

paper makers, embroiderers: in the seductive heat of the Ticino grow maize and figs and almonds.

How all this came about is not very well known to us, for most of the authorities have written in German. This book now tells us the reasons—from Celtic and Roman times to the Nazis and the International Red Cross. Up to 1789 the story is fresh and stimulating. The modern section is dull and lacking in analysis. However, the results of recent research contained in the book are themselves sufficient to make it a valuable addition to the historian's library.

—W. B. Sutch

ANOTHER CRIME WAVE

DEATH AT CRANE'S COURT. by Ellis Dillon; Faber and Faber. English price, 10 6.
LAST SEEN WEARING. by Hilary Waugh; Victor Gollancz. English price, 9 6.
OBIT DELAYED. by Helen Nielsen; Victor Gollancz. English price, 9 6.
THE QUEEN'S AWARDS. Series 6, edited by Ellery Queen; Victor Gollancz. English price, 10 6.
BEWARE OF THE TRAINS (short stories), by Edmund Crispin; Victor Gollancz. English price, 9 6.
THE NABOB'S JEWEL. by C. A. Alington; Faber and Faber. English price, 10 6.
THIS IS JEZEBEL. by Desmond Corry; The Shakespeare Head. Australian price, 12 6.

A WRITER who shows exceptional quality in her first detective story deserves first place in this consignment. The Crane's Court to which violent death comes is an old country home in Galway, a comfortable hostel for an assortment of middle-aged oddities. They are joined by a young Irishman condemned to semi-invalidism by a doctor who turns out to have been a fool. Miss Dillon's writing has wit and charm, the people are deftly drawn, and a pleasant Irish tang of landscape and character pervades the tale. The presiding police detective is subtly different from what we would expect from Scotland Yard. The only thing wrong with the story is the murders, but don't let that deter you.

To some the theme and details of Hilary Waugh's *Last Seen Wearing* will be repellent. One may wonder whether this story of sex relationships in an American University was suggested by the Kinsey Report. But as a piece of detection it is masterly. Faced with a case that looks hopeless, the police dig and dig till they strike the right lead. Like the Inspector French tales from England, this illustrates with outstanding force the truth that police work is hard, patient, back-breaking grind.

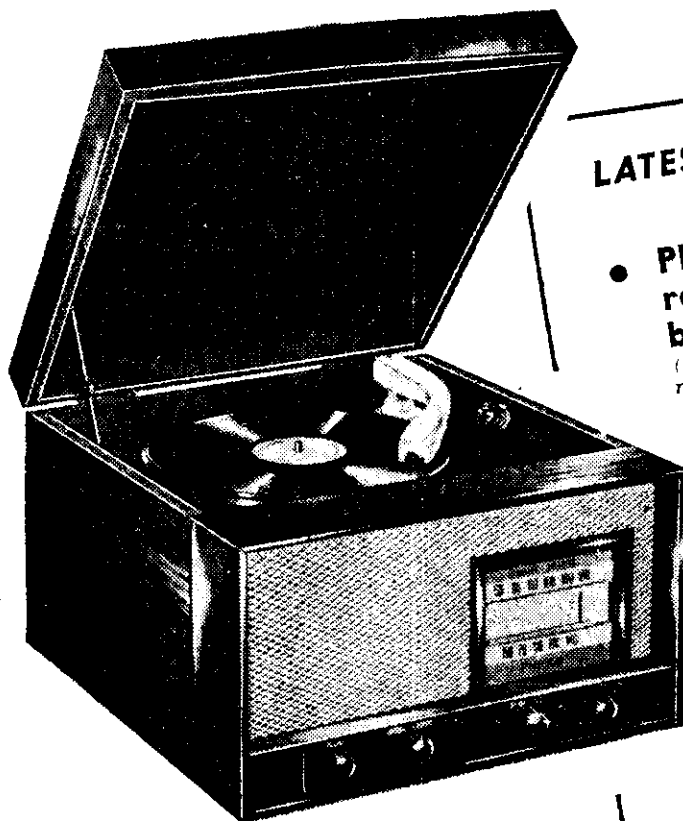
On the other hand, after Helen Nielsen's first two books, I find *Obit Delayed* disappointing. There is plenty of excitement in her story of an American-Mexican town, but in their murk of crime and corruption the characters are less interesting, and the author's style has become too knobbly and prickly. Even in crime stories, readers should not be asked to go through barbed wire.

The sixth series of Ellery Queen's Awards comes without the introduction that has been an agreeable feature of these volumes. The authors of the 13 stories include Roy Vickers, who writes an exceptionally good psychological study, Lord Dunsany, and C. S. Forester. Alas, the contribution by the creator of Horatio Hornblower reminds me of the review of Browning's first poem—"a piece of pure bewilderment."

Also to be recommended to those who like short crime stories is Edmund Crispin's *Beware of the Trains*. These 16 tales display the ingenuity and erudition that have made Crispin a notable figure in detective fiction. The amateur Gervase Fen is in his usual form, but Crispin wisely gives the official police things

(continued on next page)

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