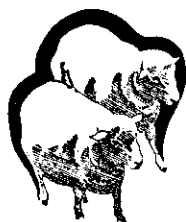


farming of such a kind that the land was impoverished, and after that, sheep-farming with recognition that the land must be fed. Mr. Mayhew has done an immense amount of research for this book, and tells the story in great detail. In any local history there must be some matter that is of purely local interest. Here the proportion is somewhat excessive. Long strings of names of persons in all spheres become dull, at any rate to the outsider. However, in the record of the growth of local institutions, there are patches of real general interest, such as editorials in the local press, so reminiscent of Mark Twain's "Journalism in Tennessee," and the account of that remarkable head of the Lawrence District High School, John Stenhouse, who, in a declining mining town, "drove, pushed, flogged, and frightened" so many children through examinations into the public service. Quite apart from the roaring days of the rushes, the student of social history will find much of value in the life of this country community, where the average of wealth has been moderate, but that of industry high. The illustrations are many and excellent.



—A.M.

THE BETTER SELF

THE MAN WHO MADE FRIENDS WITH HIMSELF, by Christopher Morley; Faber and Faber, London. English price, 10/6.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY writes his own kind of novel, and is so cheerful about it that the critic is disarmed. The man who needs his own friendship is a literary agent, a little disturbed by phantoms, and conveniently in love with a female psychiatrist. Fantasy encroaches so deeply that Richard Tolman is able to describe the search for his Better Self up to the moment when he dies while trying to rescue a friend from a burning restaurant. This is a remarkable feat of authorship: the long chapter which ends with the fire must have been written, and the manuscript left in a safe place, all in a matter of seconds. But such criticism may be ineffectual against a novel which is most of all a sustained meditation, sprinkled with quotations (and deliberate misquotations) from authors classical and modern. Mr. Morley sets out to enjoy himself; and readers who do not object to knowing exactly where they are, or what they are expected to believe, may still find it possible to enjoy the literary and amorous gossip.

—H.

IRISH FISHERMEN

THE NORWAYMAN, by Joseph O'Connor; Faber and Faber. English price, 10/6.

THIS is a romantic tale of the poor fisher-folk of the Atlantic Coast who pass their primitive lives in an idyll of hard work, hard drinking, hard love-making, and the unaffected intellectual pleasures of children. A sailor is shipwrecked on the island home of the newly-wed Macks, and the stage is set for a picture of Irish village life that has the ring of truth about it. The author has pathos, charm, humour, and vitality, but he was stuck this time for a good ending. A weakness for whimsy and for writing down to his readers may not lessen his work's popularity, but they certainly lower its artistic pretensions.

—P.J.W.

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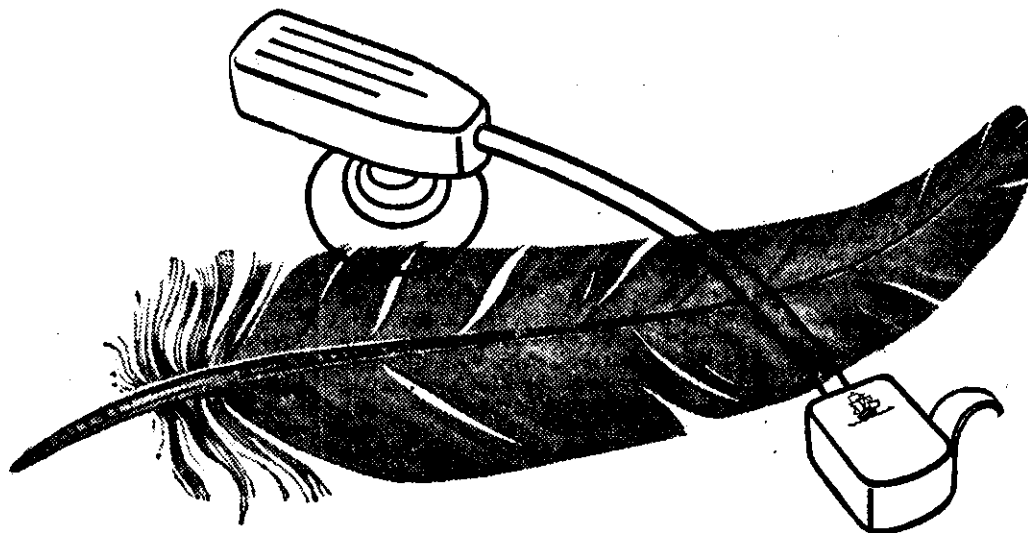
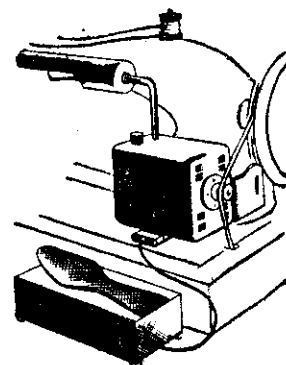
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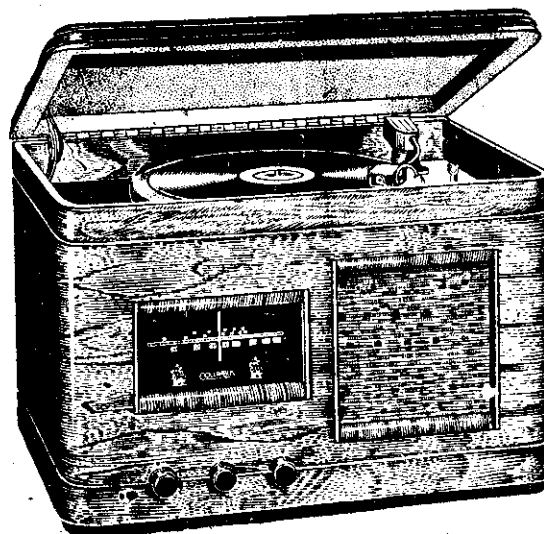
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