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Service Club Libraries Crammed With Many New, Outstanding Books.

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By T/3 KLAUS MANN.

This is the traditional season of literary novelties—paper shortage or not. The publishers are busy, and so are the librarians of our Service Clubs. There is an abundance of new titles—far too many to mention here all of them. So I'll try to pick out a few samples which seem to me particularly interesting and recommendable, for various reasons and from different points of view.

MUSIC: "The Music Lover's Handbook," edited by Ellie Siegmeister. A rich, well-organized collection of essays about musical subjects, written by distinguished music critics and composers. Although not all the contributions are on the same high intellectual level, every reader interested in the subject will find plenty of stimulating material. The opening part of the book deals with the basic musical patterns—folk song, fugue, sonata, oratorio, symphony, and so forth; the second part, "In the Concert Hall," is devoted to the analysis of various celebrated compositions, including works by the old masters and the contemporary experimenters—from Bach and Handel over Brahms and Wagner to Stravinski and Shostakovich. Follows a series of character sketches, "Meet the Composer," a group of articles on modern musical styles and tendencies, and a concluding chapter about American music—yesterday, today and tomorrow.

HUMAN DRAMA: "The Trespassers," a novel by Laura Z. Hobson. The first full-length book of an experienced, shrewd and upright woman journalist. A kind of double novel, or rather, two novels woven into one: on the one hand the complicated, frustrated romance of a brilliant American woman, Vera Marriner, and Jasper Crown, the radio magnate and erratic adventurer; on the other hand, the tragic Odyssey of a Viennese psychiatrist, Dr. Franz Vederle, who escapes with his family when the Nazis invade Austria, and, after a long and painful period of waiting and wandering, finds a new home and new hope in the United States, thanks to Vera's helpful energy. A critical reader might note that the two themes—the analytical love story and the dismal saga of exile—do not always fuse quite flawlessly. Be this as it may, the book is unusually readable, rich in clever observations and full of a warm, authentic human feeling. At once moving and entertaining, it occupies rightfully its place on the national best-seller lists.

UNDERGROUND: "Under Cover," by John Roy Carlson. The sensational inside story of Fifth Column activities in the United States—reported by a keen and courageous observer who devoted all his time and wit, for the past 10 years, to the thorough study of America's Nazi underworld. He doesn't mince words, but specifies his charges and supports them with ample documentation—revealing, mercilessly, the shady purposes and tactics of certain organizations and individuals. On the black list of this bold and exact accuser appear the names of senators and society ladies, little crooks and powerful business men, irresponsible adventurers and morbid fanatics. A stirring document and a grim warning to all of us, not to indulge in

the complacent illusion that "it can't happen here." Factual, almost dry, yet exciting and provocative. The most-discussed book of the year.

"Paris Underground," by Etta Shiber. A mild and cultivated American woman of some 60 years and her British-born woman friend became, almost by accident, the initiators and leading figures of an underground organization in Paris, through which many British soldiers escaped from Nazi-occupied France in 1940. It's an amazing, admirable story of clever wiles and unselfish heroism—told by the main character, Mrs. Shiber, herself with remarkable tact and candor. She and her spirited companion, Kitty Beaurepos, were finally caught by the Nazi Secret Police. Mrs. Beaurepos, sentenced to death, was taken to Germany; nobody knows if she is still alive. As for Mrs. Shiber, she survived the terrible months in a Nazi prison and was later exchanged for a Nazi agent in the United States—Johanna Hoffmann, the notorious "hairdresser spy" of the "Bremen." So this extraordinary woman—Etta Shiber of America—was free to return to her homeland and to write for us the most striking account that has yet come from this mysterious theater of war—the underground front in Europe.

WOMEN: "Dress Right, Dress: The Story of the WACs," by Margaret Flint. A lively and accurate survey of what our female comrades experience in this man's (and woman's) army. Couched in the form of a personal diary, in which a typical WAC tells us, candidly and unassumingly, all about her work and her fun, her little worries and satisfactions—from her arrival at Des Moines, where she takes her basic military training, up to the day of her admission to Pcs. Light, yet instructive reading. An appropriate gift for your girl friend, if you want her to join the army but would like her to know what she is in for before she makes up her mind.

MEN: "The Battle Is the Pay-Off," by Capt. Ralph Ingersoll. This is not a newspaper man speaking—not Ralph Ingersoll, the well-known journalist and editor of "P. M."; this is a soldier's book: the precise description of what an American officer, Capt. Ingersoll, observed and experienced during one day of fighting in the North African campaign. Place: a few square miles of Tunisian mountains near El Guettar, on the road from Gafsa to Sfax. Acting persons: 1,500 Italian soldiers who try to hold a strategically important mountain pass, and about 500 American Rangers who try to take the pass away from them. The Americans win, at the cost of some American lives. As for Capt. Ingersoll, his role in this minor battle, or major skirmish, was a two-fold one: while doing his duty as a soldier and officer, he remained alert and active also as an observer. He watched and registered his own reactions and those of the other men—immediately before, during, and after the fight. His book is the detailed and dramatic record of these impressions and observations. The careful study of this miniature chronicle will prove greatly profitable to anybody interested in the conditions of modern warfare and in the complexities of modern psychology. Moreover, Capt. Ingersoll's book is a confession of faith. It opens with this succinct statement: "When I first went into the army I was very unhappy." And it ends with these simple words: "It is a good army. Believe in it."

(Another article about new books in the Service Club libraries will follow.)