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in this book is to study the principles of the structure in the novel. It will help both students and teachers with its discussion of "The Dramatic Novel, Time and Space, Novels of Action and Character" and so on, ending with conclusions drawn by the author.

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BOOKS

PRISONER OF WAR

GUNNER INGLORIOUS. By Jim Henderson.
Harry H. Tombs Ltd., Wellington.

MOST men on active service say to themselves at intervals: "This will make a great story if I come through." If they are journalists they perhaps say, "A great book." But the matter gets no further. They either don't come through or they meet so many other men with better stories that their own seems less important. But Gunner Henderson held to his hope and to his plan. He wrote his book, and when many more literary, more scholarly, more philosophical, and

more provocative records have gone into the discard his will still be read. It is the simple story of a simple man who trained for nearly two years and then lasted less than two weeks; but it is very moving. First we have his active fighting experiences at Sidi Rezegh—the excitement, the fear, the physical and emotional exhaustion of serving a gun for the first time under heavy fire. But that is soon over. Within a day or two he is wounded in the foot, in the leg, in the chest, and in the head, and then he is captured by the Germans. The Germans are efficient and humane, but hand him over to the Italians, and the real story is what happens to him as a prisoner of war in Southern Italy. It is necessary to add Southern because the standards of Bari, where most of his time was spent, were not those of the northern hospitals. Bari hospital was a surgical slum—a disgrace to Italy, and a menace to every wounded soldier who entered it: dirty, ill-equipped, badly controlled, a haven for tyrants and thieves; and the worst tyrant and worst thief was a woman, a nun whom the prisoners without exception called "The Old Bitch" and would cheerfully have murdered to prevent her from murdering more of them by her corruption, hostility, and inefficiency. Gunner Henderson survives her, survives the ignorance and neglect of the surgeons, loses a leg, but holds on to his life and his reason, and one day—one unreal day—finds himself packing his kit for repatriation. And repatriation meant the book. When he wrote it he does not say, but it is an after-the-event story, based no doubt on a copious diary. It is as full of academic faults as a book of its size could be and still get past: hanging participles, mixed numbers, bad punctuation, and even bad spelling. It is declamatory, sentimental, jerky, now and again affected and forced. But pick as many holes in it as you like, you will still be stirred by it—even if you are a schoolmaster or an editor—still feel the genuineness of it, still, if you are a normal person, find yourself now laughing with the author and now shedding tears over him (or whatever you do when your emotions overcome you).

A MODERN MORALITY

YOUTH WANTS TO KNOW: A Modern Morality Play. By Howard Wadman.
Harry H. Tombs Ltd.

A MORALITY Play is usually described as one in which two sets of actors take part—Personifications of impersonal forces, as Fear or Revenge; and Representative Figures portraying typical contemporary men and women of various sorts. So described it sounds preposterously unreal. But because Morality Plays at their best only make visible and objective upon a stage dramas which actually are occurring within the minds of the spectators, some Medieval Moralities continue to be revived century after century. Quite recently also literary men have reproduced the same technique in order to present current psychological and political dilemmas—the best-known, probably, being *The Ascent of F6* and *The Dog Beneath the Skin*, by the poets Auden and Isherwood.

Howard Wadman's play is in both traditions. Like these new plays it was

(continued on next page)

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