



and REVIEWS

other equally intriguing points. But one sad point: the authors learn the "inside story" on so hard on users of clichés. They and their users are soundly condemned on every page. What cally mishandled distinctions between humor, wit, irony, sarcasm and satire.

First Blood: The Story of Fort Sumter

By W. A. Swanberg. 373 pp. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, \$5.95. Reviewed by PHIL THOMAS

W. A. Swanberg, who "Sickles" the Incredibles in 1956, was greeted with critical acclaim in 1956, has written the first shot of the Civil War. "First Blood: The Story of Fort Sumter," another tightly-organized, exhaustively detailed volume to add to the rapidly growing stack of excellent Civil War studies.

It was NOT a point selected for surprise attack. It represented the North-South quarrel in miniature, and the crisis, stirred there for months, gradually gaining intensity until the explosion came.

But neither side wanted to be the first to fire the shot which would plunge the divided nation into war, so, while the Sumter garrison and its ace commander, Major Robert Anderson, lived on short rations and in virtual isolation, ineffectual efforts were made for some six months to settle the question peacefully.

FINALLY, the patience of the South snapped, and the first shot against Sumter was touched off by old Edmund Ruffin.

THE AUTHOR also succeeds in individualizing many of the characters who played prominent roles in the Sumter story, including Major Anderson, so little known today, who did his utmost to prevent war but was fated to start one of the greatest shows of violence this nation has known.

"TO THE NORTH," says Swanberg, "they (Sumter and its garrison) represented the preservation of the Union, the enforcement of the laws against Southern intransigence. To the South they represented a tyrannical threat to nearable secession. One side would have to badge or they would be war."

A Time For Paris

By George Goodman. 210 pp. New York, Doubleday & Co. \$3.75. Reviewed by BETE GILLESPIE

This is another of those "girl goes to Paris-to-lose-morals" novelettes in which she succeeds while a young man with dreams of statesmanship (he's Foreign service meets, woe, half-wins, loses, and eventually gets girl).

At first it promised to be a light and witty novel what with Freddy meeting another of author Goodman's characters, a Spaniard by the name of the Marquis del Velasco, aboard the liner as both watched, appreciatively, while Sally boarded.

THE MARQUIS offered some wonderfully flip dialogue of the morals and mores of American womanhood that only whetted my appetite for more to come. It was, unfortunately, it didn't materialize. Atlantic flight, and everything

The Woman Of My Life

By Ludwig Bemmelman's. 218 pp. New York, Viking Press, \$3.50. Reviewed by ROBIN BARR

Once upon a time there was a shy, unworldly, gentle young man named Armand, Duc de Montfort-Lanrouy. The son of a wealthy, rowing nobleman, Armand inherited title, property, and money galore, but after seeing his father's easy way with women.

For Armand was an idealizer of women, and for him there could be only one. In spite of the persistent attempts of his father's trio of business advisors, poor Armand was unable to find the "one woman of his life."

A Dictionary of Contemporary American Usage

By Berge Evans and Cornelia Evans. 567 pp. New York, Random House, \$5.95. Reviewed by DONALD A. YATES

Here, surely, is a book that should not be overlooked by anyone who has ever stepped up on one of the reins long enough to consider thoughtfully, the charms and vagaries of a much-taken-for-granted possession—American English.

Dr. Berge Evans, of high-IQ, MC-TV fame, and his sister Cornelia have gathered together in their "Dictionary" nearly every conceivable grammatical, stylistic, etymological and debatable point common to the everyday discussions on what constitutes "correct" up-to-date American English usage.

THEY ARE STILL realistic enough to follow their notion of the formally correct term with the admission that the alternate, "popular" term is so widespread as to be unquestionably correct in contemporary usage.

THE RESULTS of the Evans' joint labor are enlightening and heartening at the same time. For while the Evans know as well as anyone what usages are traditionally stamped "acceptable" by the grammarians.

THIS, we are glad to see, gives us a refreshing approach to the enchantingly unpredictable pronunciation of language. On every page our eyes are opened and our capacities for actively thinking in intelligent terms about the language we use so extensively every day are greatly broadened.

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