

portraits and its descriptions of domestic, hotel, and camp life 90 years ago. I can't agree with the publishers that Fremantle's is the best description of Gettysburg now available; but it has the great merit that it is the description of a man who kept writing down what he saw as it was happening. I think Fremantle's best touches are the sidelights he throws on the civil population; the rancour and rudeness of the women to soldiers not on their side; the primitive living and travelling conditions in Texas; the double beds for men in nearly all wayside taverns; the attitude of the slaves; the fighting Christian ministers. Stonewall Jackson's chief of staff was a Presbyterian professor of theology. Lee's artillery chief was a doctor of divinity. Polk, who commanded an Army Corps, was the Bishop of Louisiana. All these officers and many others—including the chaplain who was a surgeon and the surgeon who was a chaplain—Fremantle describes with great vividness, as he does most of the men and women who interested him as he went along. But his worship he reserves for Lee.

—O.D.

## LIGHT AND SERIOUS

**STARS IN THE HEATHER**, by Oswald Wynd; Blackwood, English price 10/-. **THE STRUGGLE WITH THE ANGELS**, by Adam de Hegedus; Allan Wingate, New Zealand price 13/6. **A WREATH FOR UDOMO**, by Peter Abrahams; Faber and Faber, English price 15/-. **THE GAME AND THE GROUND**, by Peter Vansittart; Reinhardt, English price 12/6.

OF these four books two are intended to amuse and entertain, and two are intended to offer serious argument

through their fictions. Oswald Wynd's piece of trivia is set in Scotland. It is simple, incredible, and awful.

*The Struggle with the Angels* has an improbable basis in fact. De Hegedus, a Hungarian, uses this to make a story of the Crown of Hungary being offered to an English newspaper owner, who is tempted, but withdraws. The principal has a name but little substance. The narrator and the lesser people of this post-Trianon world are treated well, especially the Hungarians, who are mostly improbable and very Hungarian. The comedy is comic, the wryness wry, and the entertainment is entertaining.

That last recital I set down deliberately. Adam de Hegedus (in what was regrettably his last book) knew what he wanted to do in the way of construction, and how he wanted his adopted language to perform. The third author here, Peter Abrahams, is like Hegedus in that "he writes in English," but his most recent book, *A Wreath for Udomo*, is badly constructed and written in an inflated English. There are so many points to Abraham's story that in place of pattern there is only confusion. Udomo is the first Prime Minister of Panafrika, neighbouring Pluralia, a superficial South Africa as Panafrika is a superficial Nigeria. In trying to give his violent story a general reference for British African settlements in transition Abrahams loses con-

trol. *A Wreath for Udomo* is loud, shaky and crude. Indignation is a dangerous strength.

Abrahams is not, of course, unintelligent, but he is too much committed. Peter Vansittart is not committed in the same way to his theme, ostensibly the recovery of physically, emotionally, intellectually and morally deformed children in Germany at the time of the airlift. By realising an immediate world, he leaves himself free to control his larger implications. *The Game and the*

*Ground* is thoughtful and horrifying. Vansittart is not yet a considerable novelist, but he shows plenty of signs here that he may become one.

—K.S.

## CRIME—AND PUNISHMENT

**CELL 2455, DEATH ROW**, by Caryl Chessman; Longmans Green, English price 16/-. **POLICE HEADQUARTERS**, by Quentin Reynolds; Cassell, English price 18/-.

ON the 25th of June, 1948, 27-year-old Caryl Chessman, a man with a particularly revolting criminal history, was sentenced to death in California for kidnapping. On the 8th of August, 1956, Chessman made his tenth legal move in eight years to avoid the gas chamber, after spending a longer period in the death cell than I believe any man in America before him. During these eight years, Chessman, who conducted his own defence and filed his own appeals, has mastered and navigated with superb skill the intricacies of what must be the most involved criminal laws in the world. He has also written two books, the first of which has just been published.

(continued on next page)

## Parking Metres

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Apartheid law to rule blood transfusions.

—Headline.

*SING tee and fi and tum and to—  
I smell the blood of Old Black Joe  
And be it group A, B or O  
I like it not.  
Leukaemia is my disease,  
I'll have no black corpuscles, please,  
From Zulu, Pigmy, Sudanese  
Or Hottentot.*

*If where the matching tests are made  
Off-white becomes the popular shade,  
The habit must be, I'm afraid,  
Nipped in the bud.  
What though the blood bank be in debt,  
A native is a native yet,  
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But not for blood.*

—R.G.P.

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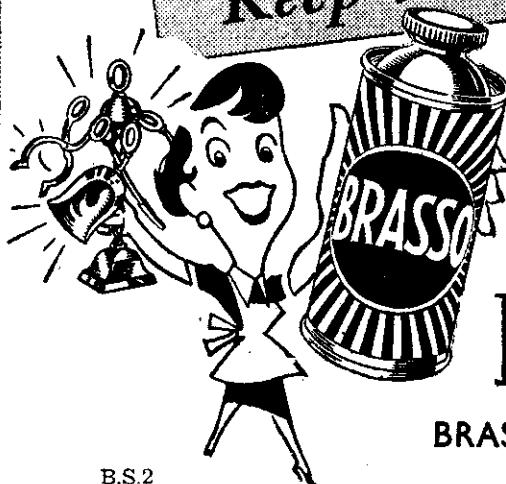
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