

## BOOK RECORD

# Hair-Raising Confessions Of Confirmed Drug Addict

## Miserable Life of Dope And Crime Revealed By Former "Fiend"

**N**OT since "Asylum," William Seabrook's epic of the D.T.'s, have I read anything to equal, in its own seamy way, "Shot Full—The Autobiography of a Drug Addict," by Francis Chester.

The author—"that rare specimen, the reformed dope-fiend"—led for over twenty years a life of crime and vice, originating in what appeared at the time a perfectly harmless "taste" at a cocaine orgy.

"I was invited to take part in a 'snow party.' I was overwhelmed with the curiosity of youth ('I'll try anything once,' I thought), quite ignorant that I was playing with the fiercest fire that can devour flesh and blood."

Mr. Chester's subsequent revelations startle you one minute, sicken you the next. He makes no at-

tempt to gloss over anything. The language he employs in telling his appalling story is mostly in the underworld vernacular of America and England, in both of which countries he pursued his drug-sodden and lawless way, until at long last he not only conquered his vice, but, joining forces at Home with Scotland Yard, was largely responsible for cleaning up the drug traffic in Liverpool, and London's Chinatown.

### Short Of Murder

Like all drug addicts, Mr. Chester stopped at little short of murder in his frenzied attempts to obtain money with which to keep himself steadily "shot full." He was not a "one dope" man; he used any narcotic he could get—opium, cocaine, heroin—anything.

There is only one thing more pitiful than a confirmed drug-taker, and that is a drug-taker deprived of his dope. He will go to amazing lengths in his frantic determination to satisfy his awful craving.

Positively harrowing is a chapter in his book ("Deprived and Depraved") in which he describes what he went through when, on one occasion, his incarceration in prison prevented his getting drugs.

"When I lay down it was not to sleep. The 'yen,' as the Chinese call deprivation of drugs, was full upon me. My joints started to ache... and the night seemed like the eternity of the damned. Towards morning a terrible tearing at my vitals developed.... It was as if every joint in my body was parched with thirst. So terrible was it that I wound the pillow-case round one knee and a towel round the other, to prevent them from rubbing together...."

In his time, Mr. Chester associated with every kind of criminal, from the common "spieler" to the white-slaver, and he was in every conceivable sort of racket. He exposes many of the tricks employed to fleece the gullible public by unscrupulous sideshowmen at fairs, carnivals, etc.

At a carnival in Utica he "became a 'grifter.'" "This consists of working an apparatus somewhat like a roulette wheel, except that at roulette it is possible to win."

### The Secret Bond

Most astounding are Mr. Chester's revelations of the manner in which drug-fiends throughout the world are bound together by their common vice, and the devices by which, in strange towns, they seek each other out, almost by instinct, and obtain supplies, even though they be in hospital or prison.

Chester's struggle to "break his fetters" and his ultimate reformation make telling reading. So strongly did he conquer his craving and regain his self-control that, when he came to associate with the English police in breaking up drug rings, he was able to smoke opium in Chinese dens to allay suspicion, without wanting at any time to go back permanently to the habit.

"Shot Full" is positively encyclopaedic in its slang and underworld jargon. And it contains the answer to anyone who is toying with the idea of giving dope a trial. That answer is "DON'T!"—A.R.M.

"Shot Full—The Autobiography of a Drug Addict" (Francis Chester: Methuen, London). Our copy from the publishers.

## All In The Cause Of Glamour

"GLAMOUR" is one of those strange twentieth century words that seem to the average mind synonymous with Hollywood and cosmetics.

A new champion of glamour is Sali Lobel, whose book, "Glamour and How to Achieve It," contains all the tricks, diets, exercises and mental gymnastics that have been foisted on a glamour-conscious world by the "beauticians."

Miss Lobel's book, profusely illustrated with portraits of herself, is particularly practical in its corrective exercise section, with handy information on keeping and getting the weight down. Chapters called "Fit and Forty—Young for Ever" and "Six Nightmare Figure Troubles" give one a fair indication of the trend of "Glamour and How To Achieve It."

Miss Lobel admits that English is to her a foreign language, and her sincere attempts at colloquial expressions have an unintentionally humorous angle for the purist. —M.M.

"Glamour and How to Achieve It" (Sali Lobel: Hutchinson, London). Our copy from the publishers.

### Conflict Of Opinion

Sir Stafford Cripps says: "A great book, which will bring enlightenment and a real gospel of humanity to those who read it—and may they be many for the world's good! One of the most absorbing novels that could be read."

Personally, I am inclined to advance the opinion that the sexual side of "The Bride Cometh" will be remembered long after the clever word-pictures and descriptive phrases, which go to make up a bulky volume, are forgotten. —W.F.I.

"The Bride Cometh" (Waldo Frank: Victor Gollancz, London). Our copy from the publishers.

## Emphasis On Sex Overrides Clever Word Pictures Sly Digs At Modern Christianity

**H**ERE is an unusual story, written in an unusual style; a style difficult to understand until 200 pages of the 702 which are taken to reach a disappointing climax have been read.

The story opens at a baptising ceremony being practised by a strange religious cult. To use a moving-picture expression, "flash backs" are used to allow Mary Donald an opportunity to give her thoughts—often super-imposed on her quoted words. Most annoying.

Mary has a twin sister, Martha, and author Waldo Frank embarks on excessive verbiage to detail in a most complete and unashamed manner their essays into sexual adventures.

Four or five sections in "The Bride Cometh" must have passed the censor by a "whisker!"

### Religious Upbringing

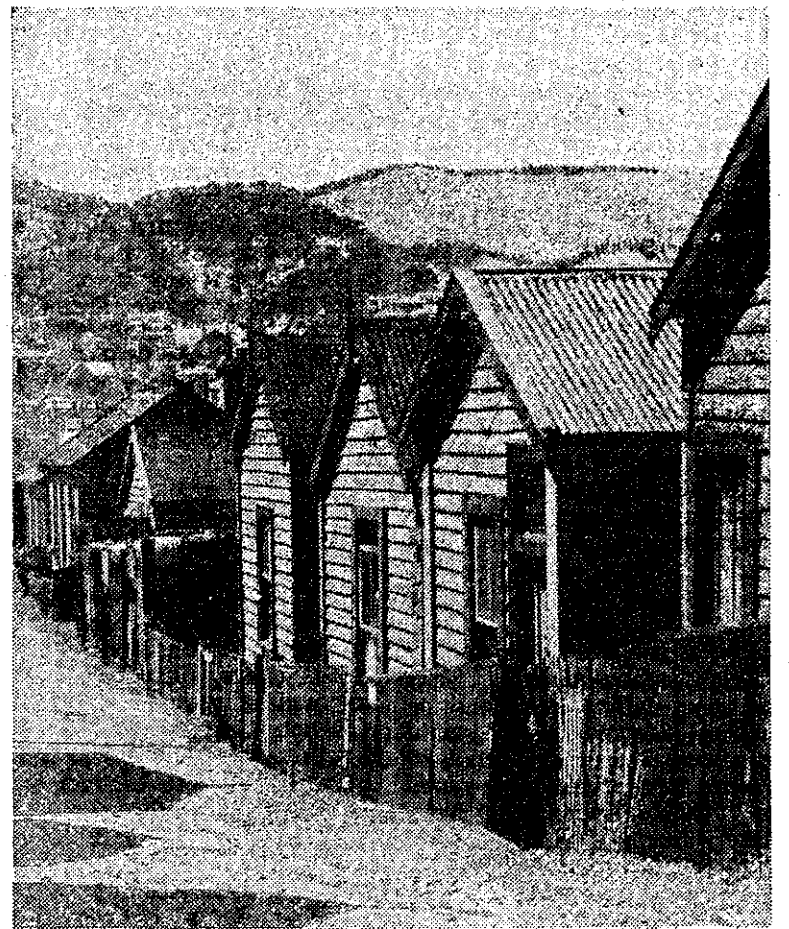
This is a book which denounces the form of Christianity which stifles the natural urge of growing children; it demonstrates, too, what is well known to many—that a too-strict "religious upbringing" invariably sees the "restricted children" going into the world and "going astray."

Martha married a bootlegger, but otherwise kept to the straight and narrow path! Mary married a young Jewish business magnate, but her "sympathy" for certain characters in the story allowed her to indulge in adultery—without a y remorse.

Communism is also given prominence in "The Bride Cometh"; Waldo Frank apparently has his views on Christianity and Communism, and has indulged in a shy criticism of both beliefs. He infers that "modern Christianity" could do with a little "practical Communism."

The portion I liked best read:—

"Throughout the Republic, business men leave their task of



★ WHERE VICE BREEDS FAST.—Opium smoking is rife in New Zealand as well as the metropolitan cities overseas. Against the background of the lovely Wellington hills one can see the plague spots of the slums. Picture gives a glimpse of one of these areas near Wellington's Haining Street, centre of the capital's drug and opium area. ★

## Novel That Makes The Reader Laugh Out Loud

### Fast Excitement On A Half Holiday

"THE ocean monarch, s.s. pale blue eyes, bow legs, and a rolling gait. This being the first occasion upon which he had ventured from the land of his birth, he had devoted a great deal of time and thought to the matter of personal apparel. What he wanted was something bright and cheerful—something which could be relied upon to attract favourable attention in any gathering. In search of this ideal he had run to earth the suit he now wore. It was of a pleasing shade of yellow, marked out in four-inch squares, with a wide, green stripe. The effect, already arresting, was completed by bright yellow boots, a white panama hat with a purple band, and a green tie which had broken out in a rash of red rose-buds."

The scenes of action in "Half Holiday" are laid in Cornwall, where a young American cowboy-pro prospector-miner has inherited an ancient castle—a castle stocked with rare old brandy.

Bootleggers come from America and disturb the peaceful Cornish villages. A pretty girl, an eccentric servant, a bunch of avaricious relatives and a "bulb-eating vegetarian" all unite to make "Half Holiday" a most amusing book—one that can be read over and over again.—W.F.I.

"Half Holiday" (Butler: Stanley Paul, London). Our copy from the publishers.

### One Laughs Loud

In this style, "Half Holiday" is one of the most amusing books I have ever read. Not since I browsed through "The Booming of Bunkie" (A. S. McNeil) have I found a book which made me laugh out loud, but "Half Holiday," with its impossible, but clever, situations, had just that effect on me.

Joan Butler has a gift of describing characters which immediately brings them to life. For instance, Mr. Snecker "... was a short, broad young man, with a red face, which looked as if it had been mauled by bears, a broken nose,

## Fascinating Series Of Short Stories

SIXTEEN short stories go to make "Old Sailors Never Lie" an interesting book. The title is the weakest part of the book—it conveys little of the good things contained in the 238 pages.

The author of "The Blue Lagoon" does not spare himself in the variety of entertainment provided. His stories range from humour to

tragedy and take in several baffling murders.

Of the 16 stories which go to make "Old Sailors Never Lie" worth while, I liked best that entitled "The Man Who Had Lived." In this clever little story the author shows that O. Henry was not the only writer capable of giving a master twist to a story; the climax makes an appeal which, to my mind, gives this story pride of place among a series of outstanding chapters.—W.F.I.

"Old Sailors Never Lie" (H. de Vere Stacpoole: Hutchinson, London). Our copy from the publishers.