

sticks and twigs," meaning bows and arrows. A people one evolutionary notch above them invades. The newcomers have advanced—if that's the direction—far enough to comb hair, portage canoes, brew drinks, sacrifice to the gods, and slay with bow and arrow.

Golding is best known for "Lord of the Flies." In that novel boys beyond the reach of civilization's sanctions revert to savagery. In this, the "inheritors," who take on civilization's attributes, cling brutally to savage traits. Golding has got his target boxed in, but it remains to be decided at just what point human nature is ideal.

This is an even better story than the other. It's not so hard as you think to sympathize with Neanderthal man, his spirit of fun, his appetites, satisfactions, and griefs. You share his terror at the "civilized" invaders.

In a way this is a sort of animal story, with Lok and Fa as faithful, trustworthy, and loving as horse and dog. William Golding has an uncanny skill in showing how the rudimentary mind works; and there's always a warm heart along with it.

THE RIGHTS OF WHITES: "The Wahindi was saying something now about there being a herd of zebras in the street last night, and the DC still complaining about elephants tearing up the planting in the *boma*, and Brian was scarcely listening because he was thinking that, having said *kwaheri* to Ololokwe, he would soon be saying *jambo* to Kerinyagga, majestic, snow-wigged, stern-faced, snaggle-toothed Mount Kenya, where God lived when He was home."

To toss off sentences like the tortured thing above requires a broad knowledge of Africa and an indifference to the finer points of writing. Robert Ruark proves that he has both throughout "Uhuru" (McGraw-Hill, \$5.95), his longish "novel of Africa today."

There is no sense in trying to recount the plotwork. For most of its length the book follows a white hunter who seems to be the major character, then drops him in favor of an African leader whose career is about to go down the drain. There are scores of lesser white and black characters throughout, each occasionally coming to the fore when needed. The whites are mostly planters fighting for their lands and rights

against the blacks, who are either schemers and rogues or loyal, ignorant "Uncle Tom" types. There is little doubt where the author's sympathies lie in what pretends to be an impartial fictional examination of the upheaval caused by the coming of *uhuru* (freedom) to the Dark Continent.

Since Mr. Ruark's work can neither be taken seriously in terms of fiction nor trusted in terms of objectivity, of what value is it? I think the answer lies in the treasure trove of fractured English it contains. Certainly when I've long forgotten "Ship of Fools" and "War and Peace" I will be able to warm myself in front of the fireplace, stroke the dog, and chuckle over any of the following:

"She walked off to the mess tent looking, Brian thought, even more attractive in her well-cut slacks from the rear than she did from the front. . . ."

"She was foamily brushing the sleeping-pill taste out of her mouth. . . ."

"From his upper lip downward. . . ."

—HASKEL FRANKEL.

FATAL CHARIVARI: Angel Maria de Lera is a Spanish author who, one would guess from his brief biography, found himself on the losing side in the Spanish Civil War, and began writing novels after holding a variety of odd jobs. His "The Horns of Fear" has already been published here; his new book, "The Wedding" (Dutton, \$3.95), appeared in Spain in 1959.

"The Wedding" is a very simple story, built up into a novel by an elaborate and leisurely filling in of details. A rich widower returns from Africa, where he made his fortune, to a village in his native Spain. He sets out to marry a pretty young village girl; and, although he arranges the marriage as properly and as liberally as possible, the villagers resent him from the start. A violent antagonism builds up against him; he has become a "foreigner" to them, a "nigger," and he has no right to marry a young girl. It is the local custom that a young couple's wedding night be disturbed by practical jokes of a doubtful character. In the case of the rich "foreigner" these end—as we knew from the start they would—in tragedy.

The story is well told, and adequately translated by Stephen Kaye. It is not Angel de Lera's fault that we keep expecting something more, that we wait for some hidden meaning to emerge. This novel, and the very choice of its subject, have a stifled air; and I would guess that such is the fate of much writing under a censorship as stringent and whimsical as that which the present Spanish government has established.

—HANS KONINGSBERGER.

HERBA, SANTA AND AQUA VITAE:

Tobacco, the "sacred herb," was once thought a cure for everything from asthma to plague; grain spirit is called "Water of Life" in nearly every language, including Gaelic (which gives us our "whisky.") The fascinating history of these and other familiar items is contained in "Folklore and Odysseys of Food and Medicinal Plants," by Ernst and Johanna Lehner (Tudor, 4.95).



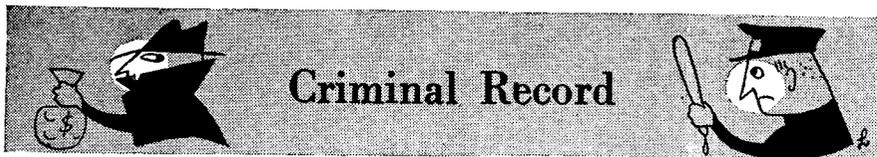
Sir John Barleycorn, from an English chapbook, 18th century.



Vintagers, from Crescenzi's "Opus Commodorum Ruralium," 1493.



Drunkard, from Berger's "Spiegel Menschlicher Behaltnes," 1489.



Criminal Record

THE SHAPES OF SLEEP. By J. B. Priestley. Doubleday. \$3.75. English freelance writer takes on cloak-and-daggerish assignment which includes grand tour of West Germany; philately figures; people die. This hand has not lost its cunning.

HOME AND MURDER: By Aaron Marc Stein. Crime Club. \$3.50. New York engineer accepts water-supply job in Virgin Islands only to find that homicide has priority over hydrology. Flip and feral.

FULL TERM. By Philip Spencer. British Book Centre. \$3.50. A staid Oxford college becomes unstead when sharp-tongued don gets his comeuppance; Superintendent Gribble (good man) has faculty assistance. Erudite, and told with great good humor.

THE PRAYING MANTISES. By Hubert Monteilhet. Translated from the French by Richard Howard. Simon & Schuster. \$3.50. Two unprincipled Frenchwomen are the catalytic agents in this deadly little *chef d'oeuvre*, which took a *grand prix* for *la littérature policière*. Documents tell the story.

PRISONER'S FRIEND. By Andrew Garve. Harper. \$3.50. English veterinarian is jolted when youthful parolee becomes murder suspect. Was it a frame or wasn't it? Usual superior performance.

THE AMBER EYES. By Frances Crane. Random House. \$3.50. Pat and Jean Abbott, San Francisco sleuthing team, investigate two deaths (one a retarded child) in extremely wacky family next door. Highly talkative.

CORMORANT'S ISLE. By Allan MacKinnon. Crime Club. \$3.50. Kilt-clad professional photographer has devil of a time when cops tag him as kidnapper of diplomat's young son; chase takes in Lowlands, England, Highlands. Lively roughhouse all the way.

THE GRAVESIDE COMPANION. Edited by J. Francis McComas. Obolensky. \$4.50. This anthology of California murders narrates eight fact crimes in detail and has a terminal summary by the editor that packs several cases into one bundle. A natural for the true-tale fan.

HEAR THE STRIPPER SCREAM. By Peter Cagney. Roy. \$2.95. Mike Strang, West

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Coast eye, takes on undescribed job for tycoon (is it blackmail or kidnapping?); there are dead. Population explosion.

THE BORDERS OF BARBARISM. By Eric Williams. Coward-McCann. \$3.95. British world-roving couple accept undiplomatic mission in Yugoslavia that has its roots in Second World War; Tito unlikely. Grown-up adventure-suspense number.

WINDOW ON THE SQUARE. By Phyllis A. Whitney. Appleton-Century-Crofts. \$4.95. Young New York woman takes post as sitter for problem child (male) in posh town-house (time 1870s); runs into oddballs, killings. Fine period piece, but just a bit drawn out.

IT'S TIME TO TELL. By George P. Le Brun, as told to Edward D. Radin. Morrow. \$3.75. Ex-New York Board of Coroners official (he turned 100 July 27) gives briskly readable account of many notable murders that came under his jurisdiction.

SEEN DIMLY BEFORE DAWN. By Nigel Balchin. Simon & Schuster. \$3.75. Cal-low English schoolboy falls for uncle's consort but draws line at murder. Delightful comedy all the way.

BEST DETECTIVE STORIES OF THE YEAR: 17th Annual Collection. Edited by Brett Halliday. Dutton. \$3.95. Eighteen short tales ranging from soft-boiled to hard, but chosen from only five media, make up latest selection.

THE LADY FINGER. By George Malcolm-Smith. Crime Club. \$3.50. Otis Minton, Connecticut claim agent, motors to Boston when bank is heisted for 250 Gs; Hub cops, FBI, also in on hunt. Excellent action.

SEANCE. By Mark McShane. Crime Club. \$2.95. English medium (not a fake) and hubby concoct snatch plot solely to increase her reputation in psychic research field, but the best-laid plans. . . . A heart-renderer.

THE TESTAMENT OF CASPAR SCHULTZ. By Martin Fallon. Abelard-Schuman. \$2.95. Paul Chavasse, British secret agent, explores West Germany in hunt for memoirs of high Nazi official; deaths litter trail. Orthodox spy thriller.

THE EVIL WISH. By Jean Potts. Scribners. \$3.50. New York spinsisters irked when widower pop plans remarriage; they plot his demise, but destiny takes a hand. Interesting study in psychological suspense.

PRACTITIONERS OF MURDER. By Charles Boswell and Lewis Thompson. Collier Books. 95¢ (paperback). Ten true tales from all over (mainly U.S.) in which the homicidists were M.D.'s who were "traitors to Hippocrates." Ingenious idea, effectively carried out.

SUICIDE OR MURDER? By Vardis Fisher. Alan Swallow, Denver 10, Colorado. \$4.95. An accredited novelist-historian here examines the mysterious death in Tennessee, in 1809, of the leader of the Lewis and Clark expedition. Excellent post-mortem, with good summaries of conclusions reached by previous commentators. —SERGEANT CUFF.

