

light. The passages joining groups of letters explain and exculpate, wonder whether her illness made Katherine think so and so, and by subtle *passepasse* convey a point of view as well as information.

KATHERINE MANSFIELD was perhaps unduly sensitive. She hates it when a letter is shown to her trusted doctor. "I wish Sorapure had not seen my private note. That hurt a bit. I winced and hung my head and felt horribly ashamed. We must never speak of ourselves to *anybody*: they come crashing in like cows into a garden." Her anger at his publication of a photograph she disliked seems disproportionate. But there are some terrible letters which owe their terribleness directly to her feeling that Murry had failed her, in insight and affection. The death of her brother in the war is regarded by some as the great emotional watershed in her life. But perhaps it came a good deal later, when in the South of France she wrote the bitter letter significantly headed "please read this all through." In all love affairs one will love more than the other; it is painfully plain who gave most in this relationship. It was difficult, no doubt, to keep up with a love that wrote and expected long passionate daily letters. But Katherine Mansfield's realisation that her husband felt it a chore even to read them struck at her with a brutality he could never have intended. "So I must face the fact that you have put me away for the time—you are withdrawn—self-contained—and you don't want in the deepest widest sense of the word to be disturbed. . . . Of course I still love you. I love you as much as ever. But to know this is torture until I get it in hand." A few months later, after they have been together again in London, she can say "You see we are both abnormal: I have too much vitality—and you not enough!"

VITALITY, even in the clutches of disease, is indeed the word for Katherine Mansfield. There is a strange relationship between her illness and her work. In late 1920, two years before her death, she gave up reviewing, fearing that the work might shorten her life, but she had just been writing some of her finest stories and others were still to come. It would be possible to argue that her work kept her alive, and that she died either because she had for the time being written herself out, or because her last frenzied attempts at a cure prevented her working. Work was literally her *raison d'être*.

As I have mentioned Murry's defects as an editor, let me end by saying that we are still greatly in his debt that these letters are now published in this form. The spectacle of his careful use of a literary property through many years does not altogether warm one towards him. But it should be realised that he was the great love of Katherine's life, next to her art what she had most to live for. The chief merit of these letters is their love.

HUNGRY ASIA

ASIA AND THE WEST, by Maurice Zinkin, issued under the auspices of the International Secretariat Institute of Pacific Relations; Chatto and Windus.

THIS symposium of potted blue books is written by an ex-civil servant of British India. In these days it is just as well to have at one's elbow a few facts about India, Japan, China, Burma, Thai-

land, Malaya, Indo-China, the Philippines and Indonesia. There's much to be gained from studying some of these figures.

It has been drummed into us all that Asia is in revolt, but it is not always clearly stated just why. This book emphasises that the crisis is one of under-production, under-employment, stagnation, over-population and worsening poverty. The logic of the figures is as horrid and as death-dealing as the bomb on Hiroshima. No amount of rearming, neither curtains nor ideologies can by themselves ease the peristaltic pain of hunger, or turn aside its drive for more to eat.

In India and Pakistan there has been an increase in cultivated land of 12 million acres (5 per cent.) since 1880. During this time, the population increased by 130 million (66 per cent.). Where there was 1 1-5th acres per head, now there is only 2-5ths of an acre. Yet in 1941, only 4 per cent. of the population were engaged in industry as against 5½ per cent. in 1911.

Mr. Zinkin considers that China is shaping her economy one way and India another. They are the two key countries whom the rest will watch and judge by results. He also asserts that "General MacArthur's claim to have made Japan a real democracy already is only a useful propaganda exaggeration." However, it is for his figures rather than for his comments that I recommend this book.

—Tom Garland

AN IDEALIST

THIS INSUBSTANTIAL PAGEANT, Poems by Monk Gibbon; Phoenix House.

MONK GIBBON writes from a Neoplatonist metaphysical bias. Early under the influence of the Irish mystic, "A. E.," Gibbon is orientated in the same way, with the world of archetypal forms behind, face to a world, this "insubstantial pageant," of Form embodied. He is more than attracted to the idea of reincarnation, a conception beautifully

(continued on next page)



N.P.S. photograph

MRS. JOYCE MARTIN, who will review two books, "People We Met," by A. C. C. Lock, and "Up the Country," by Brent of Bin Bin, in the ZB Book Review session on December 23. Other books, authors and reviewers that evening will be: "Ti-Coyo and his Shark," by Clement Richer, and "A Place to Hide," by Clifford King (Frank Sargeson); "The Sky is a Lonely Place," by Louis Falstein (Jim Henderson); and "Son of Apple," by Maurice Walsh (Mrs. S. O'Leary)

N.Z. LISTENER, DECEMBER 14, 1951.



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