

in his knapsack when they went picnicking together. While the underlying reasons for the breakup of their marriage—which lasted twelve years—are but hinted at, Steele reports that Miss Bergman asked Lindstrom for a divorce three years before she fled, in March, 1949, to Rossellini. At that time she wrote, "I see in [Roberto] a reflection of my true self. . . . I feel as if I had found what I have been inarticulately searching for for a long time." His jealousy over her resuming her career independently of him (one is encouraged to assume) led to their divorce some eight years later. No longer cowed and submissive and trying to please, as in former years, but by that time "sharp and positive and unafraid," Miss Bergman then married Lars Schmidt, a Swedish theatrical producer.

In what is basically a tritely conceived book, Steele, knowingly or not, makes some telling points which go a long way towards relieving the tedium of his psychological striptease. One of these concerns the ordeal endured by Miss Bergman at the hands of Cholly Knickerbocker, Louella Parsons, *et al.* And, finally, there is the actress's eldest daughter making a declaration of filial forgiveness and love, which, by its mechanical wording, has a faintly brainwashed air. Sidelights such as these may make Mr. Steele's not very revealing revelation worth-while fare for those who are still concerned with Miss Bergman's amatory escapade.

—IOLA HAVERSTICK.

TOIL AND TROUBLE: Public Personalities are devoted to the principle of giving the public what it wants—otherwise they wouldn't be Public Personalities—and their books, generally, are either documentations of past miseries and failure, with an up-beat ending, or pretentiously good-natured reminiscences.



June Havoc

June Havoc, fortunately, has not written a standard Public Personality Book. It was not "told to" a career collaborator, and except for an occasional fanciness and a feminine addiction to adverbs, "Early Havoc" (Simon & Schuster, \$3.95) is well written.

Miss Havoc, it is true, had plenty of trouble during her early years, but—too bad for her sales—it was not Big Trouble (dope, likker, nymphomania). And though the jacket copy describes "Early Havoc" as "racy, spirited, candid . . ." I found it to be rather bitter. Miss Havoc has not tried to make the grotesque seem amusingly eccentric or to sentimentalize the characters and episodes of her early life. For instance:

Miss Guinan's famous girls were a mess. They had lumpy figures and looked dirty. Even the ladies of the evening, who behaved so wildly at the ringside in the early hours, I thought more attractive than these women.

The book's continuity is based on Miss Havoc's participation in a dance marathon, a terrible and sadistic spectacle that flourished during the depression years. In alternate chapters she tells of her life in vaudeville as "Baby June, the Pocket-Sized Pavlova," her marriage at the age of thirteen, and her subsequent unemployment when vaudeville collapsed. In these pages Miss Havoc presents a memorable and bloodcurdling picture of a stage mother (hers).

Mother always cried when she was angry. It was a peculiar sort of weeping—wild, not sad. Little flecks appeared at the corners of her mouth, her lips curled. Her voice became gritty. I've never seen anyone else accomplish such furious weeping.

Although I had an important nine o'clock appointment I sat up until five A.M. finishing this book. What more can I say? —ROGER PRICE.

FROM POINTS TO TV: Fred Astaire's autobiography, "Steps in Time" (Harper, \$4.95), should have "the sparkle of the best champagne" (to quote the jacket blurb), for his past performances have always been of the rarest vintage. But what we are served here is decidedly tepid and flat. It is a particular disappointment to find his book is almost totally lacking in the debonair dash, wit, and sophistication usually associated with Astaire.

Astaire wastes no time in shattering the public image of himself: "At the risk of disillusionment, I must admit that I don't like top hats, white ties and tails." Then he proceeds with a breezy, informal account of his life

that skims across highlights, lingers over a few mildly amusing anecdotes, and seldom attempts more than a one-dimensional self-portrait. Though words fail him, the twenty-four pages of wonderful photographs do convey much of the quality of his genius.

Fred Astaire's fabulous career began shortly after the turn of the century, when he and his sister, Adele, made their debut in a kiddie show. (Despite having been on his toes at the age of four, Fred can't recall any particular interest in dancing.) Since then, he has triumphed in vaudeville, Broadway musical comedy, motion pictures, and television.

Fred lost his first partner when Adele retired to marry Lord Charles Cavendish. Undaunted, he went on to conquer Hollywood in a series of nine spectacularly successful films with Ginger Rogers, but this partnership, too, was eventually dissolved. Though Astaire's description of these two professional crises may be candid, it hardly goes beneath the surface to explore the relationships involved.

The question that has tantalized Astaire fans for years remains unanswered. Refusing to single out any favorite, Fred has kind words for all his dancing partners. In fact, though he characterizes himself as "bad-tempered, impatient, hard to please, critical," one searches in vain for evidence of any such qualities in his book. The modest, unassuming, likable hooper who emerges in these pages is not easily reconciled with the incomparable artist of "Top Hat" and "Funny Face."

Fred Astaire has this to say about "the dance": "I have no desire to prove anything by it. I have never used it as an outlet or as a means of expressing myself. I just dance." Whatever it is that propels those feet, may he keep on "just dancing."

—ARNOLD DOLIN.

Picture credits for pages 14 and 15
Houdini: From "Houdini"; Ingrid Bergman: Warner Bros.; Fred Astaire: From "Steps in Time"; June Havoc: Arthur Murray



Fred Astaire

For Men of Thought a Cerebral Expedition

The relation between determinism and free will, as governed by the atomic content of the human brain, is but one of the many puzzling aspects of life explored in "The Way Things Are," by P. W. Bridgman (Harvard University Press. 333 pp. \$5.75). A major—and controversial—study, the book is analyzed in the following essay-review by Arthur H. Compton, Distinguished Service Professor of Natural Philosophy at Washington University in St. Louis.

By ARTHUR H. COMPTON

THOSE who, like myself, are concerned about understanding why the world is as it is and what their own relationship is to the world will find Percy Bridgman's account of how it all fits together full of stimulating thoughts and suggestions. The author is a physicist of the strictest discipline in this science. He is also a descendant of a long line of New England Puritans, a man whose reaction against the narrower religious doctrines is so complete as to leave no room for any taint of belief in what is not demonstrable, but in whom remains a conscientious insistence on the greatest possible precision and reliability of every statement. The result is a very illuminating analysis of the meaning of words, in which his concept of "operationalism," which others have joined him in applying effectively to physical ideas, is now used in somewhat modified form to interpret the meaning of statements having emotional and psychological content.

The author's analysis of language thus brings him into close contact with the psychological behaviorists, with whose mode of thought he has close sympathy. He concludes this discussion, however, with a recognition of a real difference. "It became evident that the behaviorists were not capable of talking my language . . . they almost of necessity lose part of the picture." This is because Bridgman believes that I can talk about my own thoughts, feelings, and purposes, because of my first-hand awareness of these phenomena, while one who observes me cannot know them except from the partial information that may show itself through my actions. Thus Bridgman accepts the view, more familiar to French than to American scholars, that our knowledge comes from two sources, observation and introspection. I am very pleased that he has brought this duality of our sources of knowledge thus sharply to the attention of our American men of thought.

I have found of especial interest the author's illuminating discussion of determinism and free-will. He accepts without reservation Heisenberg's conclusion stated in this form, "we know of no way of predicting the future behavior of such isolated systems [as a moving atom] from the most complete measurements we can make on their present condition, so that in this sense small atomic systems are non-causal or indeterministic." He argues also that even before advent of the quantum theory the impossibility of observing at one time the state of all the particles in any tangible portion of matter leaves the concept of a completely determinate future for such a system without any precise meaning. Thus, he is led to view the condition of matter as only roughly determined, and causality as at best a concept of only fuzzy meaning.

When he considers the relation between the brain and one's state of consciousness, however, Bridgman

appears to become more deterministic in his thinking. First, he puts forward a hypothesis that corresponding to every possible mental state (thought, emotion, feeling, etc.) there is a precisely definable atomic state, *i.e.*, the state of every atom in the organism is completely specified. He estimates the number of possible atomic states of a person's brain as ample to account for his recognizably different conscious states, which seems to him to open the way toward giving "those physiologists and psychologists who want an 'organ of consciousness,' the answer that they want.

BRIDGMAN does not attempt to defend this hypothesis against such conclusions as that of Henri Bergson in his "Mind Energy": "The mind's activity spills over the possible activity of the brain in every direction," but rather is led by the usefulness of his hypothesis of the correspondence of mental and atomic states to accept this hypothesis as reliable. He



Honestly! Some days there's just no propitiating him!"