

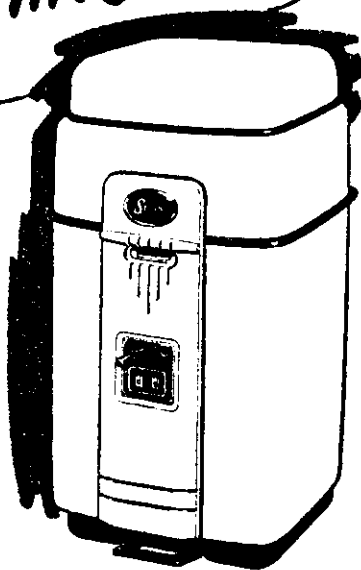
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Wring!
Empty!



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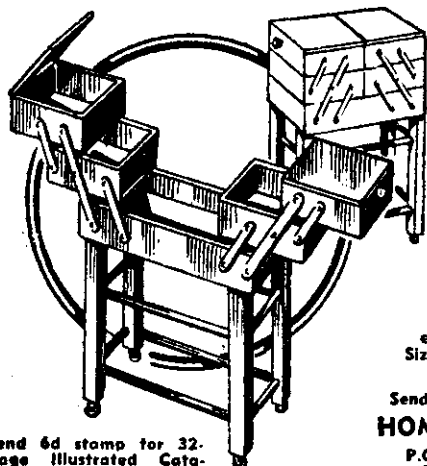
MODEL SP — features lid-tray and master control.
MODEL SHP — includes element for water heating as well.
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MODEL MHP — de luxe cabinet with an electric wringer and a heating element.

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BOOKS

An Enthusiast in China

JOURNEY TO NEW CHINA, by Margaret Garland; Caxton Press, 21/-.

(Reviewed by David Hall)

REVOLUTIONS attract enthusiasts or detractors. Mrs. Garland is an enthusiast. She was the guest of the New China Government as a New Zealand delegate to the 1952 Peking "Peace" conference (the inverted commas are an indication both of my prejudiced mind and of the vagueness of the interests represented at the conference), and also made a conducted tour with Rewi Alley and interpreters at her elbow. In this book Mrs. Garland describes her experiences with zest and colour. Her account of some phases of Chinese art is particularly good, and the frequent felicitous descriptions of a scene, a person or an artifact can make her pages glow. She saw nothing nasty anywhere (except in Hong Kong). Everyone was honest, industrious, charming, "peace"-loving and—better still—"peace"-delegate-loving. New enterprises are springing up everywhere; new housing estates are being built; rich merchants' palaces have become crèches or hospitals. Peasants at last own their own land.

It is plain that Mrs. Garland found her visit to China a rewarding experience. She has written a lively and attractive account of it, at a level above gossip. It is heartening to have a general attitude of goodwill towards the New China—balancing internal reforms against international tensions—endorsed; for few—outside the U.S. State Department—cling to any substantial illusions about the Kuomintang rump on the island of Formosa, and most New Zealanders share Mr. Webb's opinion that mainland China should have the United Nations seat. But is everything in the garden quite so lovely?

There are points where the record is—shall we say?—a trifle blurred. Consider such a dictum as this: "In all her long history China never has invaded another country." Does this comfort the Tibetans? Again, Hong Kong is a dreadful place, overcrowded, slummy, full of vice, policemen and thieves, but the writer herself reminds us that the population of that very small territory has been augmented by about two million persons who preferred to leave the New China. Germ warfare has to be served up once again. A passion for justice and fair play can be just as unbalanced and one-eyed as a blind prejudice against Communism. Undoubtedly it needed moral courage to lift the bamboo curtain, but to congratulate oneself on that courage only draws attention to the heavy investment one has made in the validity of one's enthusiasms.

"Peace" is indeed a potent word when it can turn on banquets, special trains and a standard of living for foreign guests at least equal to their own and far higher than that of the country itself. How all this was provided may be explained by such an allusion as this: "They had contributed fourteen million yen from the district to the peace movement because they said



Spencer Digby photograph

MARGARET GARLAND
"Peace" is a potent word

they realised how important it was to preserve peace." In the words of 1984 and all that—yes, indeed.

DISSECTING THE DEAN

JONATHAN SWIFT, a critical biography by John Middleton Murry; Jonathan Cape, English price 30/-.

THE strange and tortured genius whose remains lie under the great aisle of St. Patrick's, Dublin, below one of the most famous of all epitaphs, was a riddle to his own and to succeeding ages. In retrospect, Swift dwarfs most of his contemporaries by sheer passion and force of character; yet the passion was suppressed and the character most curiously warped. It was inevitable, perhaps, that Mr. Middleton Murry—after his dealings with Dostoevsky, Keats and Shakespeare—should come forward to pluck out the heart of this mystery; what was less foreseeable, was that he should write so judicious and, on the whole, so conservative a book.

Mr. Murry's method here, as in his Keats studies, is to review the known biographical facts in the light of the writings, both private and public, of his subject. A great poet or a great writer means what he says, even—or perhaps most of all—in the years of juvenilia before his mature style is formed. So, by concentrating on the "uncharacteristic" poems of Swift's early years with Temple at Moor Park, Mr. Murry posits a romantic, hero-worshipping young man whose ardent affections were rebuffed, first by the impercipient of his patron, and then by the shallow coquetry of the young woman ("Varina") to whom he proposed marriage in Ireland. If the pattern of all this suggests Keats and the reviewers, and Keats and Fanny Brawne, rather than the terrible Dean, no doubt Mr. Murry would keep an appeal open to Shakespeare: only a frustrated idealist can become a Timon. On the biographical side, Mr. Murry's solution is neat enough. "If we want the true answer to the eternal question: Why did Swift not marry Stella? we do not have to seek it in fantastic theories, of concealed consanguinity, or physical incapacity, or overweening pride; it is simple enough. It was because of his rejection by Varina."

The rest of the story is more familiar, though Mr. Murry tells it in detail with

N.Z. LISTENER, AUGUST 27, 1954.