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The BOOK SHELF

Late Book Reviews and Literary Criticism

by Doris Flint

A CYNIC TURNS OPTIMIST

"Eyeless in Gaza"—Aldous Huxley (Harper $2.50)

At the ripe age of 41 Aldous Huxley after having written 24 works of literature, developing from an accomplished satirist, through a period of disillusionment, then skepticism, has finally produced a story in which he has gone completely optimistic in the last chapter.

His first novel "Crome Yellow" published when he was 21 has as its dominant note, the author's cynical attitude toward the purposeless endeavors of the post-war intellectuals. His next great book came in 1928. "Point Counter Point" was banned in the United States for a few years but now can be purchased at any reputable book store. In this story Huxley is the worried moralist much upset over the ways of the intellectuals. After eight years this book stands out as one of the half dozen or so great books of the twenties. At the time of its publication it was widely read, chiefly for the scandalous incidents but now it is remembered for the rich experience that only the best in fiction can provide.

Four years ago appeared his "Brave New World" which is a clever satire on scientific progress.

"Eyeless in Gaza," his latest effort, in many respects like "Point Counter Point" is the product of a mature and first rate mind and like his earlier success will be read for the intellectual enrichment which it affords as well as for the interesting episodes. The story is very oddly put together, containing 54 episodes many of which are complete short stories in themselves. It is easy to imagine the thoughtful reader returning again and again to the last chapter in the book which is an illuminating essay on human relations. Each chapter is headed by a date which in itself is quite significant. The episodes are not chronologically arranged but after viewing the central character, in a scene which takes place in 1931 we may see him in the following chapter as a school boy at Oxford in 1902 or in a few pages beyond in the year 1914 when a thoughtless act of his, causes the suicide of a friend.

The theme of the story is the search for happiness. The central character is Anthony Beavis who believes that he is entirely free because he has wealth and a certain independence of mind and spirit. He is a professional sociologist who lives a life of almost complete detachment. All through the story he shuns responsibilities even to the point of preventing himself from falling in love with his mistress. He finally discovers at the age of forty that human freedom "consists not in detachment" but in identifying oneself with other lives. This idea of human solidarity is the principle which underlies the movement toward complete internationalism. It is generally recognized by thinking people that the differences in separate human beings are far less important than the things which we have in common. Individual freedom comes only in unity with other lives and the idea must be taken into consideration before many of our present world problems are solved.

There are many interesting characters in the story besides Anthony Beavis including Helen Ledwidge whom we meet in the opening chapter when she is living in southern France with Anthony. An incident in which a dog falls from an airplane on to the roof where she and Anthony are sleeping causes her to return to her husband. There is also Mary Amberley, Helen's conniving, malicious mother who is Anthony's first mistress; Mark Staithes and Brian Fox his boyhood friends. Another character which influences Anthony considerably is the Quaker philosopher whom he meets while traveling in Mexico and who teaches him the doctrine of non-resistance.

One should never read Huxley, James Joyce or William Faulkner solely for entertainment for the reader is bound to be introduced to some new phase of life which will either give him a new perspective or cause him to renovate the old one.

Canadian Legion To Give Yule Party Sat.

Maple Leaf Post No. 84, Canadian Legion of Royal Oak, will hold its annual Christmas Party and Dance at the Veterans' of Foreign Wars' Hall, S. Main street of Royal Oak, Saturday evening, Dec. 19. A program of dance music, professional entertainment, and distribution of gifts will begin at 9 p. m. The services of Betty Perice, Pauline Mundi and Mary Greig have been enlisted to make the entertainment worth while.

On Tuesday, December 22 the Post will hold its annual Christmas party for the children of the members. During the evening it is planned to show films specially suited for the children, after which comrade William Laurence acting as "Santa Claus" will attend to the presentation of gifts. Held in the same building as that of the adults' party, the affair will begin at 8 p. m.

Tall Stories

"When I was timbering in the Northwest it snowed so hard we had to be let down with ropes to reach the tops of the trees," said Smith. "And the fog was so thick the fish lost themselves in the woods, but we soon remedied that by digging ditches in the fog and draining it back into the river."

"Well, when I was digging in the Panama Canal," retored his friend, "it was so hot there one day, when my buddy went in swimming and dived off a 20-foot rock into the stream he forgot to take into consideration the evaporation, and when he was half way down all the water was gone. It happened one of our sudden rains came up, though and he landed in eight foot of water."

Grain King Has Two Crowns

Herman Trelle, above, Wembley, Alberta, farmer, has plenty of reason to smile. He's a king with two crowns. The Peace River Valley farmer clinched the oats kingship at the 37th International Grain and Hay show in Chicago and then won the wheat crown. In all, he has taken 19 world championships in grain.

He's National Corn Husker No. 1

Speeding down the rows of an Ohio cornfield, Carl Carlson, 38-year-old Audubon, Ia., farmer, is shown here as he picked his way to the 13th national corn husking championship of America. Carlson, a brother of Elmer G. Carlson, last year's world champion, picked 1,[illegible]75 pounds, or 21.039 bushels, of field corn in 80 minutes, to top the field of contestants from nine states.

KEEP HURTS SECRET; DIES

Philadelphia. — Robert Cooper, 15, died rather than tell his parents of an injury suffered in an accident a few hours before. Called from school, the boy complained of feeling ill. A doctor was summond but fifteen minutes later the boy died. Two companions, grief-stricken, told the parents that the three of them had jumped on the side of a trolley car and were thrown to the street by a parked automobile when the trolley passed through a narrow street.

D'MOLAY DANCE NEW YEAR'S EVE

Colored Orchestra Of 13 Pieces Will Provide Music For Affair

Elaborate plans are being developed for the New Year's Eve dance which will be put on at the Community House by the Hasenberger Chapter, Order of DeMolay. According to William Bawden, general chairman of the affair, the Hipster colored orchestra led by Gloster Current, which broadcasts regularly, will provide music for the occasion. The dance will begin at 9 p. m. (standard time) and continue until 1 a. m.

Committee appointments include the following: Orchestra, Jack Robertson, Owen Middleton and Walter Killing; Invitations, Harold Tilton and Jack Hinks; Publicity, Jack Emerson and Bill Averill; Decorations, Jack Bell, Jr., Lorenzo Cook, Bill Gerke, Whitney Colgate, Bill Bryant, Edward Furman, Donald Rauch and George Wordenden.

Hosts and hostesses for the dance are as follows: Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kinsman, Mr. and Mrs. John E. Martin, Mr. and Mrs. Karl Potter, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Seaman, Mr. and Mrs. Martin Cauffiners, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Timm, Mr. and Mrs. William Bawden, Mr. and Mrs. Max Smale, and Mr. and Mrs. Howard Hull.

The auditorium of the Community House will be decorated in keeping with the holiday theme and visitors will be welcomed by all who attend. Tickets for the dance may be obtained from any member of DeMolay.

Other Affairs Planned

Plans are now under way for the annual Homecoming Banquet and Dad's Night to be held at the Masonic Temple here Monday, evening, Dec. 28.

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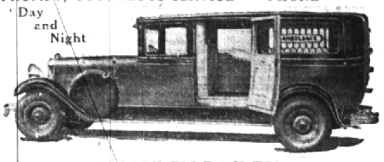

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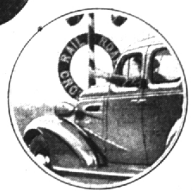

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