CURRENT BOOKS

Dumas. "American commercialism itself," they wailed, would recoil at this "odious column of tin." Evenson traces the city's evolution from the drastic 1853-70 renovation carried out by Baron Haussman under Napoleon III to the present. Haussman's work—long straight vistas, uniform facades, boulevards 30 meters wide—exemplified a strict engineering approach to city planning. At his direction, the Île de la Cité, site of Paris's oldest settlement, was razed, and government offices constructed there. Subsequent unplanned growth has also brought problems (limited access to the center city, housing shortages, pollution) and political debate. President George Pompidou favored rapid modernization in the 1970s; but his plan for a superhighway along the Seine's Left Bank was killed by his successor, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing. Overall, contends Evenson, Paris remains a city of innovation as well as preservation. Gertrude Stein's contention, uttered four decades ago, should retain its truth two decades hence: "Paris was where the 20th century was."

Science & Technology

More than 700,000 Americans attending Chicago's 1934 Century of Progress Exposition went to gawk at the streamlined Burlington Zephyr—the train with the look of the future. "Streamlining"—a style of industrial design employing sweeping horizontal lines, rounded corners, and shields to shroud machinery and protruberances—captured the nation's imagination, becoming a fad in the mid-1930s. In a readable, well-illustrated account, Meikle, a professor of English and American studies at the University of Texas, explores its genesis (in Chrysler's wind-tunnel tests) and psychological appeal. During the late '20s, businessmen were among the first to realize that streamlined vacuum cleaners, bath scales, and tricycles met less sales resistance than did older models, that packaging could sell a product. Engineers and de-
signers started to work with new materials (plastic, chrome, stainless steel), which, together with the new shapes, made some goods easier to produce. During the Great Depression, streamlining took on a transcendent meaning. With contemporary events "too complex to comprehend," Americans needed signs that the future would be better, smoother, simpler, more efficient. Streamlining had its critics, particularly among artists. "Streamlined paper cups, if dropped, . . . fall with less wind resistance," joked a New York Museum of Modern Art official. But were they really better than the old ones for their purpose? Designers contended that streamlining was the first truly American design style.

Readers may not be familiar with Raymond Loewy's name, but all will recognize his work. The company insignia of Exxon and Shell, the Lucky Strike cigarette package, the Coke bottle, the Sears Coldspot refrigerator, the U.S. postal service emblem, the 1961 Avanti automobile, Skylab—all were designed by the iconoclastic Frenchman, who emigrated to America in 1919 (in time to become a leader in the streamlining movement). Industrial Design is a lavishly produced picture book with scant text, a striking visual record of Loewy's achievements. To an astonishing extent, the man has (literally) shaped the world around us.

During the 19th century, some prestigious schools, Harvard among them, admitted women to graduate science courses but refused them degrees. A shortage of male applicants during World War II helped to change this; and by 1961, 52 percent of male Ph.D.s and 51 percent of female Ph.D.s had trained in either "distinguished" or "strong" science departments. Columbia sociologist Cole has conducted a meticulous statistical analysis of men and women scientists employed at colleges and universities (he did not study private industry). Although there are more men employed in academic science than women, he finds no significant differences between them—in terms of status and peer recogni-