

BALANCE OF PAYMENTS

"HAS anyone got any questions?"

The speaker invited at last.

And most of the audience stifled a yawn

And felt that their bedtime was past.

Till one of them rose and demanded

In a manner as friendly as ice,

"I'd like you to tell us what's all this we hear

About paying our income tax twice."

The candidate knew all the answers;

He hadn't been born yesterday.

And he shouted without hesitation,

"Well, let us look at it this way—

If ever you've had to move baggage,

Perhaps you have noticed, my son,

That carrying two heavy cases

Is actually easier than one."

—R.G.P.

Michael Campbell's vice of scholarship; and a first-rate novel is original and scholar he is. The present volume, a funny. It is also the story of the development of a young man being initiated into a more sophisticated society, this time in Dublin. The Peter Perry of the title is his eccentric aunt, a theatre-haunting party-giver whose precarious solvency just survives the three months covered by the book.

These four novels all succeed, but don't, please, look to them for a vindication of conventional morals.

—David Hall

WAR AND REVOLUTION

RUSSIA LEAVES THE WAR, by George Kennan; Faber and Faber, English price 50/-.

TO the Russians, who secured Mr Kennan's departure from Moscow, and to the Republicans, who did as much for him in Washington, we must be grateful. Rusticated to the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, Mr Kennan (like his frustrated forerunner Machiavelli) has turned his experience, acumen and literary ability to the ser-

vice of scholarship; and a first-rate scholar he is. The present volume, a detailed study of the development of American policy towards Russia in the period from the October Revolution to the Treaty of Brest Litovsk, is a model of its kind. No student of diplomatic history can afford to miss it. But it would be a pity if it were read only by specialists, for three reasons. First, like all good historical writing it has the fascination of a detective story, as the author reconstructs, from the evidence surviving, the actions and motives of the participants. Secondly, those participants included a number of remarkable all-too-human beings, whose divergent responses to the rapidly-changing circumstances, against the background of war and revolution, make for high drama (tragedy or satirical comedy as the reader chooses). Finally, the book conveys more clearly than any other I have read the nature of diplomatic activity and of American foreign policy-making. And if all the thought and argument and nervous energy devoted by intelligent and well-meaning men to those pursuits now seem to have had little influence on the course of events, how much more fortunate that the

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To keep those old dried flowers

FLAT—

A BOOK

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ends, was her passionate admirer, attended all her London seasons, and gave her a bracelet inscribed simply: "A Rachel: Victoria Reine."

Joanna Richardson has sensitively evoked the enormous power of Rachel's gift. She lets us feel the labour expended in years of studying what was to be Rachel's greatest role, Racine's *Phedre*, the greatest and most taxing in the French tragic repertory, to which she gave a definite and final form for her generation, perhaps for all time. Her art consisted in the perfect marriage of intellect and emotion, an absolute control of every nuance, every gesture. She moved through her roles like a priestess, celebrating her own intensely formal, yet passionate ritual. Miss Richardson's book vividly illumines this tragic, enigmatic figure, opens a window on the times, and makes the prospect lively and convincing; and she clearly understands the art of this supremely gifted actress.

—Bruce Mason

MORALITY APART

MADAME SOLARIO; Heinemann, English price 16/-. *SOME DARLING FOLLY*, by Monica Stirling; Victor Gollancz, English price 12/6. *A SORT OF BEAUTY*, by Jack Reynolds; Secker and Warburg, English price 16/-. *PETER PERRY*, by Michael Campbell; Heinemann, English price 13/6.

THE anonymous author of *Madame Solario* has treated an entangled theme with delicacy and assurance. The scene is Italy some time in the first decade of this century, and the whole atmosphere of the novel is nostalgic. A beautiful and mysterious woman and her rascally brother move in a cosmopolitan society with a predatory intention none the less sinister for being vague. The writer is so deeply in love with his theme that he allows a good deal of detail to invade his text; Proust could get away with 50 pages devoted to a dinner party, but here an over-close scrutiny of the fabric of events sometimes creates a static effect. But the book is good, its flavour refreshingly unusual.

Monica Stirling tells her story with an enviable economy and grace. A Parisian actor becomes the lover of a young woman who very soon prefers her advocate husband—a triumph of taste rather than of virtue; a book that is not a word too long.

A Sort of Beauty is prolix and slow-moving, but the detail it heaps up is authentic and, though there could be less of it, is never wearisome. A callow young Englishman goes out to Thailand and becomes infatuated with the Siamese courtesan who ruins him. On the whole he enjoys being ruined. On the whole we enjoy the spectacle.

'Broad shoulders' that 'can take it'

To look tailored, to look important, to feel important wear

a Rainster topcoat of fine all-wool gabardine, rich satin

lining and suede finish pockets. If it should rain —

Rest assured, those so suave waterproof-lined shoulders

'can take it'. Increasingly men buy Rainsters as dressy

topcoats... accepting the proof-lining of the shoulders as

a special raincoat assurance.

Rainster

