Burns and Allen Show," and a new set of parlor games.

The second line of criticism concerns the ITA's home-produced material, which consists almost entirely of weak but star-studded plays, playlets, and dramatic excerpts, jaded, ham-fisted, cliché-choked variety, oleaginous disc-plugging crooners, and insufferable raconteurs. As a medium of "serious" entertainment and instruction Channel 9 is useless. When it kicked off hopes were high that its "news" (under the direction of the Labor politician Aidan Crawley and featuring Christopher Chataway, the crack runner, as newsreader) would be worth watching. The BBC television news is poor, merely a screened version of the sound news, which is reliable enough but lacking in the art of presentation, and the ITA only had

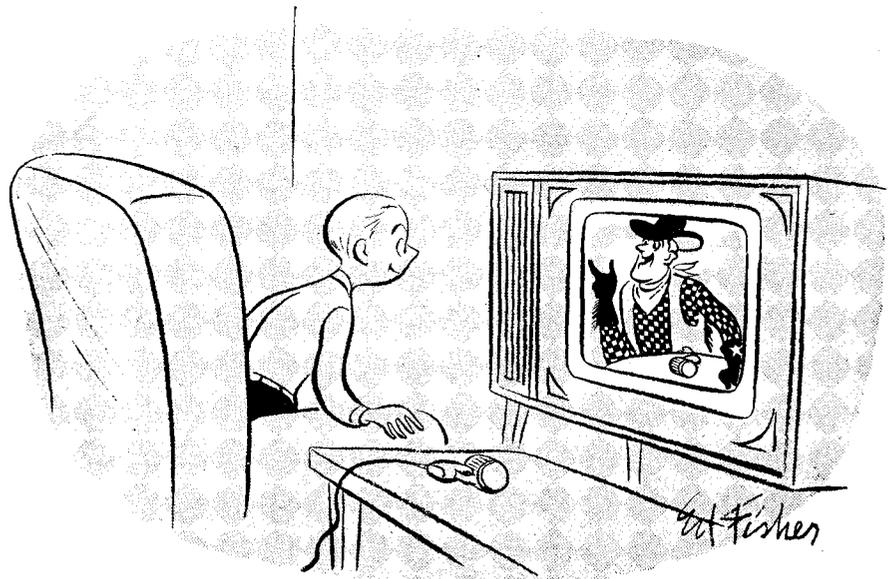
to be reasonably bright, comprehensible, and comprehensive to emerge triumphant in the battle of the channels.

Unfortunately, the ITA news and newsreels flopped. The scheduled fifteen minutes were cut and cut again, Crawley resigned, and news virtually disappeared from the programs.

Other reasonably intelligent programs have also been axed. The original fanfares announced regular peak-hour sessions of classical music from the Hallé Orchestra under the baton of Sir John Barbirolli, and for a month the promise was honored. Then the pollsters discovered that the Hallé was attracting a smaller audience than the program contractors and advertisers would tolerate. It was not a paying proposition, so it was bundled out of the limelight into the penumbral obscurity of an off-peak period. Moreover, the musical content of the program has suffered an alarming change: where once we were given a taste of symphonic erudition we are now fed solely on semi-classical "pops," corny Tschaikowsky, Strauss, and Ketelby. Much the same kind of thing has happened to the only other serious program in the ITA locker, "The Scientist Replies."

**B**UT if the critics have knocked commercial TV there are abundant signs that it has made an excellent start with the general public. The new service has made the "telly" the number-one topic of conversation in the trains and buses that shuttle London's breadwinners between suburbia and the office. It is now taken for granted that one has spent some part of the previous evening in the baleful glare

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"Fair enough, Pardner? When I count three we both reach for our Flash-o-matic Tuners, and if I beat you to the draw you promise to listen to the commercial."