

TICKETS FOR TRAVEL

THE ROAD TO TIMBUCTOO, by John Skolle; Victor Gollancz, English price 18/-.
CAPE COLD TO CAPE HOT, by Richard Pape; Odhams Press, through Whitcombe and Tombs, 18/-.
THE CONQUEST OF FITZROY, by M. A. Azema; André Deutsch, English price 21/-.
THE DESERT MY DWELLING PLACE, by Lieutenant-Colonel David Lloyd Owen; Cassell, English price 18/-.

(Reviewed by D. W. McKenzie)

THE tradition of travel in the desert has a long roster of English names associated with it; John Skolle is an American, but he has the spirit of Burton behind him. His love of the Sahara led him to travel alone in the southwest of its arid wastes until he joined a caravan from the salt mines of Taoudeni taking the bars of salt to Timbuctoo, and became just one of the camel drivers. His picture of their life from day to day is one of the most entrancingly simple narratives of recent travel literature. Their equipment for living is stripped to a minimum in an environment which makes one understand why the Hell of the people of the desert is a hot one. A man who becomes ill is left behind in the blazing wilderness with a goatskin of water only. Another caravan, if one is coming, may

pick him up. Allah alone knows. Perhaps the most interesting of the sections in this book, whose fascination is quite out of proportion to its small size, deals with that most extraordinary desert people, the Tuareg, the people of the Blue Veil, a veil which covers the mouth of the men all their lives. These, the proudest, the fiercest, the most intractable of the desert nomads, to whom war and raiding are a man's way of life, are shown as coming into the sphere of French-controlled courts without understanding fundamentally the differences in the two patterns of culture which here come into contact. What can be done Skolle does not suggest; he simply records the facts in a book it is difficult to put down.

Richard Pape, in *Cape Cold to Cape Hot*, is the hero of his own book. With a reputation for boldness, and a couple of autobiographical books about it behind him, he looks around for something remarkable to do, and decides to drive a British car, an Austin A90, from the North Cape of Norway to the southern tip of Africa. That he begins in Norway means he must go there in summer, and thus reach the Sahara in summer also, when it is normally sealed to travellers. He then must cross Equatorial Africa in the northern rainy

season. He does this in the face of troubles which will bring out any car-owner in a cold perspiration, at break-neck speed because he thinks a foreign car is on the "road" after him. From the pages emerges the picture of the bold extrovert getting himself out of difficulties which would defeat lesser men, emerging alive after having been lost without water in the Sahara, persuading an R.A.F. man in North Africa to go A.W.O.L. with him, and then complaining about the shortsightedness of a country that wants him back. Pape's personality one can admire for its ruthlessness without liking it. He records without comment that when an Arab sets a dog on to him he knocks the dog

(continued on next page)

THE MAGNIFICENT ugliness of the Town Hall, Sydney. One of the many half-tone illustrations in "The Architecture of Victorian Sydney," by Morton Herman; Angus and Robertson, N.Z. price 84/-



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