

Pinner being regarded as a co-author. Not only do they display that imagination for which the author calls in his foreword, but they also reduce to an understandable simplicity almost diagrammatic, the confusing detail of photography. In these days of paper shortage it is heartening to see so much space devoted to the admirable setting out of illustrations.

As the book could be used as a source of information as well as a stimulating connected account of the past the omission of an index is inexplicable.

—J. D. McDonald

CONDENSED CLASSICS

BARCHESTER TOWERS. By Anthony Trollope. **WESTWARD HO!** By Charles Kingsley. Todd Publishing Group Ltd., London.

ADMITTEDLY the Victorian novelists were verbose, but there seems little justification, in these days of paper shortage, for putting out condensed versions of their works when it is hard enough to get reprints of the originals. These two books, we are told in their introductions, have been "arranged for modern reading in the author's own words," but we are not told who has been responsible for the arbitrary excisions that have reduced *Westward Ho!* and *Barchester Towers* to 50,000 words each—a quarter of their original lengths. Even if we do rebel at the vast burden of explanations, moral digressions, philosophic vapourings and pompous circumlocutions which last century's writers liked to indulge in, surely it is the privilege of the reader himself to decide, according to his own personal taste, which of these passages he shall skip and which devour.

In any case—the publishers are aiming presumably at a juvenile market—these two novels have been denuded of practically all except the bare bones of plot and action, and consequently they read almost like penny melodramas. Although the books have been reasonably well produced as far as printing, paper and binding go, and the cuts and joins have been fairly skilfully made, they still fall into a category not very far above the "classic-comic" level. Many people may buy and enjoy them, but they are a poor bargain at any price.

COUNTRY LIFE

THE GAMEKEEPER AT HOME; THE OPEN AIR. By Richard Jefferies. (Uniform edition). Eyre and Spottiswoode Ltd., London.

FOR some people there are only two Jefferies—the "cataloguer" (as he was once called) of natural phenomena, and the impassioned nature mystic of *The Story of My Heart*. But these two reprints, the first of a uniform edition of 15 volumes published to mark the centenary of his birth, reveal the breadth of his personality and those qualities of his writings which have established him as a minor, though genuine, man of letters. His portrayal of rural life in *The Gamekeeper* shows that he was something more than a simple cataloguer. He sets down the accurate records of his close watch on wild life ("this is the secret of observation: stillness, silence, and apparent indifference"), but he paints, too, a picture of a society and a way of life that are rapidly disappearing. Quietly, with authentic touches of rustic character and manners, he builds up his picture of the life of the gamekeeper and his

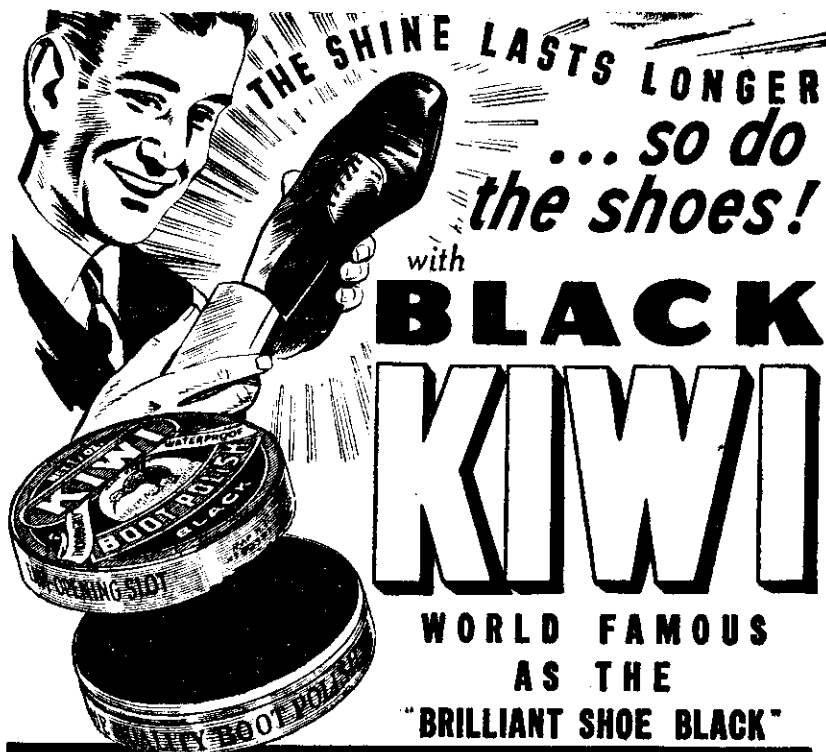
family, of the ploughman, the tenant farmer, the poacher, and all the poor people of the Wiltshire countryside whom he knew so intimately in his youth.

The Open Air contains some of the best-loved of his essays—for example, "Wild Flowers," "Under the Acorns," and "One of the New Voters"—and there are many others that show the diversity of his interests. In "The Bathing Season" he smiles slyly at some demure Victorian bathing belles, in the "London" essays he looks at the metropolis from the countryman's point of view, and in "Beauty in the Country" he shows the sensual side of his nature. ("Merely as an animal, how grand and beautiful is a perfect woman! Simply as a living, breathing creature, can anything imaginable come near her!")

He loves indeed all aspects of country life, and because he does more than merely observe, because what he writes about has been deeply experienced and become an integral part of him, he succeeds in transmitting his enthusiasm to the reader in a remarkable way.

The books are tastefully produced in grey-blue binding and an elegant typeface, and they are a handy size for the pocket. The introductions are by C. Henry Warren, one of to-day's leading writers on the English countryside.

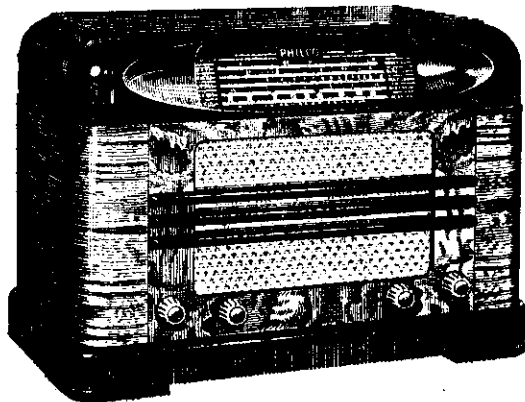
—P.J.W.



World Leadership in Radio



Through more than a half century of pioneer research and development, Philco engineers have led the world in creating vital improvements to radio tone and performance . . . in reaching new standards of radio manufacturing precision and quality. That is why you choose the finest in radio when you buy Philco.



This 1948 Philco 732, although only recently introduced, has proved the biggest-selling Philco ever released in N.Z. A 6-tube, all-wave table model with electrical band-spread tuning, it has no peer in performance, tone, distance-getting ability and appearance. Set and valves fully guaranteed for 12 months. Trade-in allowance on your old receiver and payment by instalments if desired. See your Philco dealer now.

PHILCO

Famous for Quality the World Over