

NEW ZEALAND PLAYERS THEATRE TRUST BOARD

(Incorporated under the Religious, Charitable and Educational
Trusts Act, 1908)

invite applications for
**DEBENTURES TO AN AGGREGATE VALUE OF
£20,000**

NOW OPEN FOR PUBLIC SUBSCRIPTION

DENOMINATIONS: A. £1, to be redeemed at £1/2/6.
B. £5, bearing interest payable on redemption at 4% per annum.

TERM: 5 to 15 years, the actual debentures to be redeemed from time to time to be determined by lot.

OBJECT OF ISSUE: To enable the Trust Board to acquire the New Zealand Players Company Ltd. as a going concern and, thereafter, to continue professional theatre activities throughout New Zealand along lines similar to those followed by the Company up to the present.

This is your opportunity to participate in the financing and control (through the members of the Board representing Debenture Holders) of the only professional theatre venture both resident in New Zealand and regularly touring its productions right throughout the country. Since May, 1953, 541,868 adults and children have seen the 15 plays presented in 43 towns and cities throughout New Zealand by the Players Company. The success of the present Debenture Issue will ensure the ability of the newly-formed Trust Board to continue this worthwhile work in the future—presenting plays with New Zealand actors and actresses to New Zealand audiences.

SUBSCRIBE NOW

Enquiries for prospectuses and further information, as well as applications for debentures should be made to:

The Secretary,
New Zealand Players Theatre Trust Board,
P.O. Box 7033, WELLINGTON.

Applications to be accompanied by cheques, plus exchange, if drawn outside Wellington, together with full christian names, surnames and postal addresses.

"SALAD DAYS"

Can still be seen at

Embassy Theatre, Hamilton	- -	August 13th and 14th
Majestic, Rotorua	- -	August 15th and 16th
Memorial Hall, Whakatane	- -	August 17th
Town Hall, Tauranga	- -	August 18th and 20th
Town Hall, Otorohanga	- -	August 21st
Opera House, New Plymouth	- -	August 22nd and 23rd

and in return seasons at

Playhouse, Auckland	- - -	August 25 to September 1
Opera House, Wellington	- -	September 3rd to 8th

OLYMPIC GAMES BROADCASTS

YOU
NEED **THE LISTENER**



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A REGULAR SUBSCRIBER

Books

THE GREAT AMATEUR

A HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING
PEOPLES, Vol. 1, the Birth of Britain, by
Winston S. Churchill; Cassell and Co., Eng-
lish price 30/-.

(Reviewed by R. M. Burdon)

THIS volume takes us from earliest times up to the end of the Barons' war. It is the first of four, all of which were finished by 1939, when the additional fields of knowledge embraced by research and the wealth of fresh facts disclosed by specialising scholars had already combined to present the surveyor of a vast historical scene with an intimidating amount of material to manipulate. Sir Winston Churchill, however, accepts certain self-imposed limitations by disclaiming any attempt "to rival the works of professional historians," and aiming "rather to present a personal view on the processes whereby English-speaking peoples throughout the world have achieved their distinctive position and character."

The personal view that colours his work might well have derived from Carlyle's assertion that "the history of what man has accomplished in this world, is at bottom the History of the Great Men who have worked there." But this theme is not pursued to extravagant conclusions. Sir Winston can turn aside to summarise the origin and evolution of English Common Law with the same facility that he applies to an essay on the long-bow, its efficacy in battle, the shift it caused in the balance of European power, and the minor social revolution for which its continued supremacy as a weapon could have been responsible. "If cannon had not been invented the English mastery of the long-bow might have carried them even farther in their Continental domination. We know no reason why the yeoman archer should not have established a class position similar in authority to that of the armoured knights, but upon a far broader foundation."

Yet generally speaking Sir Winston is far less interested in social trends or economic pressures than in individual actions. Heroes are hailed, belauded, and also sometimes arraigned for faults that qualified their greatness. Attempts to explode the legendary anecdotes that cling to their names rouse the author's impatience. "Tiresome investigators have undermined this excellent tale," he complains after relating the story of Queen Eleanor and "Fair Rosamond." Not if he can prevent it shall the romance of history be dissipated by destructive research or sordid rationalisation. If King Alfred did not really burn the cakes, if Robert Bruce was not really "heartened by the persistent efforts of the most celebrated spider known to history," it is still a good thing that the stories should be remembered. The miraculous features of Joan of Arc's career may as well be accepted for want of a better or more credible explanation.

An acknowledged amateur among scholars, Sir Winston has professional qualifications of another kind. He has taken a leading part in so many events that have their parallels in ancient history that personal experience has bred familiarity with the distant past. After conquering Mercia the Danes "set up a local puppet, in a fashion which has often been imitated since." No doubt



SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL

"Personal experience has bred familiarity with the distant past"

he thought of Quisling when writing that sentence, and doubtless, too, he saw a forerunner of the "appeasers" in one of the Saxon kings who "used money instead of arms. He used it in ever-increasing quantities, with ever-diminishing returns." The revelations of scholarly research seldom penetrate far beyond the confines of a narrow academic circle until transmuted into palatable form by the pen of a Gibbon, a Trevelyan, a Churchill. Sir Winston is master of a style that will help his "personal view" to compete on terms of advantage with views backed by greater erudition but less happily expressed; for the average reader is prone to fight shy of history that is not also literature, and the average reader, when all is said and done, inherits the earth.

SECOND TERM

YEARS OF TRIAL AND HOPE: The Truman Memoirs, Vol. 2; Hodder and Stoughton, English price 30/-.

MR. TRUMAN, like all authors who break their story in halves, has had to compete with himself in his second volume, and has not been wholly successful. To begin with, it was more exciting to him personally to find himself "riding a tiger" without warning or preparation than occupying the same seat when he had more knowledge and experience. In the second place, the tiger went into wilder places during the first ride, and the spectator is aware of the difference. But if it is a little less thrilling to restore order than to fight for survival, it is the same Harry Truman in both situations—cool, shrewd, plain-spoken, and clear-headed. He was sometimes dull and flat in his first volume, and in his second he is too often platitudinous. But he is always sensible; always clear and direct and honest. He can give way, but he can't be bullied or bluffed. His calm acceptance of his role as the leader of the leading nation of the world I find simple rather than naive; childlike, and almost childish. But it is better than affected modesty. The war did leave the United States the richest and strongest of the surviving world Powers, and its people did ask Harry Truman to lead it for another four years. It was better to say simply, "Thank you. I will not fail you," than

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