

"ART IS NEVER EASY"

THE EXPATRIATE: A Study of Frances Hodgkins, by E. H. McCormick; New Zealand University Press, 30/-. **WORKS OF FRANCES HODGKINS IN NEW ZEALAND, by E. H. McCormick; Auckland City Art Gallery and Oxford University Press, 25/-.**

(Reviewed by W. B. Sutch)

"FRANCES HODGKINS is a painter who is beyond reach of time or fashion or critical whim. She has made her unique contribution to the traditions of European and English painting, and her place is with the masters. . . She belongs to the New Zealand Pantheon with those other folk heroes, Lord Rutherford and Katherine Mansfield and Sir Peter Buck—all New Zealand born, all acknowledged abroad, all expatriates for the greater part of their lives."

But did she have to go abroad for her "slow, laborious self-realisation"? Why are New Zealanders, to quote John Mulgan, "a queer, lost, eccentric, pervading people"? Does the life of Frances Hodgkins illustrate an experience common to all expatriates? Does the world gain from the self-imposed exile of such people? These are some

of the questions Mr. McCormick has pondered as he has read and re-read the 400,000 words written by Frances Hodgkins to her family and friends over a period of more than fifty years—a period which amply permits her to write of the respective visits to London of Richard Seddon and Walter Nash.

Here is a magnificent diary not meant for publication. Here is the life of Dunedin in the last quarter of the 19th Century—not the poverty and drabness, but the social life of the genteel, the merchants and the professional men and their families. "The picture is Victorian but not merely Victorian, it is provincial Victorian, and colonial provincial at that." (And, one is compelled to reflect, how much richer was the life of the Dunedin genteel with their art classes and their lectures than is the life of the merchant, manufacturer and professional man today.) Here are also the Richmonds, Atkinsons, Rattrays, Pharyns, Fields, Hursthouses, Von Haasts, Downie Stewarts and the wonderful Maud England, "educated in Dresden and Oxford."

But not all are cultivated and unassuming. Here is Wellington society of 1904, "a loose aggregation of a couple of hundred women with their consorts—

judges and politicians, higher public servants and ambitious professional men, retired station-owners and successful merchants—revolving with some friction about the central magnet of Government House . . . the Art Gallery is used for the periodical wool sales . . . the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts had one solitary painting."

Mr. McCormick says, and we can all agree, that New Zealand has not earned the right to be proud of Frances Hodgkins. There is ample proof that she could not have made her contribution to art if she had remained in New Zealand. Though her father and Dunedin gave her a good background of interest in the arts, and art teaching and sales of pictures enabled her by 1901 at the age of 32 to accumulate her fare to England, she could not begin to develop until her ability and character were linked with places where art was alive. And when she did grow and change New Zealand rejected her. To get money to live, she deliberately, in 1924, for example, painted pictures for the New Zealand market "straight-forward water-colours . . . flower markets and red sails and blue Mediterranean." In one resentful letter to her brother she wrote of New Zealanders: "I grow sick of hearing from intelligent people that they wished I hadn't 'changed my style.' How do they expect progress except thru' change? . . . All great Art at one stage or another requires the



BABETTE, by Frances Hodgkins

help of Braille to explain it to the semi-blind and the wilful blind—Art is never easy." And in talking, in London, to the New Zealand artist May Smith, she said: "They're lovely people, the New

World Famous Gift Pen.. First Among the Finest!

Onoto Pens, obtainable in black and radiant colours and priced from 25/- to 80/-. Onoto Sets are priced from 45/- to £10-10-0. Illustrated from left—Model 51, price 30/-; Model 16, price 35/-; Model 1614, with platinum coated nib and quarter inch gold band, price 45/-.

To own or to give Onoto is to know a deep sense of pride — a feeling of perfection. For over 70 years the time proved dependability of Onoto has become a world wide tradition.

The British Pen Famous for its Nib
Onoto

FROM ALL LEADING
STATIONERS & JEWELLERS,
SERVICED THROUGHOUT
NEW ZEALAND.

Made by: Thomas De La Rue Ltd.,
London. Distributors: Bennett
& Thomson Ltd., Wellington.

American Discovery!

SHAMPOO that
CURLS & WAVES
while you wash your hair!



- NO MACHINERY!
- NO WAITING!
- NOT A WAVE-SET!

Just shampoo and set — that's all! Both operations done in one new wonderful shampoo. Two sizes 4/- and 6/9. If unobtainable send Postal Note to Box 210, Christchurch.

A WILFRID OWEN PRODUCT!



CURLENE
Hair-waving
SHAMPOO

Prepared in New Zealand for Marlene's Inc., Chicago, by Wilfrid Owen Ltd., Christchurch. C.S.13