

with an area nearly seven times that of New Zealand, a continental climate, about 15 million sheep of the local breed, great herds of cattle and horses, and considerable potential for arable farming. Alley thoroughly enjoyed travelling in such country, talking with the people at work, admiring the modern buildings in old cities, wondering at the indigenous culture, contrasting the conditions he saw with those "before the liberation." One can enjoy the record while blinking at such occasional ill-judged phrases as "millions of tons of bombs" dropped by Australian planes in Malaya.

Of the capital city of Ulan Bator he writes: "A tar-sealed road from airport on to a brand-new city beside a winding stream; lines of white buildings stretching out to what once they called 'the holy town of Urga,' now proud of the name, Ulan Bator, 'Red Hero.'" I should perhaps mention that this quotation, split up, of course, into short lines—ten of them, is from one of the "poems." There are about 30 beautifully reproduced photographs.

—L.J.W.

DEATHS AND DECEPTIONS

THE DIEHARD, by Jean Potts; Victor Gollancz, English price 12/6. **INSPECTOR QUEEN'S OWN CASE**, by Ellery Queen; Victor Gollancz, English price 12/6. **THE MAN IN THE NET**, by Patrick Quentin; Victor Gollancz, English price 12/6. **DEATH OF AN ADMIRAL**, by Gilbert Hackforth-Jones; Hodder and Stoughton, English price 12/6. **THE STORY THAT COULD NOT BE TOLD**, by Martha Albrand; Hodder and Stoughton, English price 12/6. **PARCELS FOR INSPECTOR WEST**, by John Creasey; Hodder and Stoughton, English price 11/6. **AGENT FROM THE WEST**, by David Williams; Jonathan Cape, English price 13/6.

"ALL through his wife's funeral Lew Morgan wrestled with a nervous, unseemly urge to yawn"—a promising first sentence. I thought Jean Potts's second "detective" a falling away from the brilliance of *Go, Lovely Rose*. Her third book, *The Diehard*, is much less of a thriller, but perhaps a better novel. Lew Morgan is a successful American business man, family tyrant, cheerful vulgarian, completely selfish, and attractive to women. More than one person wishes him dead, and dead he becomes. The chief interest is the psychology of the family and of Morgan's mistress. The two grown-up children behave before their father like rabbits before a stoat, which unfortunately is what sometimes happens in real life.

Ellery Queen's police-inspector father has hovered round Ellery in many a mystery. Now, in his retirement, he has a case of his own—multiple murder. The old man is as likeable as he is competent, and so is the nurse of fifty with whom he teams up and falls in love. Their romance is a pleasant foil to the evil world they explore; and helping them, are a policeman and his wife who could serve as models of American practical warmheartedness. Ellery does not appear and I didn't miss him.

Another well-known American practitioner, Patrick Quentin, makes *The Man in the Net* a very tense tale of an artist who is caught in the toils of an elaborate frame-up for the murder of his problem wife. The villagers' lynching-party hunt for him will make you hold your breath. A tape recording reveals the truth in highly dramatic fashion, but the use of this God-from-the-machine threatens to become common.

Gilbert Hackforth-Jones's twelfth novel, *Death of an Admiral*, is based on another kind of frame-up. A British submarine commander inherits from an admiral a problem of vengeance on a German U-boat officer for having, as the admiral believed, killed his wife and

SUBURB AT NIGHT

*THE lamps come out like flowers upon the dark;
Hills disappear; only when close at hand know flaring light
Of man's attack, now shining net strung wide,
Stressing his borders. So are the ways shown plain
For timid feet; houses, like shells, translucent,
Glowing upon the slopes. Here no mistake;*

*And bus brings certainty at stated times,
Another shell, half eaten out by man's
Accomplished white assurance, moving with swift stride.
The lamps of homing cars bore bright
And painful tunnels into the shrinking dark
That owns no place, usurped; so, too, the pale stars.*

*Sometimes the lamps go out; power fails,
And through the zero hours men sleep in savage dark
Pressing, urgent, upon the obdurate hills.
No roads remain, no net; no fearful house betrays
Its presence to the enemy; and over the foetal land
Stars blinding blink; aeons can be counted here*

*And the sea sounds, fateful, through centuries.
If moon should rise and free the dark-drowned land
No comfort creeps; shadows are Silurian, and
Dinosaurs dismay where rock outcrops seemed real.
Moon, you have no mercy; give for the small soul
Blaze of electric light, or dawn, upon the highway.* —Paul Henderson

child wantonly after their ship had been sunk. The German comes to England, satisfies the Englishman of his innocence, and, as a man of honour, expounds the ethics of his profession. The solving of the mystery is accompanied by well-described routine submarine operations. This is a good amphibious

story written by a man who commanded submarines.

I can follow my commendation of Martha Albrand's *The Masque of Alexander* with one for *The Story That Could Not Be Told*. This more compact book tells of an extraordinary imperson-

(continued on next page)



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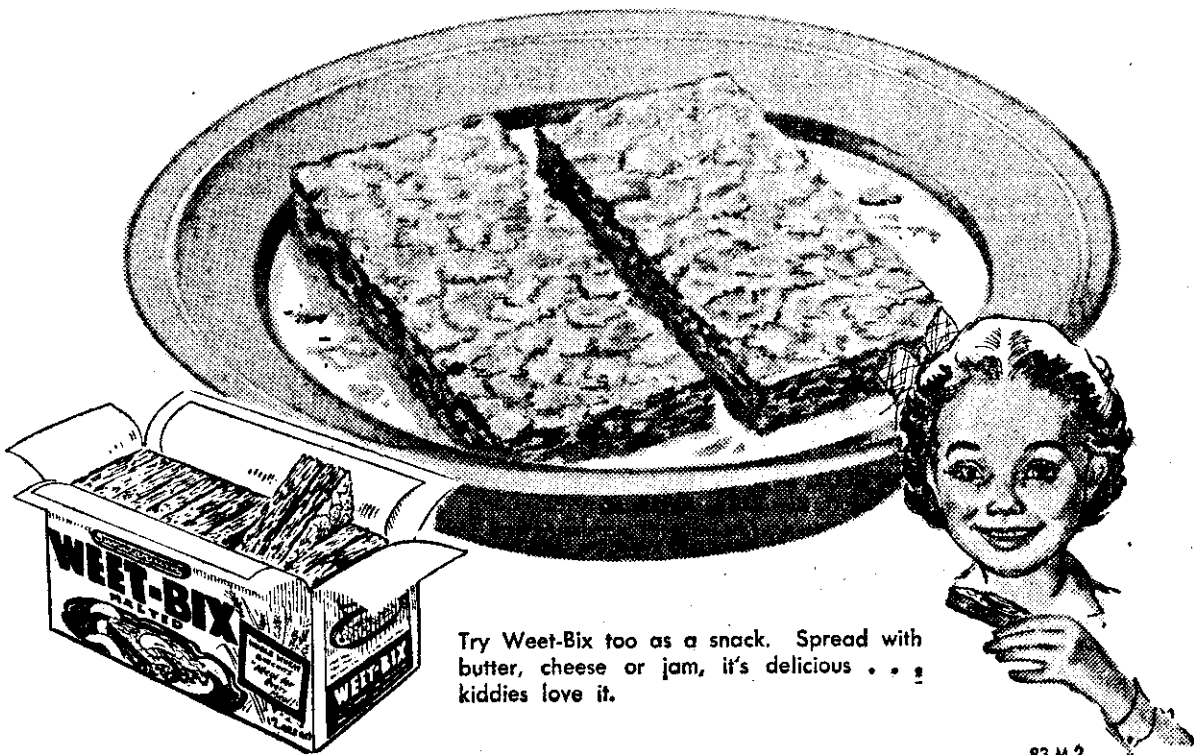
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