

BOOKS and REVIEWS

Dandelion Wine

By Ray Bradbury. 281 pp. New York. Doubleday & Co. \$3.95.

Review by Robin R. Barr

Dandelion Wine tells the story of a young boy's sudden and exciting awakening to the world. All at once on a hot afternoon in early summer, Doug Spaulding is filled with the wonder and beauty of being. For the first time in his 12 years, he seems to know what it means to see, touch, taste, smell and hear. And he sees all around him a whole new world just waiting for his secret exploration. There is no conventional plot in this story. It is simply a series of sometimes related incidents experienced by Douglas in the light of this marvelous new awareness.

SOME OF THESE EPISODES are happy ones, like the purchase of Doug's new tennis shoes. This had been an annual summer rite, but this time Doug knew why he must have new shoes. He knew he only had one tennis shoe left, and the newness of summer; he sensed the promise of adventure and fun contained in the springy rubber soles.

There was the beating of the drum and the hanging of the red, white and blue bunting, but most importantly, was the making of the dandelion wine. Now Doug knew why Grandfather, when winter was cold and days were long, stole into the basement to taste the golden summer, miraculously contained in the bottled dandelion wine.

And here were sad times, like the death of great Grandma. Great Grandpa, who had always been kind and gentle, had died. It was a frightening thing for a young boy to realize man's mortality.

THE ATMOSPHERE of the book is like that of the play "Our Town" in its small midwestern setting where the people and living are simple. Ray Bradbury tells of women after dinner in the kitchen "setting their universe aright", and men smoking on their porch swings settling the eternal problems of mankind.

He speaks of church socials, ice cream parlors, the Honeycreek Ladies Lodge, town characters like the old maid, the town junkman, the time machine—Colonel Freeseigh; so that the reader pictures an entire self-contained little world of which Doug Spaulding is the focal point.

Through the eyes of this child, by way of these experiences, you see besides the magic and beauty of summer, the whole human cycle of life and death with all its good and bad, its happiness and its sadness. This is seen with the simplicity and gentleness of a child's vision so that the bitter never overcomes the sweet.

THERE ARE EPISODES and people that do seem unreal, like the night Tom and Doug capture Madame Tarr, from the carnival in the attempt of Mrs. Elmira Brown to become Ladies Club president. But the story is in a way a fantasy, written intuitively and imaginatively and, thus, need not be judged by its relation to reality.

The writing itself is beautiful. The prose often reads like poetry. "The first light on the roof outside," "The early morning. The leaves on all the trees tremble with a soft awakening; any breeze that dawn may offer."

Some of the images are so vivid and real that you can see the tangerine colored trolley gliding smoothly and confidently over the tracks, the children with their chilled Eskimo pies. And you can actually taste the "snow ice cream melting in their mouths." This is an evocative story for those who, like Douglas, discovered the world as a child; for those who never have, it's beautiful unveiling.

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The One That Got Away

By Kendal Burt and James Leasor. 292 pp. New York. Random House. \$3.95.

Reviewed by Frederick G. Bahr.

In September of 1940 Oberleutnant Franz von Werra was shot down during a Luftwaffe raid on an airfield in Kent, England. He was captured, thoroughly interrogated by British Intelligence, and interned in the Lake District. Here he made his first attempt at escape.

This is a subsequent attempt, and von Werra's eventual success on his third try form the meat of this extremely well documented account.

Escape stories combine the best elements of mystery and adventure when well done, especially when events that occurred are true. Taken in the telling of von Werra's fight to be free is excellent.

THE GERMAN disappears for days while the entire countryside is searching for him. He comes back in seconds of taking off in a Hurricane fresh from the Rolls-Royce assembly lines, recaptured while the mechanic is still apologizing for not getting the electrical starter going in time. Final success comes in a way that is believable only because it actually happened.

Had the co-authors stuck to the story of the escape alone, any reviewer feels that this would have been a far better book. The author's approach to the mystery novel medium is quite unusual and refreshing in that the plot is subordinated to the development of the character.

A believable portrait of each of the principals is painted so that the reader within the first few pages becomes entirely engrossed in the lives of these people caught in a web of their own making. The story is built around the psychological impact and the attendant reaction and interaction of the principal characters as the finger of guilt points to him or her.

The reader cannot help but become intrigued by the individuals portrayed: Doris who is the picture of the self-sufficient, organized woman.

THIS DETAIL forms the foundation of suspense when the prisoner must know every corner of his confines, the intimate psychology of his co-conspirators and his captors, and each road, river and gully of the surrounding countryside.

It is unnecessary, however, to give each question and answer when von Werra is interviewed by British Intelligence.

The day by day diary of his sanctuary in the then-neutral United States comes close to being boring, since the climax, the escape, has already transpired.

IT IS, HOWEVER, hard to criticize industry and research. In fact, your reviewer's only strong objection is the attempt to psychoanalyze von Werra and generalise of the particular, the Nazi mind. Not only does such an attempt prove nothing, but psychoanalysis is not a reporter's function.

Read as the story of a soldier typical of soldiers from the beginning of history and freed from the chaff of international politics, counter-intelligence and Freud, your reviewer highly recommends this book. Though the reader must do his own judicious cutting, he will find his effort well rewarded.

A test version of the Army's Jupiter intermediate range ballistic missile flew more than 1,500 miles, the first successful flight of such a weapon in this country.

The Man With The Cane

By Jean Potts. 188 pp. New York. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.75.

Reviewed by Donald H. Parsons

All the elements of a successful, suspenseful mystery novel are found in Jean Potts' "The Man With The Cane."

The plot is woven around a family pentagon, rather than circle the mother, her son and daughter, and their divorced spouses, each coupled with their lover forming the five distinct points of the pentagon.

IN THE CENTER of this new figure is the murdered man who, as might be expected, has touched all the lives of the principal characters leading credence to the reader's feeling that each one, at one time or another, as the story unfolds, is the murderer.

In fact, none are completely eliminated from guilt so that the usual surprise ending when the mystery novel medium is quite unusual and refreshing in that the plot is subordinated to the development of the character.

A believable portrait of each of the principals is painted so that the reader within the first few pages becomes entirely engrossed in the lives of these people caught in a web of their own making. The story is built around the psychological impact and the attendant reaction and interaction of the principal characters as the finger of guilt points to him or her.

The reader cannot help but become intrigued by the individuals portrayed: Doris who is the picture of the self-sufficient, organized woman.



Is "Love" Naught In Tennis?

Scotflaws through the years, who have considered tennis a staid sport, in contrast to Great American Baseball, have had their greatest fun with the scoring word love for naught, or zero.

Simple explanation is, in tennis score "love" is modernization of "uff" old Scots' word meaning nothing. The game itself derived from forms of handball, the palm being first used to bat the ball; later gloves, finally rackets, gave it more impetus. Early balls had a linen cover stuffed with human hair.

Copyright 1957, John Emery Ent. capable and, therefore, impossible woman.

BARBARA, her feminine opposite, helpless and vulnerable; Monroe, whose jealousy of Doris, his wife, breaks down his studied perfect to let the reader see his weakness and insecurity.

Clyde, the hearty, hundred percent salesman who is not as sure and comfortable about life as he appears; and Maude, the weak old woman whose prattling covers up her own secrets, but lets out those of others.

The book is truly one which, once started, cannot be put down until completed. It is a fast-moving, short and engrossing book which will provide an enjoyable evening's reading for even the uninitiated reader of mystery novels.

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Young Scientists' Field Trips Set From Cranbrook

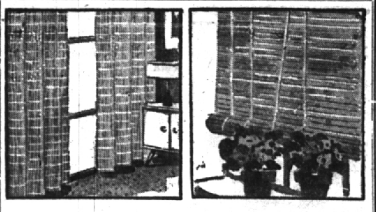
CRANBROOK — Junior members of Cranbrook Institute of Science are looking forward to five fall field trips, beginning Sept. 21 with an excursion to Point Pelee, Ont., for the monarch butterfly and fall bird migration. This excursion leaves the institute at 9 a.m. and returns about 6 p.m.

Sept. 28, junior members and some of their parents will go to Proud Lake for fall wild flowers and observations on glacial forma-

tions, returning about 12:30. On Oct. 5, they will collect Devonian fossils in Silica, Ohio, returning at 6 p.m., and on Oct. 12, they will collect rocks on Bald mountain. Oct. 19 takes them to Camp Ohio, on Fish lake, for an autumn color tour.

WALTER P. NICKELL will accompany junior members on the field trips, for which registration closes Friday, Sept. 20. Junior memberships in the Institute of Science are open to any boy or girl older than eleven years. If one parent belongs to the institute, a junior family membership is \$1.50; if not, it is \$2.

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