

NOTES FOR QUERIES

Robert Frager, writing on "The Psychology of the Samurai" in the January 1969 issue of Psychology Today retells a variety of traditional anecdotes and legends relating to Zen and the Japanese martial arts. For example, he gives the following account, "probably apocryphal" (and which faintly mirrors the American joke about the black man who intimidates his white opponent by peeling an apple in the air): "A lone swordsman was quietly eating his dinner in a small Japanese inn. He appeared calm, not bothered by the four flies buzzing around him. Three ronin (samurai unattached to any of the great feudal clans) entered. They noticed the magnificent swords in the man's sash, and the old, faded clothes that showed that he too was clanless. They knew the swords were worth a small fortune, and they were confident that one man was no match for the three of them. The three men sat down at the next table and began to make loud comments about their neighbor, hoping to goad him into a duel. He seemed to take no notice and their remarks became ruder and more pointed. The swordsman merely raised his chopsticks. In four quick snips, he effortlessly caught the four flies on the wing. As he slowly laid down the chopsticks, the three ronin slowly left the room. They had tried to pick a fight with Miyamoto Musashi, one of the greatest swordsmen in the history of Japan."

Speaking of things Japanese, the latest Evergreen Review (March 1969, pp. 25ff.) carries a short story, "The One Thousand Ryo Pledge," "based on traditional Edo period (1603-1868) tales about the Tokei-ji, the Temple of Divorce, the only place in feudal Japan where women could be separated from their husbands." The story is adapted and translated by Aki Tanino but the original source is not given. Other traditional tales adapted by Miss Tanino appeared in Evergreen nos. 43 and 56.

And speaking of the Evergreen Review, the same issue publishes an article by jazz singer Jon Hendricks ("Horses Don't Write Songs," pp. 61-62) which promises to further obscure the question "who are the folk?"

Ruth Rubin informs us that she has just recorded 30 Yiddish folksongs on five seven-inch L.P. records. They are available from her directly at \$3.00 per record. Her address: 180 West End Avenue, Apt. 6c, New York 10023. A prospectus is available.

The 54th Annual Meeting of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History will be held in Birmingham, Alabama October 9-12, 1969. Persons interested in presenting papers should communicate with Walter Turner, Dept. of History, Morgan State College, Baltimore, Md. 21212. In the past papers of folkloric interest have been presented.

A reader of the Louisville Courier-Journal and Times Sunday Magazine (March 16, 1969, p. 38) writes in to report that she has heard that Walt Disney is in fact frozen and awaiting his resurrection once a cure for whatever he died of has been found. Is this the first oral tradition surrounding the body freezing craze?