



and REVIEWS

By Ayn Rand. 1168 pages. New York. Random House. \$6.95

Atlas Shrugged

Reviewed by Ann Jacobs

A modern fantasy of villains and heroes sometimes dashes, sometimes plods, across the pages of Ayn Rand's new novel, *Atlas Shrugged*. In a world in which nothing is relative, nothing uncertain, nothing even subtle (particularly the characters) Good—a giant of many faces including ability, industry, capital—fights its final battle with evil—inefficiency—with considerable sermonizing by Miss Rand along the way. Dagny Taggart, the young heroine who runs the Taggart Transcontinental Railroad, forms the focal point of the story in her efforts to keep her trains running under increasingly difficult and increasingly ludicrous government restrictions.

THIS MAIN LINE is interestingly sidetracked by Miss Taggart's three love affairs—one with a copper-mine owner, another with a steel tycoon, and the third with the man who runs the world. These four great but beautiful characters come to the realization at various points in the book that their world is being taken apart and that the people who depend upon them (all mean nasty folk without a single virtue).

Our heroes' subsequent departure for a Paradise hidden in the Rockies (and peopled by other giant but beautiful characters) teaches mankind a harsh lesson in

America, With Love

That "America, With Love" will elicit considerable success is beyond doubt; that it does not deserve success will make little difference. Kathleen Winsor's name is enough to insure a merry ring of cash registers, but it is still the time is 1932; the place is a street in a small town somewhere in the western United States, and the characters are ordinary people caught up in the severe economic upheavals of the period.

THE MAIN CHARACTER is a twelve year old girl, who, for most of the novel, acts like anything but a twelve year old. A new family moves onto the street at the beginning of summer vacation, remains for a few months and then moves on in search of security.

Miss Winsor would have us believe that this family, a father, mother, daughter and son, are, or were, a typical American family of the time. They may be, but the adults remain such shadowy characters that they never become human beings. As a result this typical family is a real bore.

THERE ARE MANY minor characters, some decent, some shady and some completely repellent, but they provide the only interesting moments in the novel. Since all the action is seen through the eyes of a budding teenager, it is a limited view. Accepting the premise that a twelve year old looks at this world and its inhabitants in a different light than an adult does, it takes a person of rare talent to transcribe this to the printed page. Miss Winsor's talent is not that rare.

By Janet Stevenson. 313 pp. New York. The Viking Press. \$3.95

Weep No More

Reviewed by Sally Parsons

To the existing wealth of Civil War literature is added a new contender this month—a novel that is likely to have great appeal for the theatre. Through Elizabeth Van Lew, a most courageous and cunning heroine, the American reader can vicariously affirm her ability to perform tasks with the best of men.

President Lincoln himself was indeed surprised that the most important underground leaks out of Richmond emanated from a woman spy.

AND AS THE FACE she turned to the world was one of coquettishness, Elizabeth was sympathetically pitied by all her distinguished Confederate acquaintances. From Jefferson Davis on down, and allowed to go her apparently aimless ways, wandering among shopkeepers, loaning Bibles to prisoners of war, and chattering idly with ladies at tea.

Beneath this witless facade was the real Elizabeth, a Southerner who loved the Union enough to risk her life in the service of the North, commanding a network of agents, hiding escaped Union prisoners, and devising a grand plan for the capture of Richmond.

MISS STEVENSON'S first novel has all the components of good historical fiction: an adequately drawn picture of the period and locale, romance (the growing devotion of Elizabeth for an escaped Union prisoner treated, surprisingly enough, in a completely non-sensational manner), and an exciting, action-packed battle.

Rarely, however, is good historical fiction considered outstanding literature, mainly because, by its very nature, it is concerned with plot at the expense of descriptive character analysis and development.

Although Miss Stevenson's work by Mary Deasy. 381 pp. New York. Doubleday & Co. \$3.95

O'Shaughnessy's Day

Old man O'Shaughnessy, a rich Irish-American politician in Ohio, is an unsavory character as we've ever met. He's immoral, selfish, cunning—completely despicable. He raised three sons, one of whom was illegitimate. This is the story of the sons' lives as mocked by their father.

One son is sent to prison on a manslaughter charge; another becomes active in the Citizens Committee formed to overthrow his father's control of city government. The illegitimate son also fathers a child born out of wedlock.

In the end all problems are solved to remove the bad taste. I enjoyed this book and its unusual style and recommend it for a pleasant evening's reading.

October 31, 1957 THE BIRMINGHAM ECCENTRIC 7-F

Curtain Up At Sardi's

By Vincent Sardi, Jr. and Helen Bryson. 234 pp. New York. Random House. \$3.95

Reviewed by Josephine Mason

Anyone who knows New York or the theatrical world needs no introduction to Sardi's restaurant where the great and the near great of the theatre mingle daily, not only to see and be seen, but to enjoy the fine cuisine.

For those gourmets who like adventurous cooking, this book is your meat, since it is a collection of almost three hundred recipes gleaned from Sardi's kitchens. The recipes have been especially adapted for family use by Helen Bryson who spent six months watching Sardi's chefs at their work.

VICTOR BORGE, apparently an old hand at Sardi's, has written the preface to an exciting collection of dishes, ranging from Beluga caviar to roast beef hash. Included are after theatre or television suppers, menus for quick pre-theatre dinners, outdoor or barbecue cooking and a complete wine list.

The recipes appear clear, concise, and easy to follow even though their titles may sound impressive, such as Emme de chicken Croque au Coq with buttered egg noodles.

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