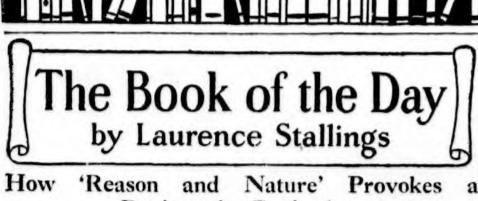
THE NEW YORK SUN, FRIDAY, JANUARY 29, 1932.



Reviewer's Confession.

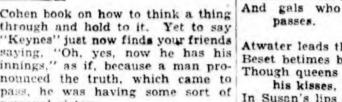
Reviewers may be by nature hon- | Cohen book on how to think a thing est; but some books lend themselves through and hold to it. Yet to say to the graces of a review, and some saying, "Oh. yes, now he has his do not. The most widely read and innings," as if, because a man prodeeply reviewed book in the list of pass, he was having some sort of best sellers, for that reason, is rarely personal victory.

fine books of 1931. Yet the only of a letter from a biochemist to a and prissy exception to an occasional of such a volume.

Mr. Cohen is not concerned with making a reviewer's path to be in such journals as the Nation and strewn with primroses, though the book is cogent, reflective, yet clear. It is studiously devoted to setting down a method of thinking along lines of a rational scientific procedure. Unquestionably "Reason and Nature" charts the course that thought will plot often in our time; it apprehends methods aborning since Galileo, and which have become so acceptable that, by the middle of this century, a philosopher who disregards the tenets of scientific rationalism will hardly be de rigueur at the meetings of his society. (It may be, of course, that he will be a greater man than any other there.)

It would seem certain that "Reason and Nature" contains within its admirably reasoned and profound pages the basis of what must be accepted "in the competition of the market" as the proper way in which to search for truth. Yet it defies reviewing in a general sense and is one of the profound books which will not be met with on any best selling list; it will probably be found there in work reduced to cretin scale by painted a brighter blue, perhaps," the public begins to inquire as to the nature of classic, scientific rationalism

We confess it to be our busman's holiday. Reading it in secret, with



a work to which reviewers have A reviewer can hardly have privacy of opinion as regards the imagi- Travel's what she likes plenty of; devoted their best hours. A reader native works, such as fiction and may have been spending four months poetry, and belles lettres in limited upon Morris R. Cohen's "Reason and editions. These things, at his hand, Nature" with full recognition that must immediately go into the mill.

Nature" are not to be reviewed; Where men, it seems, slide quickly ism." I speak also as one who obworthwhile sort of review it could the reader with a long list of Mr. And in the end, lost to ambition, command would be the publication Cohen's terris-with a judicious Swig rum at every intermission.

hibition of the reviewer's own su- The characters lead lives to daze, perior knowledge in such a field. A placid scribe whose daily lot

Good as some of the book reviews Revolves around his wife and tot.

OBJECTIONS TO BRANCH CABELL The Ginned Parade

AFTERNOON MEN. By Anthony

"THESE RESTLESS HEADS." By Branch Cabell. Robert M. McBride & Co. Powell. Henry Holt & Co. \$2. \$2.50.

More of those lushing, feckless souls, Whose lives are just so many bowls Of cherries sunk in deep morasses.

And gals who beg you to make

Atwater leads the ginned parade, Beset betimes by this charade: Though queens in queues pout for In Susan's lips alone his bliss is.

Susan, however's off of love. And near at hand, inviting pillage,

Are gals to crowd a Greenwich Village. it must have been one of the truly Eut books such as "Reason and A village set in London town,

biologist, thanking him for the gift point or two-and with a sham ex- The style's a grade B Hemingway's,

D. W. L.



some popularizer when, "fished up. Mrs. Mary Roberts Rinchart, author of "Miss Pinkerton" (a mystery story, to be published February 11 by Farrar & Rinehart, \$2). Buying bustling aflutter to rustle in dusty a mystery story at a bookstall. (Associated Press Photo.).

the New Republic are, a good half A London Letter

By JAMES BRANCH CABELL. For all that I wish for Branch Cabell all kinds of good luck (within, of course, such moderate limits of success as any human being can find endurable in a lifelong acquaintance), and for all that I have read his

Romance in Spain

Graham Greene. Doubleday, Doran.

first book with an interest such as I have not lately accorded the work of any other beginning writer, yet has this book left me unpleasantly impressed and pervasively irritated by its artless candors. In a beginner charity allows much. Yet there is no hiding the fact that the author of "These Restless Heads" is truthful; he is even in earnest; and if there be any third form of self-indulgence equally damaging to literary merit

I do not know it. I speak as any confirmed romantic must speak perforce when confronted by the accursed thing called "real-

RUMOUR AT NIGHTFALL. By serves that this Branch Cabell has rendered into print an unflattering account of my household, of my personal foibles and of my hitherto

The kind of romanticism which we find in "Rumour at Nightfall" is a belated survival, or revival, of the

private life. Stevensonian romanticism of three I FEEL BETTER NOW. By Marga-Now this is a liberty taken at the cost of all logic. It is a misstep or four decades ago. As might be which makes this book a prolonged expected, this romanticism is now exercise in doing precisely what its comewhat impure and diluted. writer proclaims he has never been Greene, who is Stevenson's younger able to do. In his nineteenth chap- cousin, is inclined to mix his fantasy ter, I mean, he speculates at prodi- with more or less real characters and gious length as to why he has at no situations. And, strangely enough, brittle, clever, subtle, satiric (in a is, we are told, a typical young time written anything which touched there is even a touch of romanti- gentle way). There are other adthe known life about him; and to cism's opposite, naturalism.

\$2.50.

my opinion-to my, perhaps, biased The author tells a story of love and opinion-his surmises wear an odd intrigue in the Spanish Pyrences, and again there is a pose, as when Western progress, the other patriotic racial problems of a foreign landfavor when they occur plump in the where the Government is in search she laments middle of a book which is, through- of a rebel leader hiding in the mounout its every paragraph, so com- tains. Two English newspaper men, pletely and, indeed, microscopically a Spanish girl and the rebel leader concerned with its writer's immediate are the chief characters. The story surroundings. relates the jealousy of the English- fake Ninons around and some of vation.

me in this book. The author of Englishman by the other. It ends grain of salt in your Manhattan nese. rhetorical floriculture. I note, for vivor. example, his reiteration of the refrain word "nonsense" at the close scribing nature and in portraying of each section of the book, and a men characters. He does some really kindred juggling with "contentment" brilliant writing, for instance, in in the code of the sections which are telling of Chase's ride down the devoted, without any such thin mountains to San Juan in a storm. trickery as figures in the prologue and the epilogue, to the writer's and in describing the Government Century has just published two self. I observe such unrestrained in- forces' attack upon the rebels' inn. more "White House Conference" The cynical treatment of the women books on child health and protection. stances of onomatoporia as "this

characters is, on the other hand, out "Body Mechanics: Education and flag's fleet, unflagging, flippityflop characters is, on the other hand, out "Body Mechanics: Education and flapping" or the paronomasia of cf harmony with the rest of the Practice." prepared by a subcommit-"like dead leaves scuttling and story, and seems a bit shallow. It is tee on orthopedics under the chairnot in keeping with the heroic mood manship of Robert B. Osgood, and gutters." I regard the elaborate of the events, or the grand passions "Psychology and Psychiatry in Pedibuilding up of long rhapsodies and implied in the characters' actions- atrics," the report of the subcommittirades in order that the instant they and is surely not a part of true tee on these subjects, of which Bronreach completion their architect may romanticism.

tumble them over, fleeringly. I lift

gray eyebrows before the ever-pres-

ent confection of "prose rhythms"

bury), as such verbal cates are ex-

emplified, let us say, in the five feet



THEY NEVER COME BACK. By William Plomer. Coward McCann. \$250

There is apparently a type of mind that rejoices in racial generaliza. tions, in such arbitrary dogma as that the Scotch are stingy or the Irish pugnacious.

The observations included 'They Never Come Back" are much more subtle than these, and they may be accurate, yet they have the same quality of being comments made in a vacuum, beyond all possibility of prcof, their aptness depending largely upon the prejudices of the individual reader. The scene of the story is modern Japan, and the Japanese, naturally, serve as subjects for the comments, though occasionally hemispheres are involved, and East and West are spoken of as though all Orientals reacted in a fixed manner to a given situation, and all Occidentals obediently reacted to the same situation in the opposite manner. . . .

These generalizations may be spoken of first, for they form much of the substance of Mr. Plomer's novel, and seem little more than dead weight to the story. Aside from them, "They Never Come Back" is a pleasant and readable novel, rather slight in the complications it evokes, but gracefully written, and containing individual passages of great charm. Vincent So does the reader. The publishers Lucas is a young Englishman visitgive no price for the book-it's price- ing Japan, impelled by a motive no less. There are other adjectives: more substantial than a whim. He

English artist, and on the boat he jectives it is not: cynical, sophisti- one a liberal and one a reactionary; to characters whose fortunes are cated, modish, smart. Though now one skeptical of the benefits of deeply involved in the political and Though I'd rather be wicked than My sins don't amount to a damn. only purpose, evidently, is to intro- the adventures that occur.

James Branch Cabell.

So Say We All

ret Fishback. Dutton.

Increased succeptibility.

son Crothers was chairman.

. . .

men over the girl, her faithlessness them are writing what passes for A letter introduces Lucas to Iris, permanently ended by some one buy-Nor is that quite all which troubles to the leader and the betrayal of one smart verse that is not worth your an English girl married to a Japa- ing a ticket to some other place. Is "These Restless Heads" seems to me with the death of the Englishman clam chowder. Compliments to the ters Sado, an indecisive, self-centered acter's problems that induces Mr. regrettably overprone to dabble in and the girl's marriage to the sur- New Yorker and Vanity Fair and young man, and forms a friendship Plomer to insist upon them as types? any other magazine that gives you with him. The remainder of the The author is at his best in de- growing room so that you may the decline and fall of this friend-In your inimitable way

Grow more charming every day Which naturally means for me personal relationships grow slightly

tense, after Sado has become disillusioned with him, and after he discovers Iris is in love with him.

to have made some study of new

"The Price of Life" does nothing

out in Russia by the State Publish-

pressive, the author is obviously not

"They Never Come Back" is com- the East to life in a happy descripared with "A Passage to India," tive phrase, only to smother it at but there is a fundamental differ- once in vague and pompous moralizence between the two novels. In "A ing. ROBERT CANTWELL.



Fifteenth Century Headdress.

encounters two typical Japanese, Passage to India" we are introduced and aggressive. These two charac- moreover, these problems are not ters disappear, and never figure in given as footnotes to the story, but the novel after Lucas lands; their are embodied in it in the nature of

Be yourself. There are too many duce a few pages of political obser- We cannot take a situation very seriously if we feel that it can be Simultaneously, he encoun- it this inconsequentiality of his char-"Sado," he writes, "like so many novel is given over to an account of young Japanese of the present," or "Iris and Lucas belonged to a class ship, to characterizations of Iris and and a generation which inherited her husband, to additional psycho- little but chaos and decay." evilogical generalizations. In the end, dently refusing to consider his charas we have suspected from the first, acters important if they do not con-

Lucas returns to England when his form with a multitude of others.

One feels that such generalizations should be left to the reader, and one feels it all the more strongly because Mr. Plomer can bring a fragment of

no thought of reviewing it-in itself it is a constructive review of man's own processes which distinguish him

Few books can escape the mill; for attempts to gainsay the work of any hibition of foreign paintings. Service.

ously situated at that time believed, everything. with Mr. Keynes, that Versailles was telling you." . . .

omist to do so. The best seller list, are not competent to believe-and let when things such as Keynes has un- it go at that. 'ringly predicted have come true, is filled with gibes about "Oh yeah" Radio Talks on Music and Roger Fry is writing wee from men who prove their own Radio Talks on Music ticles in the New Statesman. fatuity rather than that of the stock racketeers who were uttering them. . . . We were in despair until that market crash came. We had remained out of speculation until we were green with envy of our millionaire friends, and all because, reading "The Economic Consequences of the Peace." we followed Keynes and believed him right and that the

whole thing was a house of cards. But we have never, that we recall, mentioned Keynes before in a review. . . .

are at loss to review it. We would tials, adequately supplies. need a sledge hammer, and to go about socking people with it. When The Columbia University Press has we think of Keynes with his arro- just issued No. 354 of its studies in gance in 1919, telling the world what history, economics and public law, the rogues would not have it believe, Edward R. Hardy's "The Large Essomehow we connect him with the tates of Byzantine Egypt.'



of the reviews are in such vein; amateurs, by ruddy old boys who had a few courses in such a subject while at college, and by gentlemen

Bertrand Russell's dispute with Einstein and his variation from de Sit-Reviewers, those who go from day ter. A general reviewer nowadays tually once a year for the last four of continuously increasing or of con-

the grist must keep coming. One of great specialist in his field; he is our favorites was a work on eco- fatuous when he tries to praise it. The Flemish exhibition was the nomics which we read in hospital. It intelligently. How can he do either? first. So huge were the crowds that not but object to this overcareful is no exaggeration to say that the It has been many decades since a it attracted that an Italian exhibi- handling everywhere of mere syllabook lel us to two years of night man might sum up within him all tion was held the next year. After bles as though they were diamonds. sessions in economics at Georgetown erudition. In the time of Voltaire, that there was a Persian exhibition; University in the School of Foreign the greatest reviewer in history, it and now the French exhibition has

that first book of his came from general knowledge advanced in his the arrival of the precious canvases lessly. Russian economic phenomenon. It fire; for he still has hopes of seeing of Burlington House. would be fair to call it "I keep on so the hay emulsions are all around tion, which began the series, many horse."

swarming with infusoria. We think of this simplicity in one odds the best of our prophets in the selves up to review a work calling world of revision. But what will it for a passionless, specialized enavail a reviewer, of no specialized deavor in a field remote from easy knowledge, to din such a thing into apprehension. We can only say that the public ear? It would mean to we believe in Morris R. Cohen's challenge almost every other econ- "Reason and Nature"-and that we

SYMPHONIC BROADCASTS. By Olin Downes. Dial Press. \$2.50.

fied the series of radio broadcasts he the Curtis Institute of Music. There glaring and clumsy fake, or, at all more. are 150 standard productions of or- events, a poor example of the mas-

chestral repertories dealt with by When we find a book such as "Rea- Mr. Downes in a simplified fashion duced from such an experience is: son and Nature," and we believe in which should not fail to reward de- Learn to have the courage of your our mind and our heart that here is votees of music whose technical unto us as Keynes has always be n, we enlightenment that he, in all essen-

LONDON, Jan. 14. from other beasts-we regret having professing to decipher with pleasure public. In the mass it could not be recipes of Professor George Saints-Incalculable is the mighty British (after the very best but antiquated described as "art loving." Yet punc-

to day, have little privacy of mind. is licked before he starts when he years it has swarmed to see an ex- tinuously lessened length, which

was possible. One had read Plato opened its doors and will keep them ples of the faux bon-as we human-Those and yet many other exam-That book was "The Economic and that crowd; had punished Des- open for two months at the very ists say by ordinary when we con-Consequences of the Peace" by John cartes and his crush; was leaning to least; all of which time it will be temn whatsoever is admired by per-Maynard Keynes. Certain men griev- Newton, &c.; was going to tear into practically impossible to see the pic- sons who do not admire us-I obtures except through chinks in a serve, I repeat, ruefully. It seems

dense and surging mob. all the bunk; all of it, every settle- It is our greatest pleasure to spend And why? No doubt snobbery has Restless Heads" has wasted a great ment, every geographical division, a lot of time in the company of an something to do with it, the aimless deal of effort upon his filigree niceevery economic readjustment. We old gentleman who got his biology follow-my-leader of any crowd . . . ties. Such rhetorical love knots are sat around to await the crash, at the Zoological Institute at Berlin, And then the journalists, hard up at odds with the taste of our plain Friends grew wealthy not awaiting and who listened to Huxley at Ken- for better copy, have taken their age, and one cannot but marvel over it. And now, between the explosion sington. One finds him at 76 for- turn in awakening public interest. the infinite labor which a beginning and counting the dead, Mr. Keynes ever putting into his little red note- Even the triumphal progress of a author can devote even nowadays to does another book and is reproached books works which he must have visiting film star has received less the more difficult refinements of for an "I told you so" attitude. Since immediately to keep in step with the attention from the daily papers than writing as an actual art, thus thuft-We older writers have been Harcourt-Brace he has written field. Yet, at nights now, when it is from abroad, as they are brought up taught long ago by our readers, in steadily of such things as treaty re- chill, he likes best to put his micro- from the docks under armed escort conjunction with our royalty statevision, currency reform, and the scope under the lamp nearest the and tendery disposed on the walls ments, to indite otherwise. We do not attempt, in Branch Cabeil's per-

is hardly just to say that his new an amoba divide. In fifty years it There p also the glamour of their nickety phrase, "to guide the unibook is an "I told you so." But it has not been within his fortune, and value. Luring the Flemish exhibi- corn in double harness with the dray . . .

visitors stood entranced in front of

the Rembrandts as though they were For the beginner, though, there is It is difficult for a reviewer not to field of knowledge, and know that contemplating a fabulous banknote always hope, and "with time and succumb to the errors of the public not only we, as a reviewer, but all under glass. . . . In fact, wheth- experience, aided by the sympathetic which he feeds. For consistent bril- general reviewers everywhere are er one sees the pictures or not, one's appreciation at the reviewer," it liancy Mr. Keynes has been by all faking terribly when they set them- fellow visitors are always worth the may be that this Cabell also may entrance money. learn to do better in a more modishly homespun fashion. Meanwhile I

Meanwhile the experts, ordinarily could wish, I confess, that the perso retiring, enjoy a brief appearance sonality of this new writer were a beneath the spotlight. Books are pub- tiny bit more attractive to me. There lished on the particular national is everywhere, to my feeling, an aura school and, what is more, are sold in of smug self-satisfaction over the large numbers. Various monographs completion of the biography of the on French painting are already out, life of Manuel (with which Branch and Roger Fry is writing weekly ar- Cabell after all had nothing what-

ever to do) and a weak-spirited ac-I do not know whether Fry's re- ceptance of the fact that this uninown as a critic extends beyond the verse can prove both kindly and limit of these shores. Himself the comfortable, such as no approved

most genial of men, as a critic he is pessimist of my generation could THE CRIME AT THE CROSS-The music editor of the New York implacable and severe as only critics avoid finding distasteful. This Branch Times has here collected and ampli- of the fine arts know how to be. Cabell in brief appears to enjoy life. . . . This is often especially in- howsoever soberly; he indorses, to

gave in 1930-31 as interpreter of the timidating if one asks him for his every practical intent, the time-apworks performed under Toscanini's opinion of some picture that one proved rulings of human wisdom. direction by the Philharmonic Sym- happens oneself much to admire. In and among the better class of Ameriphony Orchestra, in addition to two variably he announces, though in the can writers that simply has not been programs rendered by members of kindest way, that the picture is a done for the last twenty years or ticle, constituted the only clew to a loves a pretty woman and spoils chaos and the essential emptiness of

A critic of quite another brand is

Clive Bell. He is not-he would not claim to be-an expert, so much as Medical Society of New York State, Creeping Jenny and the theft of the nings. There is, in short, rather a suggestions of a quite reverse naa literary popularizer of sculpture Mr. Stryker here speaks with the Lorrimer sapphire. Inspector Bad- nostalgic atmosphere through the ture, as when Lebedkin, a young and painting; a function which he voice of authority on the many vital deley, greatly disappointed when whole book; and in contrast stand official, is made to say to Kiril: performs with great good humor and points of law with which the phy- Anthony Bathurst refused to become Jenny, Thad and Susannah, Thad's "You've had a taste of bohemianism

a method of approach personal sician and surgeon may be compelled actively interested in the case, frank- sister. These are the three who are here and have filled your head with rather than portentous. Here is the to cope with in the course of work- ly admitted that he was drawing fighting through the morass of con- nihilistic ideas-Soviet nihilism. Oh. primrose path of criticism, the path day practice. The principal prob- only blanks. However, it is Anthony vention to something finer and more it doesn't take the big towns long to which, if we can afford to be sin- lems dealt with, illustrated with cita- who solves the mysteries-the jewel honest, and being too early, they ruin men." Lidin develops his study cere, we shall most of us admit that tions of many typical cases and judi- robberies and the murder-in a per- fail. we prefer to tread. Clive Bell has cial rulings, fell under the general fectly logical and Holmes-like way, with the use of a completely conall the apparatus of scholarship, but subject of the doctor's legal liability though it is rather a strain on the "Wild Rye" is not a very impor- quite pre-Freudian, psychology, and is too smiable a character to em- to the charge of malpractice. The reader's credulity to believe that a tant book, but it is tenderly written his oddly lyrical style does more to ploy it ruthlessly. As the amateur metaphysician remarked to Boswell, tinent supplementary procedures es-defy detection while intimately asso-lives as truly as any modern girl and official categories. somehow "cheerfulness is always sential to lines of defense action- ciating with close friends for a week completely wins the heart of the This author's works were recently expert testimony, lay witnesses, hy- or more. A good "mystery," well reader with her struggles and con- published in a collected edition by PETER QUENNELL. pothetical innocence or culpability, told, with little unnecessary verblage. fusion. This book will be enjoyed by Government Printing House in Mos-Royal Corfissoz writes an introduc- The book is designed for the en- Arthur Elwood Elliott's "Para- man nature that are not sugar coat- a likely propaganda trend. "The those who like quiet stories of hu- cow, which might indicate in them tion for "Contemporary American lightenment of doctors, but there is guay" (Columbia University Press) ed beyond recognition, and that yet Price of Life." however, is the most Prints," just published in a limited much in it which the lawyer and is a discussion of the country's cul- have a breath of clean air about intensely individualistic novel that "Saxon Farm Workers:" Eleventh century. In "Medieval Costume and edition by the American Art Dealers' nonprofessional reader may profit- tural heritage, social conditions and them. Life," By Dorothy Hartley. Scribners, \$5. has come the way of this reviewer Association. ably learn. educational problems. ELIZABETH SANDERSON. in many months. Soviet Russia may

TENDERLY WRITTEN

WILD RYE. By Mariel Hine, Appleton, \$2.

close severally the pair of preciose paragraphs about Agni and Hephæs- a young girl in love. Jenny Rorke, motherless at seventeen, is sent to sure to find an interested audience. or may not be evolving a "new" tos. I decide that common sense can- her mother's people to grow into maturity.



"Man About Town." 15th century.

Creeping Jenny

WAYS. By Brian Flynn. Macrae-Smith Company. \$2.

"With Creeping Jenny's compliments. She takes but one." These the reader. There is Grandmother expiation. two sentences, neatly typed on a Dale, who is witty and gay in her It is the changes brought about in card left in place of the stolen ar- eighties, and Grandfather Dale, who Kiril's nature by the distracting series of unusual jewel robberies. Linda. There is Aunt May, who is a the city that are important. There Scotland Yard, though mystified, was social climber, and Aunt Effic, who are moments when Kiril thinks of not unduly upset, believing the is sallow and unpopular even with himself as a traitor to the new order, thefts would turn out to be an "in- her own mother and who takes it all but these are infrequent and unimside society job." The Yard, how- out on Jenny.

the beautiful Mrs. Mordaunt, chate- sleeves, and balls where the Lancers onist as a horrible warning to those laine of The Crossways, was found is danced. There are broughams and in Russia who might be tempted into As counsel for many years to the done to death following a visit from tricycles and piano songs in the eve- disloyalty. He is, indeed, capable of

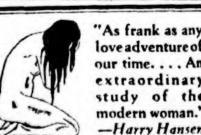
NEW BOTTLE: OLD WINE

THE PRICE OF LIFE. By Vladimir Lidin. Harpers. \$2.

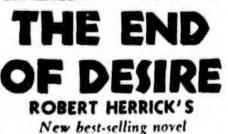
The judgments delivered to us in America about the allegedly new While this author's last book, "Ten Days' Wonder." was an amusing literature of Soviet Russia have been so numerous and conflicting that and sophisticated farce, this new book is a moving and tender story of these first important products of Soviet writers to be printed here aro

> Yet it will be difficult for any one literature, but this book is definite While with them she meets Thad to discover anything either Soviet or proof that the Russian peoples can Ryott, a talented young artist, who "new," in the social sense, in this still breed artists of brilliance and falls in love with Jenny and she latest Russian novel. The vehe- profundity.

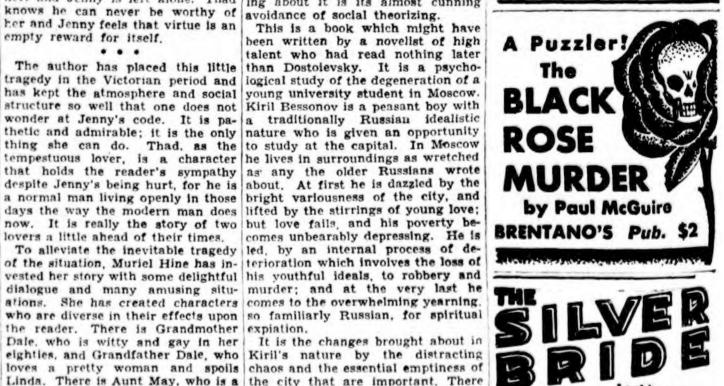
CLIFTON CUTHBERT.



love adventure of our time. . . . An extraordinary study of the modern woman." -Harry Hansen

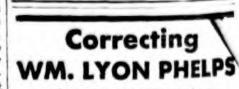


6th Printing FARRAR & RINEHART



In this new romance of love's struggle Ethel M. Dell probes the secret places of every woman's heart. A triangle with an unexpected twist.





Prof. Phelps, in picking "the ren best books of last year", includes MARY'S NECK, by Booth Tarkington. We're delighted by this compliment, but the book won't be published till Menday. Prof. Phelps had an advance copy. So for one of the most entertaining novels of this or any other year, give your bookseller an order today. Ready in all bookstores Monday. \$2.50 DOUBLEDAY, DORAN

