

the individual case which generates among other things the tragedy of loneliness, the prevalence of cruelty, the excess of vice, "Government corrupts" because, on Godwin's view, political institutions encourage social conventions.

Rumour has it that the original title was *The Ethics of Anarchy*; and in my opinion that would have been more appropriate for a book which deals with moral reflections on political theory rather than straight moral philosophy as we now know it. The author makes the most of attractive presentation—e.g., one chapter is called "Archbishop Fenelon Versus My Mother." Even excessive use of long quotation has the advantage of presenting a creditable selection of Godwinian extracts. Such discussions as those on utilitarianism and punishment (not to mention the author's own views on pacifism which clearly emerge) cannot but be stimulating.

—Ronald J. Butler

#### LOOKING AROUND

*PLEASURES STRANGE AND SIMPLE*, by William Sansom; the Hogarth Press. English price, 12 6.

*PLEASURES STRANGE AND SIMPLE* is William Sansom's first collection of essays. He brings to them the wide range of interests, the quick eye for colourful background and incident, and a flair for the apt and telling phrase, that have made him one of the best short story writers of the decade. At worst, this book is brilliant journalism. The journalist's preoccupation with the sensational or bizarre is there, too. He visits a nudist colony, and Andalusia and Tunis; he analyses Edgar Allan Poe and jive; he plays cheerfully with the hundred-and-one ways in which we can die by accident, and takes another quick look at Blondin crossing the Niagara on a tight-rope. But everything comes crisp and fresh from his pen. He lends us his five senses; and a sixth, good humour. Good reporters don't deal in abstractions. They don't so much tell us what they see and hear and feel as make us see and hear and feel for ourselves. That is Sansom's gift.

It is no paradox, then, that the most exciting part of an exciting book should be on the most matter-of-fact topic. Good as he is on foreign ground, he is most effective at home. The essays on London—on Soho and its history, and

an exploration in time and space of a third of a mile of underground from King's Cross—are as good as Boswell himself; and as fervently fond.

—Anton Vogt

#### THREE FROM THE STATES

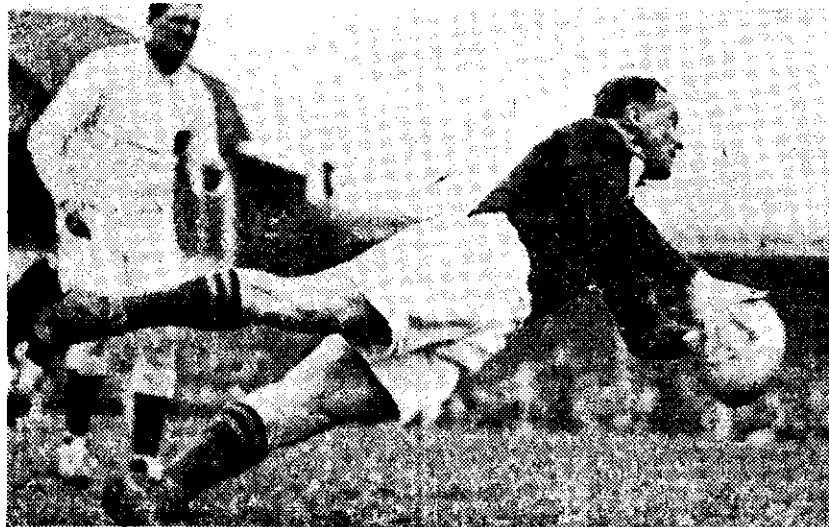
*THE LAND THAT TOUCHES MINE*, by John Sanford; Jonathan Cape. English price, 12 6. *MRS. HULETT: LOVE IN OUR TIME*, by Bertram Bloch; Victor Gollancz. English price, 12 6. *BREAD FROM HEAVEN*, by Henrietta Buckmaster; Victor Gollancz. English price, 12 6.

THE ethical values of the "American Way of Life" are, not surprisingly, attracting the critical attention of serious young American writers. *The Land That Touches Mine* is the tragedy of a modern Ishmael, stripped of illusions without the saving grace of an ideal, self-condemned by an overwhelming sense of guilt in which his own sins (we take up his story shortly after he deserts from the Army) are identified with those of an expanding capitalist society. Mr. Sanford writes with brittle, bitter intensity and has a fine flair for pungent phrases ("Fresh sweat bled from him as if by concussion, and thumbs behind his eyeballs pressed them outward like dents in a hat"). He handles the intermittent flash-backs skilfully, and without impairing the almost painful suspense. But as an indictment, the novel loses force through the exaggerated self-pity and blurred outline of its principal character.

In *Mrs. Hulett: Love in Our Time*, the Story Editor of Twentieth Century-Fox has written a book as self-assured—and as evanescent—as one of his Company's Grade A films. Starring beautiful Emmy Hulett as the woman forced to choose between power and love; Jim Hulett, whose political career depends on the threads which are plucked by his wife; shrewd, tolerant Sam Thomas, lover of stars and producer of hits; and likeable, libidinous Lily Grainger, Broadway's gift to the Theatre. Wait for it at your neighbourhood cinema.

*Bread from Heaven* is firmly planted in the main stream (or should one say Main Street?) of the traditional American small town novel, with two agonised young Czech refugees demonstrating for the umpteenth time that love casts out intolerance in the end. Miss Buckmaster

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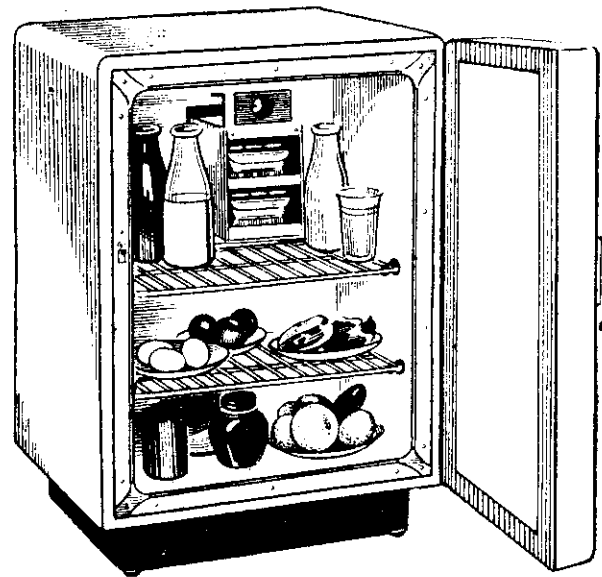
DANIE CRAVEN, one-time Springbok star and master of the dive-pass, in action. His book, "Danie Craven on Rugby," is to be discussed by a panel of experts in ZB Book Review at 9.35 p.m. on Sunday, September 6. The panel will comprise M. F. Nicholls and W. H. Parker, two members of the 1924 "Invincibles," with Winston McCarthy as chairman

N.Z. LISTENER, AUGUST 28, 1953.

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