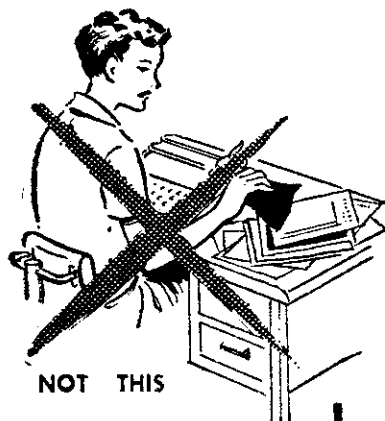


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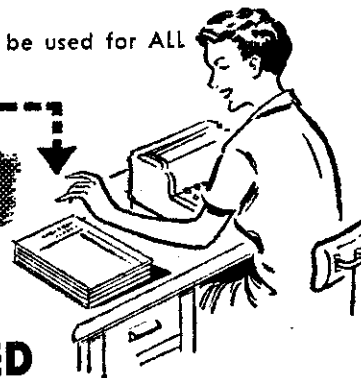
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BOOKS

(continued from previous page)

Of them all *The Gallows and the Cross* impresses the most, by its passionate sincerity and its measured, unvarnished style. It is hard to tell where, if anywhere, fiction enters into this journal of a Hungarian Catholic prison chaplain. With a mounting horror at his gradual identification with the processes of the law, and at hanging itself, the priest, despite his desire to serve God, comes to find himself at one with the men he accompanies to the gallows. His final protest—helping a condemned prisoner to escape—leads to his own imprisonment. But we are not left with any sense of waste. The graphic descriptions of hangings and the sober drama of the priest's soul stir our pity and horror, making this moving plea against capital punishment a challenge to the conscience of every reader.

Translated from the German, *Eroica* is a biography of Beethoven, supposedly written by Nikolaus von Zmeskall, who was actually a friend of the composer. Herr Pidoll keeps so close to the facts that it is difficult to understand why he did not write a straight biography, unless he needed the mask of von Zmeskall to comment on Beethoven's philosophy from a contemporary viewpoint. Although the musical sections are fine, the lengthy and serious expositions of Beethoven's ideas, by contrast with Rolland and Sullivan, seemed to me woolly when they were not Teutonically dull.

A. M. Maugham's novel, following King Henry V. from boyhood through Shrewsbury and Agincourt to his early death, is, of its kind, better than most, if not as good as some. It is scholarly, intelligent, lively, without too many embellishments, and refreshingly noblehearted. But I did miss Falstaff.

—J.C.R.

BROADSIDE

THE DEMON OF PROGRESS IN THE ARTS, by Wyndham Lewis; Methuen, English price 12/6.

WRITING from a background of personal experience—for he considers that back in 1913 he was himself the first British extremist, who fortunately didn't mature—Mr. Wyndham Lewis sets out to define the "disease" of extremism in the arts and to attack it. It is not, he says, easy to identify (he does not, for example, object to the extremism of Henry Moore or Graham Sutherland), but he believes that beyond a certain well-defined line, which no one not an artist can ever in fact see, there is nothing. Followed with close attention, the ideas which bristle in this book should leave all who read it better able to make up their own minds.

—F.A.J.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

SNAPDRAGON, a collection of queer stories, edited by Mervyn Savill; Arthur Barker, English price 12/6. Some of these stories, by famous writers, have not appeared in previous anthologies; and all of them are interesting.

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