

The characters remain afar off, going through their actions rather mechanically. Yet with half his mind Dr. Lin can do more and better than the many people who come to the business of writing blessed with no mind at all.

The book is worth reading for a couple of sentences, comments on American civilisation. Tom Fong, the old man, who sweated without cease in a laundry to make enough to bring his family from China, is hit by a truck: "When the police came they found Tom Fong lying in a pool of blood, dying a typically American death." And the damning question without answer that could only come from a son of a Matriarchy: "The Americans would proclaim, display, exploit and brazen sex from the skies . . . but where did the (American) mothers go when they suckled their young?"

—G. le F. Y.

TUDOR INTRIGUE

LORD ROBERT'S WIFE, by Elizabeth D'Oyley; Michael Joseph, London. English price, 9/6.

ELIZABETH D'OYLEY has written a capable story set in the period between the decline of Henry VIII and the rise of Elizabeth, a time tormented by persecution, struggles for the throne, and an unsettled peasantry. Her background is impressive, yet in spite of her skill and imagination some of the characters seem a trifle wooden. The period language and historical detail may have slowed up the story, but there are no obvious flaws. Her explanation of the mysterious death of Amy Robsart, wife of Queen Elizabeth's favourite, the Earl of Leicester, is interesting and convincing.

—F.R.B.

NEW VERSE

BEYOND THE TERMINUS OF STARS, by Hugo Manning; Phoenix Press, London. English price, 5/-.

THE PATTERN OF A DARK, by John Sundowne; Phoenix Press, London. English price, 6/-.

IF one wonders sometimes who will buy them, it is still good to see the reappearance in England of slim volumes of verse delicately printed, on handmade paper: here, more gracefully than in the literary symposia, Western civilisation makes its last stand. These two voices blend discreetly into the post-war New Romanticism—the strongest literary influence seems to be Dr. Edith Sitwell; Mr. T. S. Eliot is already a classic, to be echoed as familiarly as Shakespeare. Mr. Hugo Manning has force and eloquence and is inclined to be apocalyptic; Mr. Sundowne plays more sensitively with words and with private reflections. So brief a notice is inadequate for what is here sincerely and sometimes finely stated, in verse that has no more of pastiche and less of pretentiousness than is common in such collections.

—J.B.

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