

# BOOKS and REVIEWS

## 25,000 Books To Go, on Sale Monday Morning

Some 25,000 books will go on sale Monday morning Oct. 27, at 9 a. m. at the Birmingham office of Detroit Edison. The sale, sponsored by the Birmingham branch of A. A. U. W., will run through Friday.

There will be books of every conceivable type with prices ranging from five cents to a dollar. You will be able to fill a supermarket cart with books and magazines for five dollars or under. There will also be a special section of rare books and first editions of special interest to book collectors.

The committee reports that a number of private libraries have been donated. They include a group of foreign language novels, many sets of hobby instruction books, and a 50-volume theater library with plays ranging from 1900 to

the present and special texts on make-up, staging and acting. A large number of cookbooks have come in recently as well as journals and periodicals. One tattered Birmingham periodical, pre-1900 should be a "find" for someone.

BOOK TABLES will be arranged according to subject matter so you won't have to go through thousands to find what you want. If you happen to be a true Yankee bargain hunter, book sale browsing may sound like paradise.

The sale is from 9 a. m. to 5:30 p. m. daily, through Oct. 31, with evening hours, Monday and Thursday until 9.

**Lolita**  
By Vladimir Nabokov. 319 pp. New York. P. Putnam's Sons. \$5.00.

Reviewed by JACK JACOBS  
Reviews and comments on "Lolita" have been appearing in this

great diversity for the past three years, but the book itself became available only last month. Through the "Lolitaless" years, I have seen it described as "a satire" by The Bookster, "a love story" by Lionel Trilling, "a distinguished novel" by Graham Greene, and "pure filth" by Louella Parsons. Now that I have read the book, I find myself in agreement with the first three opinions.

Humbert Humbert, the central character, is a witty, likable, middle-aged European with a passionate desire for what the women's magazines call "sub-teens"—girls aged nine through twelve. This weakness, previously confined to a sort of park-bench voyeurism, gains control of Humbert when he encounters his life's passion—a skinny, scabby-kneed, twelve-year-old American female—while staying in a New England town.

He speedily marries her mother, and Humbert, after years of denial, finds himself the guardian of his paramour.

TO CARRY out his schemes and avoid detection, Humbert takes the girl on two extensive trips through the U. S., and here the satire is most pronounced. When not detailing the pangs and terrors of his obsession, Humbert, the worldly European, describes the vulgarity of roadside America with wit and horror. The motels, the restaurants, the roadsigns, the "tourist attractions," with their aggressive commercialism—all are included in his quietly devastating travelpogue.

Nabokov has a conciseness of language which gives his writing great style. Although he writes in Russian, he handles English with ease and originality—playing with the words to give them an intricacy of meaning rare in current writing.

LET ME warn the sensation-hunter not to be misled by the cries of Miss Parsons and other guardians of morality. By present standards, "Lolita" is notable for its lack of sexual detail, and what little there is, I am sure, could only be of interest to poor Humbert's paedophile ilk.

I recommend Lionel Trilling's essay in Encounter magazine (October '58) to those curious about the book's unusual theme. Trilling believes that Nabokov wanted to write a love story based on the chivalric concept of love, in which the lover is a slave—obsessed and consumed by his passion.

In our time, with marriage something of a business agreement and adultery so overworked, Nabokov used perversion as the only concept of passion-love which his readers could accept.

**Homespun America**  
Edited by Wallace Brockway and Bart Keith Winer. New York. Simon and Schuster. \$10.00.

Reviewed by TOM PHILLIPS  
Back in the days when men were men and they spoke and wrote with little, if any, fear of the consequences, the literature and language of this country were as virile and powerful as the men who wrote and used them.

Or, as the editors of "Homespun America" put it, these things typi-

cal what was then "the American way"—a mixture of sense and nonsense, solemnity and levity, whimsy and wisdom.

The ability to phrase what one said and write in pungent and powerful prose is little in evidence now, and this is a pity.

IN AN EFFORT to rectify the situation, editors Brockway and Winer have gathered together a large anthology of very American, mostly hitherto unanthologized, material (which) consistently reflects the peculiarly American ways of thinking and writing—rough, plain, sometimes coarse, often humorous.

They have chosen well. The material gathered in "Homespun America" ranges from the once witty sayings of Benjamin Franklin to the tongue-in-cheek comparison by Seba Smith of rum and newspapers; from John Greenleaf Whittier's still-touching poem "Snow-bound" to Heywood Brown's ringing tribute to courage, "The First Robin."

MATERIAL by many old familiar writers makes up much of his anthology, although the not-so-well-known get their fair share of space. The former include Mark Twain, Robert Frost, Carl Sandburg and Bret Harte. Among the latter are a numbered Nathaniel Ames, Archer H. Shaw, Dick Wick Hall, and Bill Arp.

Both the well and lesser known blend together to make a harmonious whole. In fact, the only flaw in this otherwise excellent volume is its lack of an index.

Much could be written extolling "Homespun America," but its subtitle catches the spirit of the book perfectly: "A collection of writings—happy, somber, gay, serious, rough, subtle, and otherwise—designed to capture the essential quality of the free United States."

## At Fort Campbell

Pvt. James E. Remmel, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Remmel of Highland avenue, is scheduled to partici-

pate with the 161st Airborne Division's 502nd Infantry in a parachute assault on Fort Campbell, Ky., as part of "Exercise White Cloud."



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