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Refurbishing the Freudian

Tales

m. 263 pp. New York:

LORINE PRUETTE

O THE publication of his first book, "Escape from Freedom," Erich Fromm immediately at-tracted attention as an original tinker in psychoanalysis. He was among the first to recognize that Freud's great contributions were healthly appeared. Fromm immediately athevitably conditioned by the times and the culture in which he lived In "The Forgotten Language," Dr. Fromm adds a third dimension to the Freudian interpretation of drams and challenges the once-acrosanct Oedipus complex.

In this interesting work he re-stores the dream to respectability, and goes far beyond the hackneyed symbolism of the boxes and the towers. He finds a logic in dreams and a great deal more meaning and a great deal more meaning; than wish fullfilment, although he illustrates such dreams also. He holds that we may be better people in sleep than awake, and argues this convincingly. Dromm is 'a scholar,' with a richness of reference to the history of man's thinking about himself, the universe and the gods. Unlike one of the earlier analysts, he some of the earlier analysts, he does not feel that all knowledge of human psychology began in the latter part of the last century, when Freud and Dr. Josef Breuer got together on a case of hysteria that Breuer had cured by hypnosis.

At times The Forgotten Language" has a poetic quality not so much in phrase as in manner of thinking. This is especially evi-dent in the discussion of the meaning of the Sabbath, the day on which God and man both rested. At times the reader is reminded At times the reader is reminer of Robert Graves' murky, fascinating novels concerned with the worship of the Mother Goddesses. Both men see in symbols and myths various evidences of this earlier gentler : religion in which all men had value because they au men may value because they were sons of the mother, and the father's role was unknown or ignored. They hold that when the father became the authoritative head of family, state and religion, the individual's value was reduced to the single virtue of obedience.

Sophocles wrote in a patriarchal iety, in which Zeus was far more society, in which Zeus was far more powerful a god than Ceres. In his three plays about Oedipus he was re-working a myth that was shready old. Freud seized upon the nigth to illumine his theory of the incestuous sexual drives of the child, since Oedipus kills his father and marries his mother. He had found a metaphor to carry his meaning, and the Oedipus complex became, lo, the cornerstone of a new religion. Fromm takes a little hammer of judicious inquiry and comes very close to smashing at least a corner of that cornerstone.

The recent production of Coc-teau's "Oedipe" makes the inces-tuous relation of mother and son the crux of this famous myth. But Gide's little play of the same But Gide's little play of the same pates some of the conclusions of Fromm. They both see the sig-nificance of Oedipus' answer to nificance of Oedipus' answer to the famous riddle of the Sphinx: what goes on four legs, then two, then three. Oide, speaking as Oedipus: "It was I and I alone who understood that the only pass-word, if one didn't want to be eaten alive by the Sphinx, was Man.

And although to each one of us, my children, the Sphinx may

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is alv self, the solution Fromm: "The riddle it-answer to which required nothing but cleverness, serves only as a veil for the latent meaning of the question, the importance of

Analyzing the myth as he earlier studied the symbolism of dreams, Fromm shows how the significant element is obscured. He finds that exement is ossured. He finds that there was no attraction between the mother and the son whom she had thought dead, that the Queen simply went on with the job of being King of Thebes. The plays then appear as a study of recurring struggles between father and sons, a struggle for authority and power, in which the Queen and the de-voted daughter Antigone still represent the older, matriarchal reli-gion. In the end, the Mother Goddesses still manage to have their way.

The analysis is too detailed to be reported here, but it is conducted in a highly effective fashion, and stems logically from the earlier section on dreams and on the Sab-bath. When Dr. Fromm attempts to round this out with an interpretation of the fairy tale, "Little Red-Cap"—one wonders why this name was not changed to Little Red Riding Hood—and still further to an interpretation of Kafka's nightmare dream, "The Trial," the argument is not so convincing. Inargument is not so convincing. In-deed, it. the fairy tide the author seem to revert to the traditional sexual symbolism, perhaps because of the brevity of his treatment. The earlier section on dreams should be of great interest to the general reader. Dr. Fromm's interpretation of the Oedipean myth terpretation of the Oedipean myth has already been presented in a symposium and summarized by Patrick Mullahy in his "Oedipus, Myth and Complex." But the complete discussion of the development of symbols makes us eases mised second volume or asic language of this basi thinking.

Lorine Pruette has written o various psychological subjects, in cluding a biography of G. Stanle

Stage Life

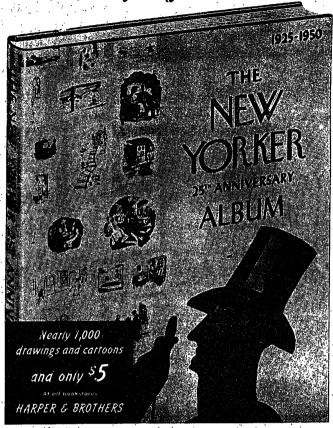
EMMA CONQUEST.

By Rene Ray. 374 pp. G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$3.

To ACCOUNT for Emma Con-quest René Ray goes far back into family history. Somewhat into family history. Somewhat, more than a century, ago, an English youth with the odd name of Doggered Conquest was cut off by his family for marrying "beneath him," so he took his bride to the Continent and soon became the most fashionable glove-maker in Paris. For his son, Hugo, he picked out a French girl with a "dot." out a French girl with a "dot."
As a pioneer aviation enthusiast,
Hugo returned to an unfamiliar
homeland, and consoled himself nomeiand, and consoler immedia for his wife's invalidism by acquir-ing a mistress. This shy, devoted being—brought up in poverty and forced by her father into marriage with a brute -gave Hugo a gifted daughter, Emma.

The author's exploration of this background is so thorough that you are convinced that it will be the key to Emma's character, but somehow the whole narrative remains locked. Hating her illegiti-macy, Emma develops into a suc-cessful actress, but her outbursts cessiu actress, but her outbursts against her father and mother are part hysterics, part histrionics. "Emma Conquest" finally shapes up as a staged simulation of life of us, my children, the spinor must that pants so hard it hann't persuade yourselves that the strength to draw a natural breath.

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