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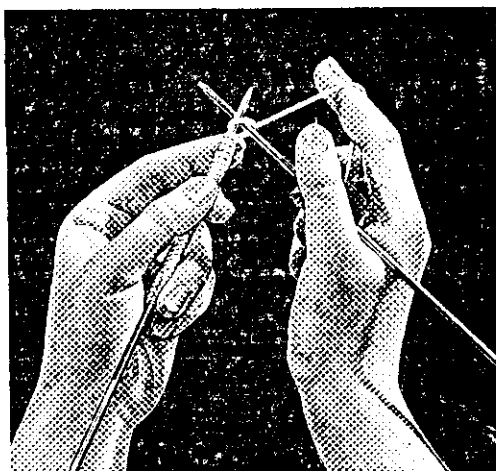
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BOOKS

(continued from previous page)

without the faintest knowledge of the meaning of that event; and on another occasion writing a tactful answer to a Scripture question on the Virgin Birth, to the effect that Jesus Christ was a remarkable man but conceived and born normally. I got full marks; but somehow I feel that George Fox would not have approved. —James K. Baxter

GREAT ENGLISHMAN

SIR THOMAS MORE, by Leslie Paul; Faber and Faber, English price 12 6.

CONSIDER the Holbein portrait of Henry VIII, the broad flaccid cheek, the little ruthless mouth, the cold eye, the high intelligent forehead. The skill of the artist has put it all before us, a frank materialist disappointed in his objects but still pursuing them. In his own age he had only two real opponents, both of them extraordinary men—

Charles V too big for him, Thomas More too good for him, the one in Europe his master, the other in England his servant, but God's first.

This brief account by Leslie Paul gives all the essentials of Thomas More's life and character. It is well known how many-sided was his work for England. As a young member of the House of Commons he helped establish the right of the Commons to vote or refuse the King's demand for exorbitant taxes under Henry VII. The fact that subsequent Tudor despots were able to whittle away this right does not belittle his achievement. As Speaker of the House he tactfully upheld its right to free debate against Wolsey, Henry VIII's arrogant Minister. He was the greatest of England's Lord Chancellors. In an age of intolerance he was tolerant, in a greedy age he preferred to refuse the large sums of money offered to him, and indeed well earned. He accepted honours reluctantly and readily relinquished them.

Everyone finds something in More. To the scholar he is the great English Renaissance classicist, to the lawyer his career at the Bar is a model, to the social reformer he is the humanist and philosopher, so much so that the Marxists are now claiming *Utopia* as the first socialist manifesto. In statesmanship and international affairs his wisdom is only now receiving due recognition. His wit and charm of manner made him loved throughout all Europe, but he joined with them personal austerities and steady piety. Henry was no fool and knew that in the matter of the divorce and Headship of the Church he must win him or break him. The attempts to prosecute More for misconduct in his office failed so ignominiously that today they read like testimonials to him. Finally he is the Christian martyr who laid down his life for God and the Church. There is little new in what Leslie Paul tells us, but it is worth repeating.

—F. J. Foot

A COUNTRY'S EVOLUTION

IRAQ, 1900 to 1950, by S. H. Longrigg; Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, English price 35/-.

THIS is an admirably learned survey of a subject which is of critical importance to the world today, namely, the evolution of a country from political

tutelage to independence, and from poverty to national prosperity. The story is told sympathetically, from the point of view of the one-time tutor. It analyses illuminatingly the problems caused by the introduction of parliamentary democracy into an immature community, the sharpness of national reaction and optimism in the early days of independence, and the disillusionment that sometimes follows.

The lessons of Iraq should be pondered by all interested in comparable evolutions in course elsewhere. Brigadier Longrigg's well-balanced account assesses the elements of hope as well as giving an honest indication of dangers. A good deal of its detail is too closely argued for people who are not specialists, yet it is well written and can be plundered with pleasure as well as instruction even by a hurried reader.

—F. L. W. Wood

ROMANCE

AFTER THE HOLIDAY, by Louise Collis; Faber and Faber, English price 12 6. THE CROOKED WALL, by Ruth Compton Mackenzie; Jonathan Cape, English price 10 6. FANFARE FOR A WITCH, by Vaughan Wilkins; Jonathan Cape, English price 12 6. THEODORA AND THE EMPEROR, by Harold Lamb; Robert Hale, English price 18 -.

BOY meets girl, boy sheers off and meets another girl. First girl, a prissy piece, anyway, makes herself a career and laughs at the world. This, with some teasing thought transitions in the vein of Elizabeth Bowen (*The Heat of the Day*), makes up Louise Collis's contemporary novel, something slightly more ambitious than is quite warranted. But I shall be on the look out for her next novel.

The Crooked Wall is a late Victorian period piece, with the background skillfully filled in. Husbands prove to be a tiresome intrusion upon girlhood friendships. It ends in a nicely-managed murder. The whole book is slow-moving, sedate and—may I say it without a sneer?—ladylike.

Vaughan Wilkins endeavours, most manfully, in *Fanfare for a Witch* to make a hero of Frederick, Prince of Wales, the unlucky son-father sandwiched in between George II and George III. Even with the addition of an English sultana from Morocco and her devoted American-Turk and some violence thrown in, the theme droops on its many romantic bolsters. But it may well be popular.

Harold Lamb writes, not a novel but a "biographical narrative," sub-titled "The Drama of Justinian." The history is sound and balanced, and he has chosen one of the great moments of the Byzantine story. But alas! the style endeavours to prod the Drama (a capital certainly) into too rapid motion. His book seems to fall between the two stools of scholarship and romance.

—David Hall

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE ROYAL VISIT TO NEW ZEALAND, edited by J. H. Richards, text by J. M. D. Hardwick; A. H. and A. W. Reed; 15/-.

A HANDSOME commemorative volume, its numerous illustrations printed on art paper, and the text written with commendable restraint. Most of the photographs are familiar, but they have been assembled in their correct sequence so that the tour can be lived again from the arrival at Auckland to the departure from Bluff.

POETICAL WORKS OF ALFRED

TENNYSON; Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, English price 12/6. A new printing of the Oxford Standard edition, including the plays.

N.Z. LISTENER, JUNE 4, 1954.