

## The Times Book Page

### THE FIRST READER—By Harry Hansen 'The Time Is Noon' Portrays Young Collegians In Roaring Twenties

"THE TIME IS NOON." A novel. By Hiram Haydn. New York, Crown, \$3.50.

AMERICA'S jazz decade, the 1920s, was the time when the younger generation broke away from all restraints. The World War had brought only disillusion. Prohibition had made guzzling fashionable, and country lanes were lined with pint bottles tossed out of the motor cars. Half-baked Freudianism routed sex reticences and encouraged easy alliances. Literary standards broke down likewise and practically everybody was a poet. But many college graduates still preferred Wall Street to Grub Street.

You must admit that a thoughtful author would find this period ready-made for his purposes. Yet only a few writers have tackled it, and none with much success. Hiram Haydn, novelist and teacher of writing, gets a pretty strong grip on the period in his latest story, "The Time Is Noon." For in these 561 pages he has built convincing, full-length portraits of half a dozen young Americans of college age, and kept the story going at a rapid pace.

IT IS REALLY REMARKABLE how much activity and talk Mr. Haydn has packed into this novel, for most stories about college students get pretty thin. He also manages to portray convincing backgrounds in Florida, Boston, Greenwich Village, Paris, Harlem and Gastonia, N. C., and to convey the air of the times when girls were unsettled by rowdy attentions, rich young men considered the world their door-mat, broken men became boot-leggers, and one or two serious ones threw themselves into social and economic causes.

The latter give Mr. Haydn a chance to portray a young man who works for the underdog. Sol Krassovsky, though a fellow student with Tom Robinson, Lathrop Stone and Charley Hoyt at Emerson College, is an outsider who offends against convention when he attacks Christian ethics in a school paper. Sol is expelled because he won't apologize, and soon thereafter is abused by anti-Semites among the students.

SOL BECOMES the chief protester against the abuses in American democracy. He gets into the fight to free the Gastonia mill workers, who, with Fred Beals in the lead, were accused of murder. Sol clashes with Communist organizers who are exploiting the incident for party purposes. This enables Mr. Haydn to give a pretty clear description of Communist disregard for truth in the interests of strategy. Since the chapter closes with the conviction of the accused, Mr. Haydn does not give the sequel, in which Beals eventually got away.

In portraying the rest of the characters, Mr. Haydn has two capital characters in the girls—Sand Warren and Harriet Hawthorne, but they are unlike any flappers you ever knew. More introspective and mature for their years, perhaps. To what extent their talk and that of the other men will hold your interest depends on whether you find their

**New 'Race' Story Out**

"LOST BOUNDARIES." By W. L. White. New York, Harcourt, Brace, \$1.50.

W. L. WHITE'S little document, "Lost Boundaries," contributes a cheerful note to the writings on race relations.

Mr. White has found a family in Keene, N. H., which long has passed for white but is actually Negro.

Dr. Albert Johnston, a graduate of the University of Chicago and Rush Medical School, said nothing about his race until he was turned down by the Navy; then he told his 17-year-old son. The subsequent testimony tells how it affected the Johnstons and their friends.

THE SON took it earnestly, but suffered a period of readjustment. During part of that time he made a trip across the United States, visiting relatives.

He learned that many members of their family had crossed the color line, and that it was customary for a light-colored Negro to disappear among the whites. The Johnstons feel better now that they are in the open as "colored people."

Apparently they have not been victims of hysteria or of the violent affronts that make up so much of current fiction. Thus Mr. White's book bears testimony that some communities are generous and free from bias.

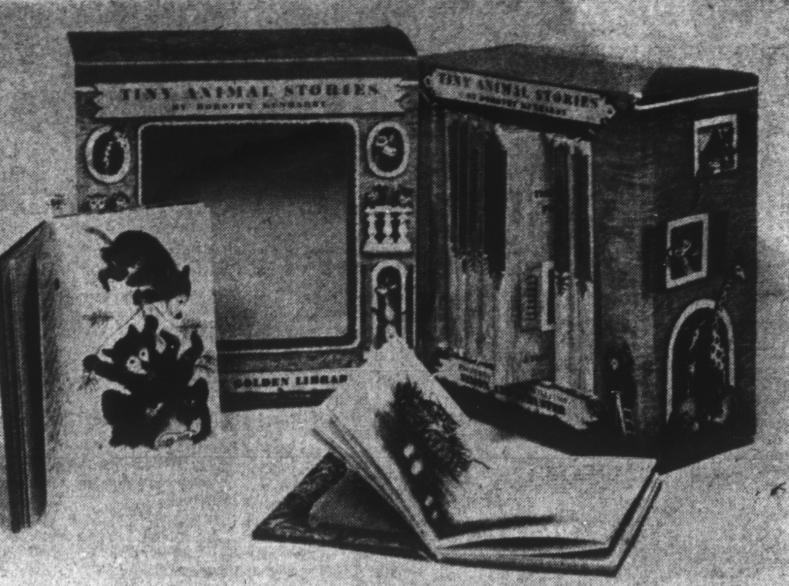
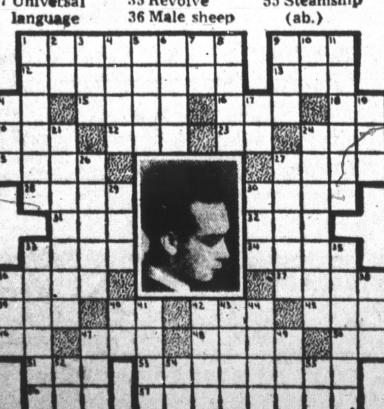
BUT IT SHOULD always be remembered that the Johnstons are very light-colored, and therefore "easy to take." Their race, one of pride in the Negro race, is to be commended.—H. H.

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39 Social insect	27
40 Ether	28
42 Chum	29
45 Saints (ab.)	30
46 Parent	31
47 Harem room	32
48 High notes of	33
Guido's scale	34
50 Near	35
51 Sesame	36
53 Least ripe	37
56 Conclusion	38
57 Denial	39



**FIVE-INCH BOOKSHELF**—This set of 12 miniature volumes with its colorful little bookshelf is "Tiny Animal Stories," by Dorothy Kunhardt, first of a new Simon & Schuster children's series called the Tiny Golden Library. Each little book has stories of different animals with illustrations by Garth Williams (\$1 the set).

### Max Eastman's Autobiography Is a Frank Account of the Harm Virtue Can Do

"ENJOYMENT OF LIVING." An autobiography. By Max Eastman. New York, Harper, \$5.

BY HENRY BUTLER

MAX EASTMAN'S autobiography, "Enjoyment of Living," is one of the frankest recent accounts of the harm virtue can do.

That statement is not a perverse paradox. Both Mr. Eastman's parents—his preacher-father, Samuel, and his mother, Annie Ford Eastman, probably the most eminent woman preacher of her generation—were distinguished for high moral principles, active conscience, both personal and social, and genuine kindness.

MAX'S MOTHER, far more gifted and imaginative than her husband, particularly exemplified the best liberal-Christian tradition of her time. And yet her life, and by subtle influence her son's life, were somehow blighted by the very moral earnestness which 40 or 50 years ago was supposed to make people not only good but happy.

In such forceful and successful books as "The Literary Mind" and "Enjoyment of Laughter" Mr. Eastman impressed me as a vigorous personality—sensitive, no doubt, but not neurotic. Now comes his autobiography with a confession as candid as Rousseau's of personality difficulties. Mr. Eastman's trouble in adolescence and young manhood was the familiar conflict between normal attractions and puritanical inhibitions. Despite all the loud rancor of recent decades, the conflict still persists and psychiatrists make a good living from it.

WE MAY HAVE to wait for the second installment of the Kinsey Report to find out with some accuracy what the ideal of saintly purity has done to American womanhood. Writers like Phillip Wylie and more recently Geoffrey Gorer ("The American People: A Study in National Character"—Norton, \$3) have attacked that ideal as gravely harmful.

It seems to have made Max Eastman's mother unhappy. Marriage and the facts of life seem somehow to have given her a profound shock from which she never fully recovered. She felt guilty. She felt that she had failed her husband, and tried to compensate for her sense of failure by being tenderly, passionately devoted to her four children.

When her eldest son died in

1933, he was a 40 Alleged force from Guatemala 42 Equal 44 Narrow way 46 Stage play 48 Worshippers 49 Ocean 50 Belongs to it 52 Preposition 54 Symbol for ruthenium 55 Steamship (ab.)

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57 Denial

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59 Tatters

60 Equal

61 Fish sauce

62 Stage play

63 Revolve

64 Male sheep

65 Steamship (ab.)

66 Male sheep

67 Denial

68 Harden

69 Tatters

70 Equal

71 Fish sauce

72 Stage play

73 Revolve

74 Male sheep

75 Steamship (ab.)

76 Denial

77 Harden

78 Tatters

79 Equal

80 Fish sauce

81 Stage play

82 Revolve

83 Male sheep

84 Steamship (ab.)

85 Denial

86 Harden

87 Tatters

88 Equal

89 Fish sauce

90 Stage play

91 Revolve

92 Male sheep

93 Steamship (ab.)

94 Denial

95 Harden

96 Tatters

97 Equal

98 Fish sauce

99 Stage play

100 Revolve

101 Male sheep

102 Steamship (ab.)

103 Denial

104 Harden

105 Tatters

106 Equal

107 Fish sauce

108 Stage play

109 Revolve

110 Male sheep

111 Steamship (ab.)

112 Denial

113 Harden

114 Tatters

115 Equal

116 Fish sauce

117 Stage play

118 Revolve

119 Male sheep