

## BOOKS

(continued from previous page)

paw versus man and man's gun—these are the stuff of *The Phasian Bird*. Norfolk is the county, 1937 to 1944 the time, and the life of game, farm and countryside the theme of this book. If a farmer could persuade himself that he had time to read quietly, he would enjoy it; but naturalists will claim it for their own.

The last book in the list is included simply because the author has a better hand with trees, fields, hedges, weather and footpaths than he has with men and women and the normal affairs of a novel. *Sons of the Farm* is called a novel; but Mr. Porteous devises a chilly tale of two sons and a decaying farm, a sort of frosty evening shadow of a story by L. A. G. Strong or Neil Gunn. The warmest and most readable passages describe birds in flight or trees in leaf; the coldest and most trite deal with men's ambition or women's envy.

—J.

### TURN OF A TIDE

**THE ARMYTAGE COLLECTION OF MAORI JADE**, by K. Athol Webster; photography by John Queenborough. A.R.P.S. The Cable Press, London. English price 10/6, post free.

NEW ZEALAND has been so often at the handing out rather than the receiving end of almost two centuries' trafficking in the treasures of her one unchallenged native art, that we should

be grateful to Mr. Webster (a New Zealander resident in London) for contriving and conspiring the return of a remarkable collection of Maori worked greenstone. The story behind Mr. Webster's booklet starts with a famous collection of greenstone formed by John White, of Dunedin, in the 'eighties, and its almost axiomatic movement to Britain. Here it was purchased by T. E. Donne, whose resolve to sell it by auction was met by the author's dexterous interposition of Edward Armitage as a cash buyer. The sudden death of Armitage in 1946 again threatened the dispersal of the greenstone, and it was only through Mr. Webster's efforts that the collection reached the Auckland and Dominion Museums.

The eighty-five tikis which form the core of the collection are admirably illustrated by Mr. Queenborough's photographs, with descriptive notes by Mr. Webster.

—Roger Duff

### BROKEN THEME

**ANGRY DUST**, by Norbert Coulehan; the National Press Pty. Ltd., Melbourne. 10/6.

AFTER being wounded at Gallipoli, an Australian, Anthony Carlisle, is "like a twisted gaggle of gas piping, weak in every joint and ripe for the first anvil blow of Plumber Chance." Plumber Chance involves him in a scheme for transplanting 30 delinquent children from London slums to a new

settlement in Western Australia. As Carlisle's soul is now a "broken convoluted," he not unnaturally needs some help with the scheme. This he gets from Walter Joyce, "a tower of strength," and Mary Devoncourt, whose father "hated politicians with a strange subterranean hatred." These three, dodging among the clichés, eventually get the children to Australia.

The theme of Mr. Coulehan's novel could be interesting. The Carlisle Scheme is to bring out only the worst children, and, in a new land, to treat them as the best. But by attempting to avoid the colonial language and style which we associate with Dad and Dave, the author has become bogged down in the worst refinements of Victorian family fiction.

—C.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

CRITICS are now less certain of Mary Webb's place in English letters, but she is still much admired. New and old readers should be interested in *The Essential Mary Webb*, an anthology prepared by Martin Armstrong (Jonathan Cape). Selections are taken from the five novels; there are six complete essays and 12 poems. An added distinction is given to this volume by four illustrations in colour and many drawings in black and white by Norman Hepple and Rowland Hilder.



Alan Blakey photograph

MAN'S physical environment, rather than the intellectual climate of the moment, will be the theme of the ZB Book Review session broadcast on Sunday evening, August 14. In the chair will be Professor K. B. Cumberland (above), and the two books which will be discussed at length in the session will be William Vogt's "Road to Survival" (reviewed by Dr. Guy Chapman), and "Our Plundered Planet," by Fairfield Osborn (reviewed by H. C. D. Somerset).

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