

(continued from previous page)

women to slap, and it is proof of Miss Scanlan's skill that she succeeds in making us realise his attractiveness. The publishers' jacket tells us that "Kit Carmichael and his odd philosophy triumph in the end," but to what extent? Elizabeth as well as Kit has private means, the testing time is short, and Kit is no nearer doing a real job at the end than he was at the beginning, but perhaps this is just life. However, the war. . .

These two move in a society of cousins, with a masterful and thoroughly objectionable aunt in the background, to whom they are accustomed to defer. Their passage is not so smooth as that of Elizabeth and Kit. This pleasant English circle talks a lot. Sometimes there is a surfeit of chatter about trivialities,

Carr's *Appointment With Fear* stories, but who have not met him in print, will find *He Who Whispers* an appointment worth keeping.

### HOUSE OF CLAY

**WHY I BUILT AN ADOBE COTTAGE: OR PUAWANANGA.** By Charlotte Preston Larkin. Printed and published by the Northland Gazette, Kawakawa.

WHAT most people will want to know is not so much why Mrs. Larkin built her cottage, but how. They will know if they follow her story to the end, and it may have been her plan to make them do this. But it is more likely that she put the *why* first because it seemed to her of most importance. What most readers will regard as the real sensation—building a house with her

### Library of the Deceased

THESE books, perhaps not for you nor me,  
Not remote pastures in which to replenish  
The spirit's energy:  
Yet this and more they were to him.  
Keys that commanded surprising doors,  
Lights growing out of the void when thought was dim.

THESE were his windows to the world,  
Having learnt life he put his books away:  
But here he drank, here thrust a torch,  
Against whatever desert, whatever dark.

NOT frittered like a breath,  
But reader turned pilgrim,  
And wearing amulets wrung from these redoubtable priests,  
Shall he not prevail  
To read a radiance on the walls of death?

— J. R. Hervey.

but Miss Scanlan has a gift for making the things of daily life interesting to her readers. The best-drawn character in the book is Elizabeth's middle-aged servant Lottie, the type of devoted family retainer whose ranks are being rapidly thinned by social and economic changes, perhaps not altogether to the advantage of society.

—A.M.

### APPOINTMENT WITH CARR

**HE WHO WHISPERS.** By John Dickson Carr. Hamish Hamilton (Melbourne).

THOUGH it is handicapped by poor paper and indifferent typography (and, in the review copy, by a bindery blunder which presents the book to the reader upside-down and back-to-front), *He Who Whispers* is a well-knit story quite up to the standard which keeps John Dickson Carr in the van of contemporary crime writers. It has all the author's usual trade-marks—his preoccupation with the emotional states of his characters, and those early intimations of spiritual wickedness or the supernatural which are so tidily explained away in the later chapters. It might be interesting to speculate on the extent to which the author has been influenced in this direction by the exploits of Father Brown. Certainly Dr. Gideon Fell, in his corporeal self, suggests a somewhat rumpled and rumbunctious Chesterton. But it would be unfair to imply that John Dickson Carr is a copyist. His construction of a story is strongly individual and his experience as a serial-writer serves him well in maintaining the reader's interest. He does share with Agatha Christie a weakness for misleading the reader in the matter of clues by underlining the irrelevant, but many readers would not have it otherwise. Listeners who have enjoyed the BBC recordings of John Dickson

own hands for £119—she deals with quite casually, but fills pages explaining why the house-building impulse first carried her away. There is some help from On High in it, and some from her neighbours, but whether she is waiting for the weather to clear or for the "Plan Divine of the Master Builder" she is a personality, full of courage and a genuinely contagious vivacity.

### Philip Neill Prize Divided

THE Philip Neill Memorial Prize in Music, awarded annually for a work of original composition by a New Zealander who is, or has been, a student of the New Zealand University, has been jointly won this year by Miss Dorothea Franchi, of Auckland, and Mrs. Dorothy Scott, of Dunedin. Previous winners of the prize have all been men—Douglas Lilburn was one, H. C. Luscombe, of Auckland, and Frank Callaway, of Dunedin, the others.

Both of the winning compositions for 1947 are song-cycles, and both make use of the work of New Zealand poets. Dorothy Scott's song-cycle is for soprano voice, piano, and string quartet, and is entitled *In the Younger Land*, from the name of the first piece, a poem by A. R. D. Fairburn. Dorothea Franchi's song-cycle is for tenor voice and piano, and comprises settings of poems from a collection by Robin Hyde, *The Desolate Star*.

The annual value of the Philip Neill prize is £25, and one of the conditions of the contest is that the winning composition shall be broadcast. Details of the broadcasting of the 1947 winning entries will be announced later.

### Experiment

A NEW literary experiment after the manner of James Joyce and Franz Kafka has recently been published in England. It is *Prothalamium*, written by Philip Toynbee, a 31-year-old grandson of Professor Gilbert Murray. All of the characters, besides being fictional people, are supposed to have a symbolic meaning, which may not be apparent on a first reading.

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Work these into the daily diet, and you'll be better for it (provided you keep it up). MILK (1½—2 pints); eggs, as you can get them (or, alternatively, dried peas, beans or lentils in some form); meat, with liver and fish once a week if possible; plenty of vegetables; raw fruit; bread (half should be wholemeal) and cereals; and your full butter ration. And don't forget to use iodised salt always. Cheese is good, too, if you can't take enough milk.

When it comes to eating, this is worth noting. Have your meals at regular intervals; eat them slowly; and if you want to help your digestion, let things be quiet and peaceful at mealtimes. Arguments can wait.

ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Keep this announcement for future reference.