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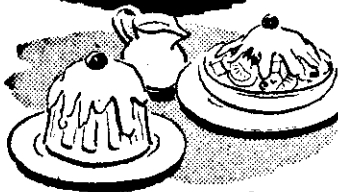
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## BOOKS

(continued from previous page)

Asians lies in giving assistance to develop the natural resources of these countries for the benefit of all the people.

Ritchie Calder, Science Editor of the *News Chronicle*, is in his own sphere one of the most competent of British journalists. His book contains the observations of himself and two colleagues who were sent at the request of United Nations to report on the problems, programmes and progress of U.N. Technical Assistance and Specialist Agencies in the over-populated and under-developed countries of South and South-East Asia—Borneo, Java, Thailand, Burma, parts of India and Pakistan, and Afghanistan. Calder gives a graphic picture of the situation. He also gives the impression that much more can be done to save Asia from what it has to be saved from by the United Nations or by Britain and America alone, than can be done by U.S.S.R.; and that more can be done by large-hearted technical assistance than by political or military machinery.

—L.J.W.

### DETECTION WITHOUT CRIME

*ANNALS OF MEDICAL DETECTION*, by Berton Roueche; Victor Gollancz, English price 13 6.

A CHARMING bedside manner is very pleasant, but accurate diagnosis is the basis of the physician's craft. Today the doctor has more diseases to look for; but he can resort to a growing army of specialists, especially if he is in or near a city. Uncertain what the patient has, he can whisk away a specimen to a laboratory, perhaps in the block where the patient lies, and get a solution quickly. The prescribed treatment follows immediately. If it is a notifiable disease, the Health Department is called in to trace the trouble to its source, and this may involve long and laborious investigation.

Such is the theme of this fascinating book from America. It is something like the sort of sleuthing that Austin Freeman's Dr. Thorndyke does, but without the element of crime. Here are real cases that came to American hospitals, and were diagnosed and hunted down. The first is trichinosis, a disease contracted by eating raw pork; and after the arrival of this book a similar case of diagnosis and tracking was reported from England. Some of the cases here involved as much patient spade work as one finds in a story about Inspector French. We have, among others, leprosy and smallpox, botulism and psittacosis, and a poisoning that arose out of an accident with restaurant salt cellars.

Berton Roueche weaves the nature and history of these diseases, and the human element, into narratives which, as one would expect of reprints from the *New Yorker*, run smoothly but in lively style. Their scientific accuracy is to be accepted. Two of the chapters won a prize for medical reporting. There is also an account of the work in one of the great commercial laboratories where anti-biotics are made, and looked for in material gathered from many lands.

—A.M.

### BOOK FOR MOTHERS

*CHILDREN IN THE HOUSE*, by Nan Fairbrother; the Hogarth Press, English price 12/6.

THE author spends the war years in an old house in the country, with her two small sons. She moves gently through the four seasons: observing her children and the countryside, and read-

ing and thinking. Her interests are astonishingly varied, and all her comments imbued with a philosophical calm rare for both her sex and sophistication. Her style, indeed, is impeccable: gentle irony devoid of malice, humour without vulgarity, scholarship without skite, and love that is never maudlin, illumine everything she touches. The reader is caught in a spell that reminds him of his favourite authors, and favourite pictures, and most cherished memories of child and parenthood; and yet this first book is quite unlike any other book, except for the certainty that, like other favourites, it will be read again and again.

The reviewer is nonetheless in a quandary. Having made his judgment in a series of assertions, he needs pages of quotations to justify them; and there is no room for that. He dare not take one sample from so rich a store, any more than he would take a recipe to prove a cook-book. But if any young family wants to give Mum a book, this is it.

—A.V.

### PUBLIC FACES

*PERSONA GRATA*, by Cecil Beaton and Kenneth Tynan; Allen Wingate, English price 21/-.

A PHOTOGRAPHER and a dramatic critic join forces to make hay of prominent personalities. In their introductory note they state that the list is a personal one; and if one's personal taste should happen to coincide with theirs, one may be grateful for this book. But where Picasso rubs shoulders with Gary Cooper and the Crazy Gang, the limitation of a choice dictated by private enthusiasm becomes apparent. Mr. Beaton's photography is lively and incongruous, Mr. Tynan's commentary lively and superficial. One would have preferred a less sumptuous edition, and subjects selected in accordance with a standard less private.

—James K. Baxter

### NEW PENGUINS

EXCELLENT new Penguins and Pelicans are being published all the time, and among the most valuable recently to hand is *The Literature of the United States*, by Marcus Cunliffe (N.Z. price 4/6). With a rather rare ability to compress and yet remain intensely interesting, the author has covered the period from colonial times to the present. The background is not forgotten; and there are extensive notes on further reading. *The Seagull and Other Plays*, by Anton Chekhov (2/6), is a second volume of translations by Elisaveta Fen which should be welcomed by those who criticise the Garnett translations of the plays. *T. S. Eliot: Selected Prose*, edited by John Hayward (2/6), a companion volume to *Selected Poems*, includes both literary and social criticism. *Byzantine Art*, by David Talbot Rice (3/6), first published in 1935, has been brought up-to-date and in part re-written, for both general reader and specialist. *Pottery and Ceramics*, by Ernst Rosenthal (4/6), also a revised work, covers its subject in detail "from common brick to fine china." *The Queen's Government*, by Sir Ivor Jennings (2/6), is a new work, by a well-known authority, on the principles and machinery of the British system of democracy.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

*THE SCARLET FRONTIER*, by E. V. Timms; Angus and Robertson, Australian price 16/-. The sixth novel by Mr. Timms in his early Australian series. Its setting is in Queensland.

N.Z. LISTENER, JULY 16, 1954.