



## 'Contemporary' or 'modern'?

There are two schools of thought. Some say 'modern': others 'contemporary'.

Well, we can leave those differences to architects, critics and the lexicographers. Our contribution to the discussion is a wide range of Sundour Fabrics—for example like the texture and the print shown here—and that seems to satisfy both schools of thought.

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small... you can be certain of finding the fabric of your dreams. There's a whole world to choose from—bold prints or dainty chintzes, textures or damasks, velvets or chenilles, dainty marquises or gay sprig muslins. And at prices to suit every purse.

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## BOOKS

(continued from previous page)

also a most intriguing human document. Dr. Maxwell has hit upon a fruitful way of writing three-dimensional history.

—J.C.R.

### NET AND ROPE

*THE PRIMITIVES*, by S. B. Hough; Hodder and Stoughton, English price 10/6. *YIELD TO THE NIGHT*, by Joan Henry; Victor Gollancz, English price 9/6. *UNDER THE NET*, by Irish Murdoch; Chatto and Windus, English price 12/6.

S. B. HOUGH has turned from thrillers to a happy tale of the wholesome English family so lovingly portrayed by Samuel Butler and D. H. Lawrence. The "primitives" are twins, Percy and Eliza, whose youth is tortured by the ambitious gentility of their mother; in the end Percy, a poet, gets six years' hard for living on the immoral earnings of Eliza while they are living together as a married couple. The narrator blames the twins for this catastrophe, but the author blames the regional setting of the novel, and the mother; between the two, belief and interest in Percy and Eliza wither away, and although the early chapters are authentic enough, Mr. Hough confuses the character of the mother.

It is easy to define the author's own experience in Joan Henry's novel; her earlier book and magazine articles explained how she served twelve months in a women's prison. This novel is the monologue of Hilton's last 14 days before she is hanged for murder. There is little incident (her appeal fails, she is confirmed, she says goodbye to her mother); the interest is in the situation powerfully imagined from within both the women and the gaol. In her cell the light is always on, two women warders are always watching, talking, playing patience. Apart from one's overwhelming sympathy for the dying woman the best of the novel is the different reactions of the warders to their charge.

*Under the Net*—Joyce Cary cum Noel Langley—is presumably a portrait of the kind of people a budding writer meets in London. This is perhaps taking it too seriously; I was irritated by the persistent irresponsibility in character

and situation, but this simply marks it as an existentialist novel. Which is not surprising, since the author is a philosophy tutor at St. Anne's in Oxford, and this is her first novel.

—R.T.R.

### ORDEAL IN KOREA

*DEFY*, by Lieutenant Dennis Lankford, M.B.E., R.N.V.R.; Allan Wingate, English price 7/6.

*DEFY* describes one man's experiences of the war in Korea. The author tells of his life as a prisoner of war and the tortures, both physical and mental, he suffered at the hands of the Chinese Communists in their efforts to get him to "co-operate." In the first instance co-operation meant signing a confession that he was a spy, a saboteur and a war criminal. Later he was asked for details of his life and career and for information on naval administration.

The Chinese seem to have had all the usual morale-breaking techniques plus some refinements of their own. It is almost impossible to imagine the effect of being made to dig one's own grave and then being taken out, day after day, to play Russian Roulette. This consists of the guard putting one cartridge in the barrel of a revolver and then spinning the barrel. The muzzle is placed to the victim's temple and the trigger pulled. This was done every day for a week. After enduring this and many other tortures, and surviving the almost unbelievable discomforts of prison life, coupled with Korean winters, Lieutenant Lankford was finally repatriated.

This is a gripping story of the outstanding courage and tenacity of one man against the inhuman cruelties of his captors.

—B.C.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

*WHITE COOLIES*, by Betty Jeffrey; Angus and Robertson, Australian price 17/6. A straightforward and dramatic account of an Australian Army Nursing Sister's life in a Japanese prison camp.

*THE ART OF CONVERSATION*, by D. Erskine Muir; Odhams Press, through Whitcombe and Tombs, N.Z. price 9/6. An earnest little book of instruction for people who want to be good talkers.

### THE UNBORN CHILD

THEY put my poem in a book,  
Dull eyes ran over it and took  
From it no thrill, no ecstasy,  
To mystery no key,  
But over it slipped with careless glances  
As water in the brook  
Slips over pebbles, murmuring as it dances—  
No mark upon the water, nor upon the stone—  
Over the opaque surface of their mind  
It passes and is gone  
And leaves no trace behind.

Come, this one shall be mine own  
And from some spring  
Beyond my passive head  
The timid thing  
Shall creep  
As the serpent from his crevice deep  
Slides forth into his old, accustomed form  
And, coiled in grasses thick and warm,  
Drinks through his green and golden skin  
The blessed sunlight in—  
So shall this child of my own making live  
Within the womb, under my own control,  
And know but brief  
Excursions to the doorstep of my soul  
For my delight alone,  
In truth mine own, mine own,  
And to the unworthy public never shown.

Alas, old vanity and habit still  
Prevail, and here it is, against my will.

—Arnold Wall