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BOOKS

(continued from previous page)

contains an account of the methods of crop-drying in various countries where the process is important, as well as an exposition of the theoretical considerations involved at every point. Recommended for reference.

—L.J.W.

LITERARY INSIGHTS

THE WOUND AND THE BOW, by Edmund Wilson; W. H. Allen. English price, 18/-.

ESSAYS in this book were much debated when they were first published in 1941, and the demand for a new edition shows that the interest continues. Nor can this be surprising. Edmund Wilson has looked at Dickens with a seeing eye. Brushing aside conventional attitudes, he looks beyond the entertainer and sees the great novelist—the greatest dramatic writer in England, he believes, since Shakespeare. But his long study of Dickens, easily the best part of the book, is by no means a new idolatry: Wilson brings the man and his work into a balanced relationship, and he never forgets the text. An essay on Kipling is equally penetrating, though much less sympathetic, and in some ways rather cruel in its portrayal of an unhappy man. The remaining pieces are slighter; but the book is notable throughout for its psychological insight especially in the treatment of early maladjustment as a creative influence in writing.

IN THE VALLEY

STOKES VALLEY THROUGH THE YEARS, by Milton and Poppy Watts; the Stokes Valley Centennial Committee; 7/6.

PREPARATION of this book—118 pages, fully illustrated—was a courageous enterprise for a small district.

The history is concise, and there are many biographical references. It is encouraging to see that literary associations have been thought worthy of mention. An adventure of Robin Hyde, who about 28 years ago was lost for a few hours on the hills, is the subject of a brief report which should be of interest outside the Valley.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

BONNIE FECHTER, by Marjorie Pentland; Batsford, English price 21/-. Lady Pentland's life of her mother, the Marchioness of Aberdeen and Temair, gives special attention to her public work. There are many illustrations, some in colour.

PUBLIC OPINION AND GOVERNMENT POLICY IN IRELAND, 1801-1846, by R. B. McDowell; Faber and Faber, English price 35/-. The fifth of a series of studies in Irish history, this one deals exhaustively with problems of the period following Union with Britain.

ANIMAL FORMS AND PATTERNS, by Adolf Portmann; Faber and Faber, English price 25/-. An approach to zoology through a study of the special nature of the visible appearance of animals. The drawings by Sabine Baur are outstanding.

JAMES BRAID, by Bernard Darwin; Hodder and Stoughton, English price 12/6. The biography of a great golfer by one who knew him well.

CASE HISTORY, by Heinz Liepman; Shakespeare Head, Australian price 15/-. The story of a drug addict, based on a psychiatrist's reports and the patient's diary but written as a novel.

HOW TO KNOW YOUR BIBLE, by A. Victor Murray; Allen and Unwin, English price, 12/6. A guide to a study of the Bible which aims at taking the reader along by stages.

Prince of Storytellers

RAFAEL SABATINI was a prince of story-tellers who loved to write vigorous, hot-headed romances about princes, dukes, medieval noblemen, pirates with royal blood in their ferocious hearts, the Spanish Inquisition, the love affairs of kings and adventurers. His heroes all lived by a simple code of morality. They fought with their natural strength and courage against the intriguing villainy of their enemies, and often won the heroine's kiss after killing off wicked uncles with their sword. They were gallant swashbucklers, always heroic and always chivalrous. Sabatini is remembered in the main these days for such stories as *Scaramouche* or *Captain Blood*, but he also wrote histories of real people like Cesare Borgia and Torquemada. His earlier novels are perhaps not so widely known now, and listeners may have forgotten *Love at Arms*. This was broadcast as a serial last year from 42B and has now started from 2XP, at 9.15 a.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays. It tells a story of Italy in the days of the Condottieri—professional soldiers who were hired to fight the battles of the great Dukes and landowners. Its

two leading characters, Francesco, Count of Aquila, and the Princess Valentina of Urbino, become involved in a medieval intrigue which is solved with the help of Peppino the Jester. Valentina is pledged to marry the wicked Duke Gian Maria, whose cruelty and extravagances have brought disaster to the state of Babbiano. She flees to the Castle Roccaleone, where with Francesco's help she defeats the Duke and restores happiness to the land.



RAFAEL SABATINI

N.Z. LISTENER, APRIL 17, 1953.