

# BOOK REVIEWS

## Flapper Age Brought To Life

**THE BEAUTIFUL AND THE DAMNED**, \$4.50; **THE GREAT GATSBY**, \$2.95; **THE LAST TYCOON**, \$2.95; **AFTERNOON OF AN AUTHOR**, \$4.50; By F. Scott Fitzgerald. Scribner.

Perch swing, bobbed hair, nambrotal, Stutz Bearcat, rumble seat. "Yes we have no bananas" — it is the Flapper Age to which we return with Fitzgerald, who identified that glittering era, lived in and as a part of it, and made it his inalienable fictional domain.

Of these four books, the last is a collection of short stories and articles not in hard covers before, ranging from the well known "How to Live on \$36,000 a Year" to the little known "News of Paris—Fifteen Years Ago." The other three are reissues of novels you surely have read:

Anthony Patch, the eager playboy, squanders his substance, both the cash and the character, in the years of his marriage to Gloria ("The Beautiful and the Damned"). Jay the "great" Gatsby dies for his too faithful love for Daisy Buchanan, or his too ruthless career: Stahr battles fiercely for filmland power in the unfinished "The Last Tycoon." And we must not forget, just for lack of new issues, "This Side of Paradise," fame and fortune, and "Tender Is the Night," a subject at which he evidently made his first stab in "One Trip Abroad," from the new collection of short pieces.

"Haven't any money," says the young husband unconcernedly to his wife, who repeats the remark and adds, "let's go to the movies." They all drink themselves under all the tables. They conclude they know too many people; if they could have been left alone, if their classmates, well-to-do friends, pretty girls and handsome fellows had

left them alone, they might have survived the '20s and prospered morally.

That's what they were like in these novels, never blaming themselves, young, witty, brash, not unprincipled and not principled, grasping at quick, ephemeral pleasures, victimized by unquenchable thirsts and insatiable appetites, never petty and never heroic. They were middle-class from head to toe, in clothes, income, manners, brains, aspirations. And of all writers, Fitzgerald alone got down in dramatic black and white their tinselly, variegated, hot-hued existences.

Arthur Mizner in an introduction to "Afternoon" points out how

fact and fiction run neck and neck in Fitzgerald. It was this subservience to fact which could make him pedestrian. There are many early pages—you find some in "The Beautiful and the Damned"—which have no lift, they aren't even journalism, but elementary reporting. But in his best work, only the lift is left. Edmund Wilson in a foreword to "Tycoon" calls it Fitzgerald's "most mature" and "far and away our best novel" about Hollywood. It is written with superb assurance; here is a artistic mastery. Fragmentary though it is, it occupies, along with "Tender Is the Night," an unchallengeable place in our literature.

## Tales Of Torture Beyond Censorship

By W. G. ROGERS

**THE QUESTION.** By Henri Alleg. Introduction by Jean-Paul Sartre. Translated from French by John Calder. George Braziller, \$2.95.

Perhaps you thought you'd read enough books about the torture of a man by emissaries of an all-powerful modern state, a Hitler or a Stalin, for instance. But here's one more horrible account:

Alleg was a newspaper editor whose ideas of politics, society and nationalism ran counter to those of the military in the city where he published. A detachment of paratroopers picked him up and sped him to prison. They wanted to know the name of the person with whom he spent a night in his attempt to escape capture, but he refused to talk. So they put the "question."

They began by strapping him to a filthy plank, fixing electrodes to various parts of his body and subjecting him to electric shocks that grew so violent they set him screaming.

They beat and kicked him, burned off some body hair, almost drowned him, tossed him at last on a bed—but the mattress cover concealed a nest of barbed wire. They tried truth serum, threatened him with death, swore to torture his wife, too, but they were still unable to break him. His ears ringing unforgettably, he says, with the anguished cries of many others put to the same brutal tortures, he was shipped off

at last to another prison where he managed to write this short book.

It was not Nazi Germany or Soviet Russia that presided at this barbaric ordeal, but the French government in Algeria. Alleg was editor of Alger Republican from 1950 to 1955 when the paper was banned. It advocated independence, opposed unequivocally by the French army of occupation and the colonists. Alleg himself was apparently a Communist, white, and French born.

News of his arrest and torture published in a Paris paper kept that paper out of North Africa. The original book was proscribed—the first time that has happened in France for two centuries, it is said. French surveillance was so strict as to make French copies scarce here, but at least one French bookstore in New York will stock this translation. Pirated or under-the-counter editions and translations abroad have sold about 200,000. Of this American edition, 10,000 copies are already in print.

Sartre writes a ringing defense, and asks where France is heading. With Andre Malraux, Roger Martin du Gard and Francois Mauriac, he signed a petition to the president of France asking for an outright condemnation of torture and begging that this book be allowed to circulate.

I hate to have you read this book; I'd hate it more if you didn't. If I could ever wish a book was bogus, this is it.

## Harsh Opinion Fairly Stated In Appraisal Of Stein Works

**ART BY SUBTRACTION: A Dissenting Opinion of Gertrude Stein.** By B. L. Reid. University of Oklahoma, \$4.

When Reid, a Mount Holyoke teacher, calls his study a "dissenting opinion," I can't at first guess whether he's on my side, which is for her, or on the other. He is unhappy against.

But this is a welcome book. To begin with, it is fair. Reid refrains from quoting people who have made scurrilously personal criticisms. He specifically exonerates her of the charge of trying to fool the public. On the positive side, he finds her theories usually arrived at intelligently.

However, he doesn't agree with them and can't abide her writing, with one exception, "Three Lives." He calls her prose style flat, labels her writing the denial of the only real purpose of writing, scores her egotism, condemns her famed repetitions—but doesn't mind repeating himself. An inaccuracy like putting the Picasso portrait in the Museum of Modern Art, where to be sure it once was for a brief stay, instead of the Metropolitan does not detract at all from the credit due his painstaking research and his astuteness, however, misdi-

rected. It made sense to like Stein in person, he agrees: her work is something else, and he says she must "hang" for her "failure to communicate."

All details aside, here is precisely the point. For a mass of people who knew her and a mass who did not, there was a magnificent communication not only in "Three Lives" and "The Autobiography" but also in "The Making of Americans," "Four Saints," "Tender Buttons," and salty poems. The fact that Reid is immune to the Stein magic does not prove it is not there. This is a welcome book really because if this is the strongest case against her, her major works, exhilarating and unforgettable, would seem secure against any assault.

### SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS

PULASKI, Ind. — Farmer Bob Thomas found out the hard way what the expression "bullheaded" means. Angry because his bull refused to move, he threw a wrench at the animal. The tool struck the bull's head, bounced back and smacked Thomas squarely between the eyes, knocking him cold.

## Kansas City Drive Licks Delinquency

By MARY KAY FLYNN  
NEA Staff Correspondent

KANSAS CITY, Kan. — While schools of its sister city across the river in Missouri struggle with a serious delinquency problem, this city virtually is free of a scourge that usually respects no boundaries.

There is no magic formula or sheer luck behind this Kansas City's enviable student behavior record. It was planned that way. Outstanding features of the all-out anti-delinquency program in this city of 130,000 include:

Hard-hitting preventive and corrective measures within the school system.

Emphasis on religious training and parent-school relations.

Strong city-wide recreation programs.

Close cooperation between schools, police youth bureau and juvenile court.

Intense public interest and supporting laws.

The Board of Education has given school administrators authority to act vigorously in any misbehavior situation. Any school principal has the authority to deal immediately and decisively with student violators without first consulting the superintendent of schools or school board members.

Any student caught with a concealed weapon is automatically suspended for the remainder of the school year.

Gangs and rowdism are non-existent. School officials and police prevent formation of trouble groups by attacking any symptom of budding organization, whether on school premises or outside.

Sororities and fraternities in junior high schools and high schools are forbidden by state law. Membership draws automatic suspension.

In cases of vandalism, the school deals out its own sentence after any police action. The "delinquent" parent has the choice of paying for damaged property or seeing his child expelled from school, school officials contending that "Dad takes better notice of the violation and of his responsibilities if he has to dig into his pocketbook."

A parent or guardian is summoned to the school office after every act of misbehavior on the part of his student charge.

Sixty per cent of junior high school and high school teachers are men, salaries having been set to attract male as well as female teachers and administrators.

Authoritative high school student councils are encouraged. Regular meetings between school staffs and parent-teacher organizations are held.

Because school officials feel that "idleness breeds trouble" and educational responsibility goes beyond the classroom, extensive extra-curricular activities are scheduled.

Gyms are open regularly for unscheduled sports, dancing and other supervised activity. Special interest clubs are organized, parties with "glamour" and dignity are held regularly after school hours and "lots of boys are carried on sports squads who never will make the team."

The veteran principal of a newly integrated high school with 2,040 enrollment observed that the school's students are "better behaved than at any other time in the school's history." He noted, however that today's youth of prosperity "seem a little more inclined to be destructive than in my day when it was sinful to destroy."

Superintendent of schools F. L. Schlagle sums up the school stand this way: "This town isn't going to stand for hoodlums making trouble for the schools. The school doors are open to law-abiding citizens who want to learn and this right is not to be denied or disturbed by a few."

He added that school officials have found that students can and do not only respect but also admire order and discipline.

Approximately one-half of the public school pupils in the first to sixth grades are enrolled in the weekday church school released

time program. The system here is one of the few in the country which includes all 12 grades.

According to the Rev. Norman E. Berry, who heads the religious training program, the total enrollment would be considerably higher if additional volunteer teaching facilities were available. Enrollment averages 90 per cent in districts with adequate church school accommodations.

In addition to a city-financed, city-wide recreation program, supervised sports programs are provided by civic clubs, and the YMCA in conjunction with churches.

Referring to the juvenile delinquency threat, Police Chief John Theroff said his department "tries to stay on top of it." His course includes working closely with school officials, clergy and the public; quick followup of any indication of trouble and widespread patrolling.

## Robert E. Lee Under Study

THE DEATH OF A NATION.

By Clifford Dowdley. Knopf, \$5.

As the Civil War centennial draws ever nearer, we can anticipate that the war's campaigns and battles will undergo searching re-examination. By common consent it seems, Gettysburg is getting the initial scrutiny. A half dozen books dealing with that critical battle have been issued in the last two years. Now comes "Death of a Nation" to set a high standard for centennial scholarship.

Dowdley's book is a study of Robert E. Lee and the Confederate army at Gettysburg. The title, in itself, is indicative of the importance of the battle in the author's view. There, he feels, was the Confederacy's last opportunity, not for military victory but for military stalemate that would have won independence for the South.

The reasons for Confederate failure at Gettysburg were complex. They began in Richmond with Jefferson Davis' policy of defense by dispersed forces, as opposed to the concentration which Lee desired. Job Stuart's absence on a raid which Dowdley says he undertook to win vindication for the brawl at Brandy Station added another handicap. The reorganization of command, necessitated by the death of Stonewall Jackson, proved costly in terms of inter-corps liaison and coordination.

The battle itself was a tragedy of Southern errors. From Dick Ewell's costly indecision in the twilight of the first day, nothing went right. Lee himself was not without fault: He fought the battle as he had fought in the days when Jackson was his assault arm — and Jackson was dead.

The importance of Dowdley's book, however, lies in his study of James Longstreet, the "old war horse" of Confederate corps commanders. Longstreet's behavior at Gettysburg long has been a topic of controversy. In recent years, there has been a tendency to make out that Longstreet did not behave as badly as had been painted. Dowdley will have none of that.

Dowdley has gone back to the original records and based his appraisal on confirmed accounts of what was said and done on the battlefield. The process discounts much of what Longstreet wrote in later years. Dowdley finds that Longstreet was in a sullen and stubborn mood that made him incapable of command; that, willfully or not, he shirked his duties and responsibilities. Why? He was irked because Lee did not rely on him as Lee had relied on Jackson; because Lee had shrugged off his strategic concept of the campaign; because, as he saw it, Lee was blind to the Longstreet genius.

This probably will revive the Longstreet debate in all its fever.

## Civil War Outlined

**THE OFFICIAL ATLAS OF THE CIVIL WAR.** Yoseloff, \$40. "Monumental" is probably the best word to describe this publication of the official battle and campaign maps of the Civil War. It's a handsome king sized volume, reproducing 175 plates that originally were printed with the 128 volumes of the Official Records of the war.

The publishers, Thomas Yoseloff, previously issued new editions of the "Photographic History of the Civil War," and the "Battles and Leaders." The problems involved in those publications were immense; they were dwarfed by the obstacles encountered in this project. The work is not perfect, but the flaws are trivialities, in comparison with the overwhelming merit and importance of the project. These maps have never before been accessible to the public. Making them available for browsing, for research, or for just plain pride of possession is a service of incalculable value.

A forward by Henry Steele Commager recounts dramatically the background of the original Atlas. A publisher's introduction outlines some of the difficulties accompanying the publication.

**The Cover**  
THIS YOUNG lady isn't a rodeo queen candidate this year but she has a sharp eye on the years of the immediate future. She is Susan Williams, the 14-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Harold Williams of Bonanza. That's right, Susie is pictured with her pride and joy, a 5-year-old mare named Kitty.  
—Photo by Kettler