

The photographs they have chosen will revive many happy memories for New Zealand trappers and climbers and will surely attract novices to widen their experience.

Useful small scale maps add to the value of the text, but the lack of index is one that every reference librarian will deplore.

—John Pascoe

## PENDENNIS AND FRIENDS

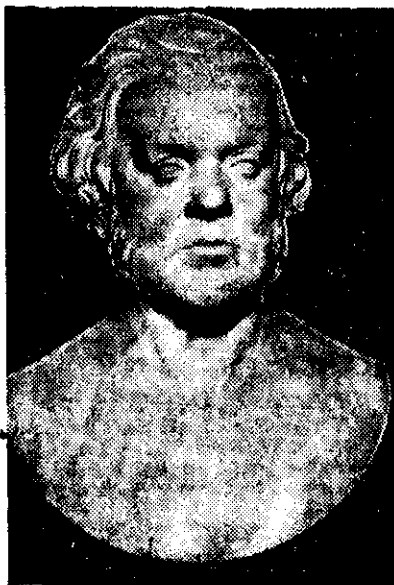
THACKERAY THE NOVELIST, by Geoffrey Tillotson, Cambridge University Press, English price, 22 6.

THACKERAY'S work is examined with thoroughness and great sympathy. Professor Tillotson is concerned mainly with the six long novels, which he sees as a unit; they are to be read, he suggests, as "one immense saga." Further, the continuity is a response to the demands of Thackeray's own nature. "They (the novels) indicate how well he himself was aware of the streamingness of experience. Not surprisingly, for he was one of those for whom narrative is as natural as the flow of the blood."

The book is an elaboration of this judgment. There are other matters to be touched on—Thackeray's conservatism, his willingness to take the world as it is, and his appeal to ordinary human nature; but these come easily, and with a sort of necessity, from that first appraisal of Thackeray as a writer.

Some critics have found him shallow; they see no evidence of social conscience, and deny him any power of sustained thought. It is doubtful if a man who lived so much in narrative could have been a systematic thinker; and I can see no reason why a weakness of philosophy should be held against him. A great novelist has an understanding of human nature which is revealed through his characters. For Thackeray, ideas passed immediately into illustration, so that even in his commentaries—as Professor Tillotson explains—his thoughts were expressed in pictures.

It is true that a writer who feels "the streamingness of experience" will reflect attitudes which may not be acceptable to a later generation. His treatment of Helen Pendennis, for instance, seems over-sentimental today, though it pleased the Victorians. But the abundant vitality and the richness of detail should remove barriers of taste set up by the years. It is very easy to slip into the world of *Vanity Fair*, or to move without con-



THACKERAY, from the bust by Marochetti

straint in *Pendennis*. And in *Esmond*, thought by some to be the best historical novel in English, the power of the author's imagination is irresistible. In that novel alone, is the answer to those who say that Thackeray's place among the great has become insecure. —H.

## THE COLOUR OF BLOOD

THE SCALPEL, THE SWORD, by Sydney Gordon and Ted Allen; Robert Hale, English price 16 6.

THIS is the story of Dr. Norman Bethune, a brilliant Canadian surgeon who made the battlefields his world. It was Bethune's writing that told the story of Malaga and Almeria to shocked non-interventionists in 1936, when Franco's German bombers pummelled women and children in the Spanish War. He was already famous in the medical world, as an arch-enemy of tuberculosis, an inventor of methods to fight it, and patenter of instruments to fight it with. But in the Great Depression he found that bad economics bred T.B. faster than doctors could cure it; and he became politically red. He was Chief Thoracic Surgeon at the Sacre Coeur Hospital, Montreal; a teacher and consultant, whose papers were read in the leading medical journals of the English-speaking world. He went to Spain because his convictions told him that "the insanity (Fascism) . . . is spreading too quickly." But he didn't go with a sword. He went with blood-banks: the first man in the history of human carnage to carry blood right to the battlefield, in bottles, on trucks.

After Spain, China. "I am going to China because I feel that is where the need is greatest; that is where I can be most useful," he wrote in 1938. At that time Japan was the enemy; and, as he was to find, Chiang Kai-shek. The tortuous policies of the Kuomintang have never been brought out more tellingly than in this story of an incorruptible. Bethune worked in Shansi; and while Japan threatened all China, Chiang Kai-shek's government found time to blockade Chinese partisans, and even to misappropriate funds sent by American democrats to Madame Sun Yat-Sen's medical committee. Bethune died in China of septicemia, in 1939, after operating without rubber gloves. Drugs could have saved him, but drugs didn't get through the Yellow Curtain. Before he died he revolutionised medicine in China.

This is a fine book, about a very great man.

—Anton Vogt

## PLEASURES OF THE IMPOSSIBLE

THE GLASS VILLAGE, by Ellery Queen; Victor Gollancz, English price 10 6. THE HERO OF SAINT ROGER, by Jerrard Tickell; Hodder and Stoughton, English price 10 6. DEATH OUT OF DARKNESS, by Michael Halliday; Hodder and Stoughton, English price 10 6. LAST CLEAR CHANCE, by Burke Wilkinson; Hodder and Stoughton, English price 10 6. A BEAUTY FOR INSPECTOR WEST, by John Creasey; Hodder and Stoughton, English price 10 6.

THAT I have criticised Ellery Queen of late makes it all the more pleasant to commend his new book, *The Glass Village*. Of his full-length novels I have read, this story of a tiny stagnant New England rural community impresses me most. An aged and famous woman artist, obviously modelled on a contemporary figure, is murdered, and the village, convinced of a stranger's guilt, literally takes up arms to block the course of suspected justice. To avoid strife, a judge belonging to the place stages an

(continued on next page)



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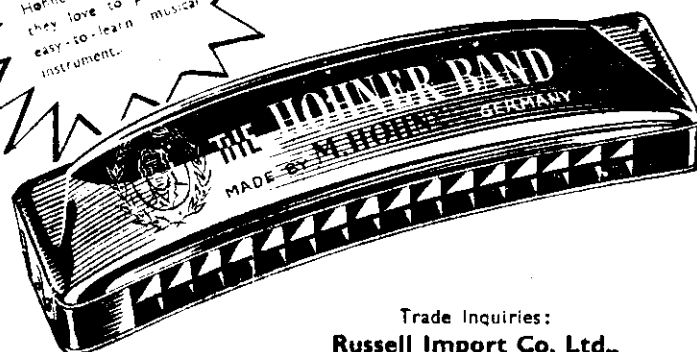
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