

be entertained, as surely and completely as a fair ground crowd are entertained by a Wall of Death rider. This view of the relation of artist and audience, one feels, is worth its weight in deuterium. It governs French literature and humanises even the armour-plated existentialists. It makes Jean Giraudoux's play live and snappy every centimetre of the way, crammed with conscious anachronisms and crisp as a lettuce leaf. It all begins when young Paris, yachting off the coast of Greece, hooks Helen without her Bikini suit, while her husband bellows over the water and yanks a crab from his big toe. Helen sees life in pictures, unfortunately for peace-loving Hector and the city of Troy: "... When I imagine the future some of the pictures I see are coloured, and some are dull and drab. And up to now it has always been the coloured scenes which have happened in the end."

Hector does not want war; nor does Ulysses. But war breaks upon them through the ironic farce of human vanity. No one is really to blame. The vigorous and witty pessimism of the play sharpens the reader's wits. Christopher Fry is the right man to translate it. Surely it could be played here.

—James K. Baxter

GUIDE TO THE BRAIN

THE HUMAN BRAIN, by John Pfeiffer; Victor Gollancz. English price 16/-.

PARTS of this book are first-rate. Into the first ten chapters the author packs a layman's guide to his brain. The information is accurate, plainly presented and well within the background knowledge of most folk. By page 147 the reader has come to some understanding, however approximate, of the



most complicated structure in the universe. Perhaps, too, with a certain uneasiness about using his brain to examine his brain.

The six chapters which follow are devoted to mental disease with a heavy leaning towards the brain surgery and spectacular treatments which sometimes make headlines. One wonders if Pfeiffer is pandering to the morbid interest that "operations" have for some people.

The book ends with two chapters on "electronic brains" in which these computing devices are simply explained; for, after all, they are simple things. This leads naturally to speculation on the possibility of original thought by

BOOK SHOP

IN the Book Shop programme on Wednesday, May 2, Robert Goodman will review three books: "The Day of the Monkey," by David Karp; "Loot and Loyalty," by Jerzy Pietrkiewicz; and "The Road," by Harry Martenson. J. H. Rose will discuss "Ascent of K.2," by Professor Ardito Desio; and the Rev. Alun Richards will talk about "The Whispering Gallery" (John Lehmann) and "Surprised by Joy" (C. S. Lewis).

the machine. The point is, I think, disposed of when one considers that, in framing the instructions for what the machine is to do, one practically designs the machine. The possibilities of a machine having control of its own power source do not occur to Pfeiffer. They have not eluded the comic strip purveyors. Nor the physicists. Such a machine is dangerous.

If you believe that mind is merely the brain in action this book will broaden your understanding. The chapters on memory are masterly. Those who think that the mind is something more will be in difficulty with Pfeiffer. He finds the experimental data sufficient. Sufficient, that is, to account for the phenomena he describes.

—J.D.McD.

THE CLAIMS OF LOVE

ASPECTS OF LOVE, by David Garnett; Chatto and Windus, English price 8/6. *WOMEN DIE TWICE*, by Paule Lafeuille; Victor Gollancz, English price 10/6. *SHADOWED JOURNEY*, by Mavis Winder; A. H. and A. W. Reed Ltd., N.Z. price 9/6. *A PIECE OF LUCK*, by Frances Gray Patton; Victor Gollancz, English price 12/6.

THE aspect of love which chiefly preoccupies David Garnett in his new short novel (first for 20 years) is its unpredictability. Rose, the first heroine, is French, matter of fact, and embarrassingly honest. She finds it perfectly straightforward to pass on from a juvenile Englishman to his sixty-year-old uncle. Years later it is equally suitable for the same young man to fall in love with Rose's fourteen-year-old daughter. The plot is neat—a diminished version of *La Ronde*. The treatment is decorous. The whole work is graceful. Am I imagining things, or do I detect a certain weariness?

Sophistication, too—under a facade of goggling simplicity—is the dominant characteristic of *Women Die Twice*. Incidentally, its blurb is more than usually misleading. Like David Garnett's book, this novel translated from the French, is neat, short and handles loves with

(continued on next page)

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Making excuse for the power that isn't.

—R.G.P.