I have just read with interest and admiration the manuscript of P. D. East's forthcoming book, "The Magnolia Jungle." It is a fascinating document, I think, and one of the most original scripts, both in content and style, that I have seen in some time.

The earlier chapters, on his childhood, reminded me somehow of Sherwood Anderson's western tales in tone and accent. The middle chapters are an unusual account of a "Southern Education" that I only wish all Americans, especially Southerners, would read; or better yet, learn from. The final chapters, on The Petal Paper itself, are so remarkably honest, penetrating, and objective!

I needn't tell you that I laughed at the comedy that runs through the book — and the self-comedy. But there is something else: a poignant and touching strain in the narrative as a whole; a great sense of human dignity. P. D. East is a "funny man," yes indeed, and is a native kind of satirist whom Mark Twain would have welcomed.

But East also has the compassion that true humorists always have: the knowledge of human tragedy, and the knowledge of the eternal, ridiculous human situation. That, born and reared in Mississippi, he has put himself in the service of the highest ideals of freedom, equality, and justice, and that he can do it without losing his humor and human perspective, is the final achievement of the book.


THE MAGNOLIA JUNGLE
An Excursion In Personal Journalism
by
P. D. East

Publication date and selling price have not been set, but...  

WATCH FOR IT!

THE MAGNOLIA JUNGLE