

**THE FIRST READER—By Harry Hahsen**  
**Nelia Gardner White Wins \$8000 Annual Award for 'No Trumpet Before Him'**

"NO TRUMPET BEFORE HIM." A novel. By Nelia Gardner White. Philadelphia, Westminster Press, \$3.

"COMMUNISM AND THE CONSCIENCE OF THE WEST." By the Rt. Rev. Msgr. Fulton J. Sheen, Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill, \$2.50.

**NO FIRST NOVELIST**, but a professional writer with 17 novels behind her, wins the annual \$8000 Westminster award. It goes to Nelia Gardner White for "No Trumpet Before Him," the account of a young Methodist minister's attempt to get his congregation to live up to Christian principles.

Mrs. White is a former kindergarten teacher who has been writing novels about family life for over 20 years. She is married to a lawyer, has two children and lives near New Hartford, Conn.

It is important to mention that she is the daughter of a Methodist minister and thus may have gained first-hand knowledge of Sheen for the present pessimism and hopelessness.

The story of the young minister who opposes the worldly interests of an established congregation with the spirit of Christian humility and justice is not new; with variations it has occupied authors all the way from Henry Arthur Jones to James Street.

The problem is often the same: The young minister preaches the gospel in a way that embarrasses some of his people; he makes enemies among influential members of the board; he proves attractive to a young woman and tales are carried to his wife; attempts are made to get rid of him, but he stands firm—and this, briefly, is also the plot of "No Trumpet Before Him."

**MRS. WHITE** knows women better than she knows men and draws a whole gallery of individuals recognizable in any congregation.

Maybe that's why her minister, Paul Phillips, seems more acted upon than acting. For he gives the impression of a static character because he does not raise his voice.

Firmness is his trait; tact is less evident. He is apologetic to his bishop and his wife, and invokes reason rather than emotion to win his case. The women are much stronger characters.

Here is Paul's wife, who finds the atmosphere uncongenial and he states of a preacher's wife irksome. Here is the understanding bishop's wife, and her daughter Jeanie, who falls in love with Paul on a rebound from her husband. Hers is Mrs. Brush, the veritable viper, whose bitter tongue wrecks her daughter-in-law. In these and others, Mrs. White demonstrates her sure knowledge.

**THERE ARE TWO BIG RISES** in Paul's ministry. One envelops over his refusal to let professor lecture on Baudelaire, because the poet is a defeatist. Do we not accept defeat and death as the master when we sing hymns to them?" asks Paul.

This is a new stand, an opposition to what Paul considers an responsible attitude toward poetry. I doubt that we shall be cured by reading only about weakness and light, but Paul's object is to make the church express only positive Christianity.

The other crisis is more familiar: that of denouncing a rich man who lets her property run down because a certain race lives in it. Paul portrays her anonymously in a sermon, which seems a roundabout way of getting something done.

Miss Pyne, the rich culprit, is eventually reformed by Jeanie, who has the big, dressing-down speech of the book. Paul could never have risen to such a powerful third-act climax.

**WHEN I READ** novels about teachers like Paul, I always wonder why they have to put in so much time dressing their church boards and superiors. Is opposition always under their own roofs?

However, Nelia Gardner White has written a fine novel inside these limitations. She has avoided both the unctuous and the hysterical, and made "No Trumpet Before Him" a credible slice of American life.

Social reform within the United States, including a more suitable distribution of the fruits of labor, are often urged in reply to the threat of communism.

But Msgr. Fulton J. Sheen, the most persuasive Catholic preacher in the country, declares that only general acceptance of the orthodox tenets of Christianity can overcome the danger of collapse in a battle between the two great material forces of today.

Communism and monopolistic capitalism. The argument is explained in his new book, "Communism and the Conscience of the West."

**THE DRIFT** of Western lands away from Christian orthodoxy, which has come with the rise of liberal and scientific ideas since Rousseau, is blamed by Msgr.

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**FAUST IN ART**—"Faust Sees a Vision of Marguerite," a lithograph by the great French artist Eugene Delacroix (1798-1863), is one of a number of new acquisitions for the print collection of Herron Art Museum. In its theatrical treatment of the theme, the lithograph resembles a 19th-Century stage set for the opera based on Goethe's "Faust."

**'Mask for Privilege: Anti-Semitism in U. S. Lifts Secrets on Dangerous Prejudices'**

**A MASK FOR PRIVILEGE: ANTI-SEMITISM IN AMERICA**—By Carey McWilliams. Boston, Little, Brown, \$2.75.

By HENRY BUTLER

FOR A number of years Carey McWilliams has been a champion of minorities.

His principal attack is against a liberalism that he associates with laissez faire. He also opposes policies based on expediency rather than on moral worth and hits at polls that establish majority opinion by declaring: "The first poll of public opinion taken in the history of Christianity was on Pilate's front porch, and it was wrong."

**BUT LAISSEZ FAIRE** is no longer an American economic doctrine. Moreover, Msgr. Sheen gives little attention to the modifications of monopolistic capitalism and imperialism now going on in the world since he condemns all political devices that do not have a spiritual or moral base.

He declares the weakening of personal responsibility has led men to lean on social and collective props; "social conscience takes the place of individual conscience."

Morality is imposed only by religion, and, according to his theory, by belief in the guilt of man and the redemption.

He is confident that if western civilization and the Soviet Union come to blows, the resulting disaster will clear the world of its materialistic bias and pave the way for a religious revival along orthodox lines.

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**DISASTER**—John Hersey, whose "Hiroshima" tells graphically the story of the first great man-made disaster of history. "Hiroshima" heads the March list of reprints in the Bantam Books 25 cent series.

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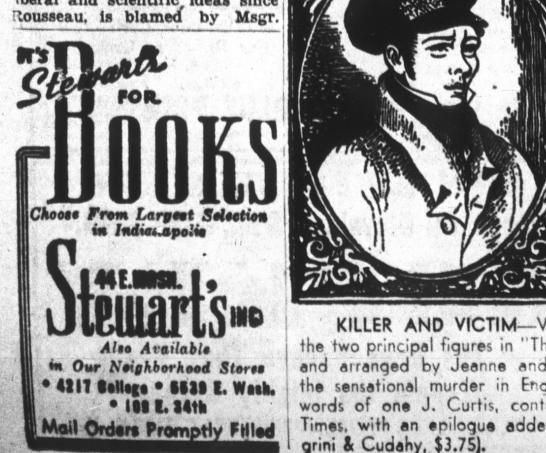
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**BACK FROM WAR—Cowboy Tale Is Amusing And Frank**

"TEMPER THE WIND." A novel. By Clyde Brion Davis. Philadelphia, Lippincott, \$2.75.

"SEND FOR MISS CORA." A novel. By Charley Robertson. New York, Reynal & Hitchcock-Harcourt, \$3.

IN "TEMPER THE WIND" Clyde Brion Davis tells the lively and amusing tale of Cowboy Shandy, garage mechanic, who comes back from the war to Buell, Wyo., with the idea that he can become a prize fighter.

A lightweight boxer, Pete Lopez, taught him the Ketchell shift and other bright steps while in the Navy.

Shandy gets Danny Shaw, sports writer, to be his manager. Danny doesn't know much about boxing and Ruth Cramer, Shandy's girl, doesn't approve of a fighting career, but Shandy thinks it will get him enough dough to buy a garage and marry Ruth.

THE SMALL-TOWN characters around Shandy are stumblebums. Shandy's biggest match with Trexler is an amusing affair different from anything in Bud Shulberg's "The Harder They Fall."

"I didn't hear you say anything about going after Trexler's fat body between rounds," says Shandy to Danny. "If I thought you needed to be told anything so obvious I never would have agreed to manage you," says Danny.

LATER IT TURNS out that Danny placed a bet against his own man. "I hold that a man's a complete simpleton who bets with his sympathies," explains Danny. "My sympathies were entirely with you, but I didn't believe you had experience enough to meet a tough guy like Trexler."

While Mr. Davis makes his characters amusing, he doesn't make fun of them.

A YOUNG FELLOW of 17, working on a tobacco plantation in Kentucky, has a fairly hard time getting himself adjusted to adult ways, especially when his father has been killed by night riders and he is trying to trace

MR. McWILLIAMS isn't too hopeful about chances of educating people infected with prejudice. A good many persons cannot do without the luxury of hates, contempts and feelings of imagined superiority.

The surest cure is what the soundest liberals have urged for many years: A comprehensive program designed to save and revive free enterprise, free competition. It's a tall order, but it may be the only remedy for an increasingly sick society.

Mr. McWilliams' book is undoubtedly the best recent popular work on the subject. It deserves wide reading.

**Perry Writes Lonely Heart**

"THE CASE OF THE LONELY HEIRESS." A novel. By Erie Stanley Gardner. New York, Morrow, \$2.50.

"DEATH OF AN AUTHOR." A novel. By John Rhode. New York, Dodd, Mead, \$2.50.

By DONNA MIKELS

THE prolific author, Erie Stanley Gardner, gets his lawyer-detective, Perry Mason, mixed up in a lonely hearts scheme in

"The Case of the Lonely Heiress," latest of his "Case of . . ." series.

It starts off with Mason and his secretary, Della Street, writing love letters to a girl they've never seen, along with a

Mr. Gardner high mortality rate of the characters involved.

As usual, the smash surprise ending takes place in a courtroom with Perry pulling out legal loopholes faster than rabbits from a magician's hat. It's sure to be entertaining to ESG fans.

IT WOULDN'T seem right if each release of whodunits didn't get someone killed off in merry old England. This time it's a mighty little author in "Death of an Author."

The murder of the quiet little writer and the search for his murderer take the readers through 200 pages of not too sparkling reading.

There's a trick murder gimmick involved that will make an addition to any library of crime fiction. Otherwise, "Death of an Author" is just average whodunit fare.

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