

the British Museum and the Christmas reverie, though Dylan Thomas's funeral jars uncomfortably—but the good things are corrupted by a meretricious setting, and by the mad-ening ticker-tape of Mr. MacNeice's ersatz terza rima. If radio has a function today as a patron for poets, let it be for a straight commissioned job of work on a set theme, or an independent reading of a poem independently produced; not, we must beg, for this shameless Third Programme exploitation of private thoughts and feelings.

—James Bertram

THE BIG GAMES

50 YEARS OF THE ALL BLACKS, edited by Willard Wooler; Phoenix House and A. H. and A. W. Reed, 16s.

AS books published on the earlier All Black tours to the British Isles are now almost collectors' items, this comprehensive survey of all four tours will be welcomed by many football enthusiasts. Three of the six contributors are Welsh, five were internationals, and four had played with distinction against All Blacks in international matches. Active participants usually find it difficult to write objective history, but these former players have achieved a very fair measure of impartiality. Commentaries are given on every game of the four tours. Some of these contain little beyond the names of the players and the point scorers, while other more significant matches have correspondingly more detail. A general survey of each tour and some statistics complete each section. For the most recent tour, extracts from press comments by a considerable number of critics are given. D. R. Gent being the most impressive.

Two or three pages are devoted to the most controversial topic in Rugby—whether Bob Deans grounded the ball over the line in the only match the 1905-6 All Blacks lost. As time seems merely to have hardened opinion on both sides, the truth will never be established, so the matter might decently be buried at this stage. The formal group photographs of the tourists and their occasional conquerors are well produced, but action photographs of Rugby rarely seem to catch the vital moments with much success.

That fine forward and former England captain, Sir Wavell Wakefield, contributes an admirably balanced foreword in which he deplores the disproportionate importance of the penalty goal in modern Rugby and suggests alterations to the laws to make the kicking of such goals more difficult.

The book is attractively produced and is a worthy addition to the still slender library of books dealing with Rugby football.

—R. G. Wilson

PRIDE AND INTEGRITY

A PRIDE OF LIONS, by John Brooks; Victor Gollancz, English price 12 6. CRESS DELAHANTY, by Jessamyn West; Hodder and Stoughton, English price 12 6. MARK LAMBERT'S SUPPER, by J. I. M. Stewart; Victor Gollancz, English price 10 6.

PRIDE—integrity—is the keynote to these three novels, since the first two deal with that quality, and the third reveals some lack of it. John Brooks's American novel about decaying aristocracy in an eastern town, and Jessamyn West's sprightly study of American adolescence, reveal pride of the indi-

vidual, while J. I. M. Stewart, in his much-publicised incursion into straight fiction, shows technical pride only. Thus I should prefer to dismiss Mark Lambert's Supper in few words, as a pretentious Jamesian pastiche in which character is wrapped in a cocoon of words, and plot reveals a crudity worthy of Mrs. Henry Wood or M. E. Braddon. Like these ladies, Mr. Stewart-Innes will probably convince his addicted readers that here is something worth reading; evidently I'm not addicted enough.

John Brooks's A Pride of Lions is full of meat, albeit rather over-bled veal. Here the characters—the dying father, the waffling mother, all the fumbling relatives—are subtly drawn: they convince you that you are among people. People whose pride will never release their old teeth from the carcasses they worry: people who do not have to be big in order to reveal the true grandeur of pathos. That the general impression is one of futility, is due to Mr. Brooks's masterly writing: there is none in the conception. If you wish to be depressed by other aristocrats than New York socialites, read A Pride of Lions and see how they, like aristocrats everywhere, are fighting a force they can neither contain nor withstand.

Cress Delahanty, which appeared segmented in the New Yorker, is a brighter "psychological" piece, so plumb full of surprises that one reader at least had lost all power of astonishment at the end of it. The hysterical note of adolescence pervades everything that Cress does: and you foresee a bright future for her in Hysterica when, as a grown woman with young integrity lost, she is well on her way to becoming a Daughter of the Revolution. There are some pleasant bits of descriptive writing in which Miss West so far forgets herself as to write with limpid lucidity: but I found the tone of the whole so forced, so weedy, like plants raised in central heating, that I finished the book more than ever depressed by contemplation of the current American scene.

—Sarah Campion

DISTINGUISHED BARRISTER

SOME WERE SPIES, by the Earl Jowitt; Hodder and Stoughton, English price 16s.

HERE are, first, some accounts of espionage prosecutions during the last war. The spies were quite undistinguished, minor and inept. If anything they rather command our sympathy as victims of the fumbings of the German bureaucracy. Nor are we told anything of the men themselves or even of their ultimate fate: so that the accounts lack interest and drama. In addition to these trials there is the Youssouff libel case against Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (we have had the other side from Sir Patrick Hastings). There is the Major Rowlandson life insurance case. The Major shot himself in a taxi in Pall Mall two minutes before his policy expired and the company successfully resisted liability under the nine-year-old contract with a defence of public policy.

When the author prosecuted Lord Kysant they were members of the same dining club. After his conviction Kysant resigned, but on Jowitt's motion the resignation was not accepted. After serving his sentence, therefore, Kysant resumed active membership. "I was pleased with this ending," says Lord Jowitt, "for I felt that Lord Kysant had been, to some extent, misled by the uncertain state of the law."

Lord Jowitt mentions that he met and shook hands with Hatry ten years after (continued on next page)

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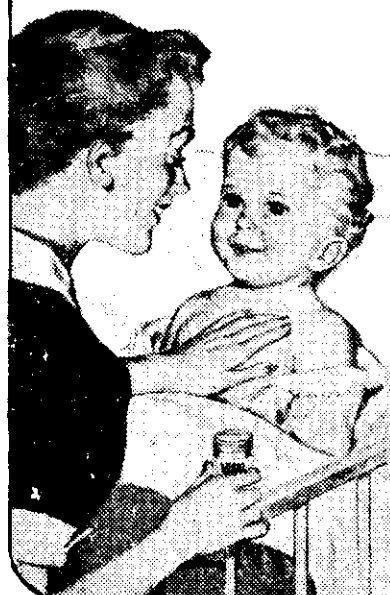
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