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BOOKS

(continued from previous page)

material is painful to James Courage, and that the tragedy set off by a talkative and vengeful washerwoman is an essay in masochism. But we are not greatly harrowed. The tempo of the book—even where the three sisters are rivals for the affections of one man—is subdued. This is one advantage of using a juvenile "medium" to tell the story; we do not rise out of his comparative indifference to the vicissitudes of the adults.

James Courage is a sensitive novelist who has so far not shown great versatility. In this respect his new book is an advance. The expatriate Garnett household, romanticising its English origins, the irrepressible Mrs. Nelson and her vulgar son, the glimpses of the school, are fresh ground. He is in the same groove still with the Blakiston parents: they show the same patterns as in *The Fifth Child* and *Fires in the Distance*—the hard self-engrossed father, the put-upon suffering mother. And James Courage is as obsessed as Ivy Compton-Burnett herself with one time and place.

Although I like *Fires in the Distance* a good deal better, I feel I shouldn't, that *Children Have Secrets* is the better novel. Its material may be less attractive, but it is an accomplished, superbly controlled story. I am very far from concurring with the *New Statesman* reviewer that practically its only interest is the novelty (to English readers) of New Zealand in 1914 as a subject of fiction. Its author has grown steadily in stature; this book will enhance it. Even his limitations seem to be turned to account.

—David Hall

ANOTHER HAMLET

THE FOLIO SHAKESPEARE HAMLET, published by the Folio Society, with illustrations by Roger Furse and an introduction by Richard Burton, English price 18.

(The shade of WILL SHAKESPEARE encounters a BIBLIOPHILE.)

Will: They've done it again! Another edition of Hamlet.

Reader: Very attractive format and type-setting—

Will: They call it "Folio," but stick neither to a Quarto nor a Folio text; M. R. Ridley edits—

Reader: Without notes, I see; but a fairly comprehensive glossary.

Will: Look at the illustrations! No colour! Where's the contrast for Hamlet's black? And not all the characters represented, even then.

Reader: I'd have liked more of the settings and — er — more completely related to the scenes.

Will (drily): Or none. But no colour! From the film, of course; black and white was false economy and bad box office.

Reader: The lines aren't numbered, so it's not much use to a student. Still, it must be most gratifying to be so continuously reprinted.

Will: Probably because the copyright's free. I see little reason for this edition; even the young actor who writes the introduction is too timid to have an opinion about the part at all.

Reader: Ah! What is yours?

Will: It's all in the play—any old edition will do. Let 'em act it, they'll soon find out. That's how I meant it, acted, to an audience. It's theatre.

Reader: So this edition is quite worth having.



JAMES COURAGE
"A superbly controlled story"

Will: Any edition of my work is better than none. And now excuse me; I must collect a few more epithets from Bernard Shaw. Such a welcome arrival.

—John V. Trevor

NEHRU'S NIECE

PRISON AND CHOCOLATE CAKE, by Nayantra Sahgal, Victor Gollancz, English price 15.

NEHRU, pivot statesman in East-West relations, did much of his thinking and writing in prison; and survived. His brother-in-law, Mrs. Pandit's husband, did not survive. A gentle, kindly scholar, he was drawn into Gandhi's non-resistance movement; like so many other good Indians, he went in and out of gaol with a martyr's enthusiasm; and he died before the British Raj made the most magnificent gesture in the whole history of imperialism.

Nayantra Sahgal's story is interesting because of her intimate relationships with the makers of history, and valuable for the insight it gives into a civilised mind that is not European. She is warmly affectionate rather than intellectual, and her book gives glimpses of her heroes, Nehru and Gandhi, that no formal historian could capture. Gay to the point of frivolity, but with underlying pride and seriousness, she writes a small girl's autobiography from the feet of the great; and her justification is that they are not made of clay.

—Anton Vogt

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE PATH OF PRAYER, compiled by Osborne T. Miller, Allen and Unwin, English price 10/6. An anthology from many sources, selected with the intention of showing the nature, purposes and techniques of prayer.

ROYAL VISIT, compiled, photographed, written and designed by the Australian News and Information Bureau; published by Angus and Robertson, Australian price 21/6. The official commemorative volume for the Queen's visit to Australia.

CONGREGATIONALISM: A RE-STATEMENT, by Daniel Jenkins; Faber and Faber, English price 10/6. A book for the layman, offered primarily as a contribution to the Ecumenical Movement.

BELLS IN ENGLAND, by Tom Ingram; Frederick Muller Ltd., N.Z. price 18/-. A full study, historical and descriptive, by an author for whom bells have been a lifelong interest.

N.Z. LISTENER, MARCH 25, 1955.