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This is not a muddled book. The plan is excellent and the facts were two decades in the gathering. It is a pity that someone once called Peattie's writing, "the very poetry of biology."

—J.D.McD.

CRICKET—PLEASANT AND UNPLEASANT

CRICKET CONTROVERSY: TEST MATCHES IN AUSTRALIA, 1946-47, by Cliff Cary. Foreword by Alan Kippax. T. Werner Laurie Ltd., London. Through the British Council.

IN the wealth of interest to cricket-followers in this book by an Australian commentator on the tour of the last M.C.C. team the item that will probably attract most attention is the author's criticism of Bradman. Mr. Cary recognises as enthusiastically as anyone Bradman's genius as a cricketer, and finds

much to admire in him as a man, but, giving evidence in support, he considers that Bradman has been over-hungry for runs and records and money, and in some respects has not been the best of team-mates. Mr. Cary is not the first Australian authority to criticise the national idol in a book. In his opinion, Bradman was too grim as captain in the 1946-47 tests.

"To Bradman, even in the first series after so many years of war and suffering, there was apparently no room for care-free cricket in an Anglo-Australian test." As play progressed at Brisbane in the opening test, "It was apparent to all in close contact with the players that Hammond and Bradman had completely divergent views on the meaning of cricket goodwill." In the second test, with the Australians in difficulties, Barnes kept on appealing against the light till the umpires called off play, and at the end of the season Barnes in a broadcast frankly disclosed his motives. "We could have played on, but it was a test match and we just had to win. I realised something drastic had to be done" There followed a detailed account of what that something was.

A second subject that will leap from the pages with exceptional force is Mr. Cary's criticism of the umpiring. Many people believe you shouldn't criticise an umpire. He is in the best position to see what has happened, and anyway, it isn't sporting. Mr. Cary finds serious fault with the umpiring on this tour, and says it told pretty heavily against the visitors. Local rebuking of critics amused him as an Australian, for he doubts "If there is any country in the world to equal us for our outbursts against official sporting decisions." For example, Rugby League referees in Sydney have been threatened with mob violence a number of times, and in Victoria umpires in Australian rules games have frequently been escorted from the ground by the police, who have even been known to draw revolvers as a safety measure. Mr. Cary throws light on what is called the "doping" of wickets, and what he says about the unpredictable nature

of Australian wickets (at any rate in this particular season) under the influence of the weather. It is curious that a word so commonly applied to the treatment of men and horses should be used of the good earth, and still more curious that, unlike such drugs given to the animal body, cricket "dope" can produce opposite effects. At one and the same time, it can stimulate the batsman and depress the bowler. The practice is not by any means confined to Australia.

In this chronicle of cricket, however, there is much that is pleasant. Mr. Cary has studied the game closely, and loves it. To him the spirit is ever so much more than the letter. He has an eye for character as well as technique, and is generous in his praise. There is a lot of back-stage information. The M.C.C. agreed to the tour "against its better judgment," and Hammond and his men regarded it as a goodwill mission. Hammond did not contain the team well. He

was weighed down by responsibility, bad health, and private worry. But he was a good ambassador, and in this he was well backed by his side. "Individually and collectively, the team was perhaps the most popular sporting combination ever to come from England." Unaccustomed abundance of food caused some of the players to put on weight. After seven years of English rations, they couldn't resist the good things offered to them. Mr. Cary gives us a good deal that is well away

from acute controversy, such as analysis of players' methods, the really romantic story of J. M. Gregory's rise to fame, and a study of English and Australian captains down the years. Some readers will find these chapters on captaincy the most fascinating in the book. On form P. F. Warner was never quite an England player, but Mr. Cary, after quoting the opinions of Noble and Iredale, brackets him with Noble as the best captain ever.

It only remains to add that the illustrations, which are all of action, are many and admirable.

—A.M.

FOR PAINTERS

NOTES ON THE TECHNIQUE OF PAINTING. By Hilaire Hiler. Faber and Faber.

IN his preface to this book Sir William Rothenstein says: "Fourteen years' experience among students has shown me how unwilling they are to work methodically. Filthy and ill-arranged palettes, misshapen and unwashed brushes are the rule. . . . It would be no ill thing if a period overmuch given to aesthetic experiment were followed by one devoted in part at least to rigid technical practice. . . ." Whether or not one shares Sir William's views about "overmuch aesthetic experiment," one can heartily agree with him that here is the book for the painter who wishes to study his means and to make the very most of them. This is no mere shopkeeper's manual of stock-in-trade. It is written by a practising artist who for many years has

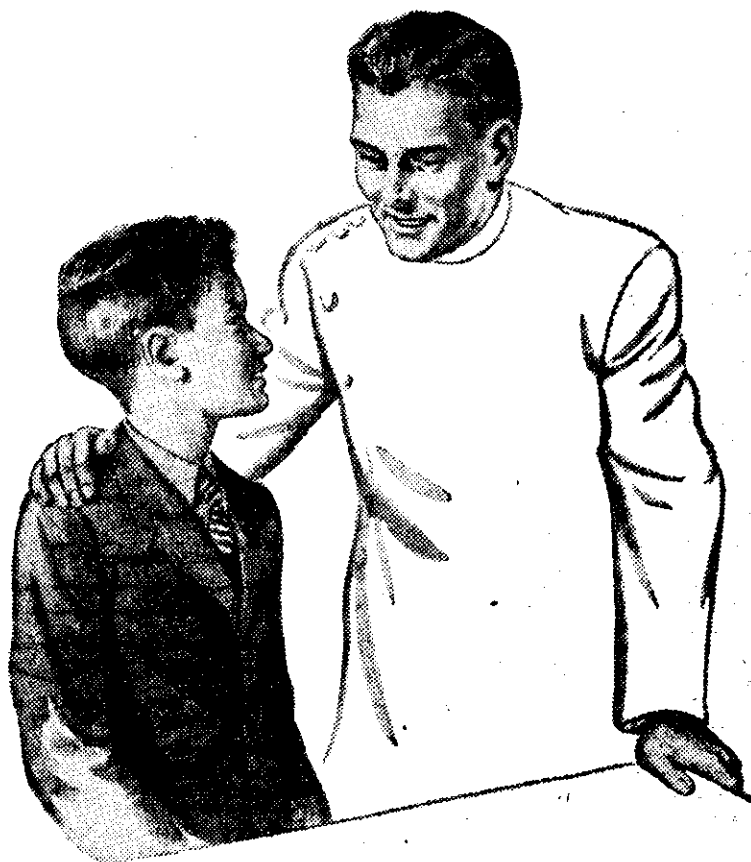
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