

worlds, with a pinch of salt (though not perhaps a big enough one for most of us). At the same time she makes it clear that even if much that Swedenborg regarded as coming from heaven is to be put down as his own subconscious musing, it is the subconscious musing of a most remarkable man. Swedenborg's descriptions of the spirit-world show an originality of imagination, a moral insight, and even touches of humour, that are not to be found in the standardised trivialities on the subject given forth by the average spiritualistic medium. His religion, moreover, has had some remarkable offshoots. Miss Toksvig makes use here and there of William James's *Varieties of Religious Experience*, but does not mention that James's father was a Swedenborgian; nor that Swedenborgianism provided the background to the writings of William Blake.

—A.N.P.

### DUSTY DEATH

*THE LITTLE SISTER*, by Raymond Chandler; Hamish Hamilton. English price, 8/6.

*THREE OF HEARTS*, by James M. Cain; Robert Hale. English price, 10/6.

*THE KING AND THE CORPSE*, by Max Murray; Michael Joseph. English price, 8/6.

TOUGHNESS is not quite everything in the thrillers of Raymond Chandler. Four or five murders are committed before Philip Marlowe breaks through the intrigue which surrounds the rather dowdy young woman who brings him his latest case, and between the murders there is the usual amount of incidental violence and amorous dalliance. But Chandler also has an eye for social drabness beneath the bright Californian sunlight, and he reveals it with a dry and searching clarity.

James M. Cain is less subtle than Chandler. He follows the cult of violence more intently, and although he seems anxious to convince the reader that he, too, is looking for reality, the feeling remains that small-time gangsters, wantons of the frontier towns, and pervers in the Appalachian highlands reveal somewhat limited facets of the human situation.

Max Murray has been welcomed as "an admirable newcomer to detective fiction." He seems a little insipid after the Americans; and the smooth writing, although refreshing, does not leave an impression of impenetrable mystery. The King comes from a Danubian State where murder, it seems, is not to be taken too seriously; and the Corpse is all that remains of a character so unpleasant that the reader's sympathies are entirely with the killer. But justice is served in the tidy ending.

### EMETT'S WORLD

*BUFFERS END*, by Emmett; Faber and Faber, London. English price, 12/6.

THIS is the fifth collection of Emmett's drawings from *Punch*. The artist is now so much of an institution that it may be necessary to say little more than that the new book is available. Emmett has not declined from his high standards of fantasy. He is still the inventor and master of aged locomotives, of woodland scenes where mechanical strangeness becomes credible, and of men with the legs of birds who remain imperturbable while the oddest things are happening around them.

—H.

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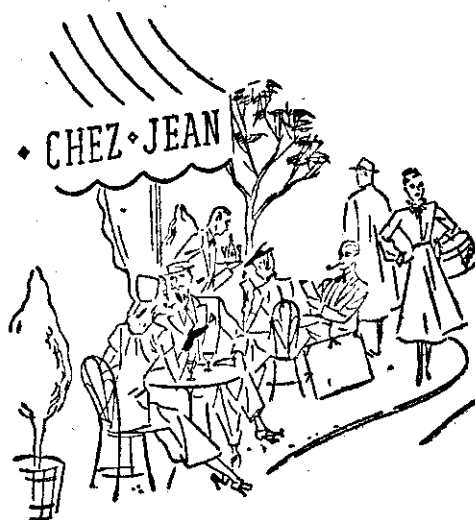
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