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Yes, "Minimum Man" is a book you should enjoy, if you can stand hair-raising creepiness and a rather acid, but nonetheless good joke, on yourself.

"Minimum Man—or Time to Be-gone," by Andrew Marvell (Gollancz, London). Our copy from the publishers.

## EDITOR GIVES YOU HIS SOURCES!

WHEN Leonard Crocombe, editor of the English magazine, "Til-lits," was cooling his mouth with beer one day in a convenient tavern, there came to him hotfoot his distinguished friend, George S. Har-rap, whose father controls the well-known English printing firm of Harrap and Co., Ltd. George had had a brain-wave. He wanted Mr. Crocombe to write a book of 70,000 words on his forthcoming holiday to Canada—and be guaranteed to publish it.

The result is "An Editor Goes West." Because Mr. Crocombe is such an important figure in British jour-nalistic circles, his holiday notebook must naturally be reviewed at some length here, whether he likes it or not. For everyone knows that nowa-days the Name is much more impor-tant than the Work.

"An Editor Goes West" covers a wide field, beginning in London and crossing in 40 days to Canada and the United States and back. In this time and over this distance, Mr. Cro-combe naturally finds plenty to amuse him, and points out he would have lost his skill as a journalist if he failed to transmit his enthusiasms. So we have his 70,000-word holiday note-book cunningly filled with:—

- (1) Copy of the Canadian declara-tion form he had to sign.
- (2) Full description of the Empress of Britain (which will not be so in-teresting to New Zealanders since they read it all recently in the shipping company write-ups in the newspapers).
- (3) Copies of the menu cards in all classes on the Empress of Britain.
- (4) Description of Mr. Crocombe's moonlight adventure with the girl who thought him "the most interesting man on the ship." (The original of a note this girl wrote to him, apologising for missing an appointment, is on file in Mr. Crocombe's office.)
- (5) Several complaints of the head cold that resulted from the moonlight stroll.
- (6) One or two interviews with fam-ous personages (couled in at least one case from a pre-written obituary).
- (7) Also facts and figures about the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and the Royal Canadian Mounted Pol-ice.
- (8) Copy of Mr. Crocombe's talk over the air, with the introducing and clos-ing remarks of the announcer.
- (9) Copies of all the letters written by obscure Canadians to Mr. Crocombe after this broadcast.
- (10) Copies of interviews with Mr. Crocombe which were printed in one or two American papers.
- (11) Copies of more menu cards from a train on the Canadian National Railway.
- (12) Mr. Crocombe's jokes, number-ing about five. The best are the ex-

cerpts from James Thurber and Doro-thy Parker.

There is also included in the note-book a few superficial impressions of Canada and New York through Mr. Crocombe's eyes; but one feels he could have made up the 70,000 words quite easily without them, and their inclusion is sheer generosity.

For members of Mr. Crocombe's im-mediate family, "An Editor Goes West" will no doubt be treasured as an au-thenticated and beautifully printed re-cord of the only time since Mr. Cro-combe has been a family man that he "had ever gone away from home for longer than a week or so." Other read-ers may not find the notebook so absorb-ing.

"An Editor Goes West," by Leonard Crocombe (Harrap and Co., Ltd.) Our copy from the publishers.

## NOT QUITE A RIVAL OF JOHN BUCHAN

EXCEPTIONAL among "thrill-ers" is the second novel of Gor-don McDonnell, whose "Jump for Glory" won the praise of the critics and — more important — the ap-proval of that small proportion of the public that is willing to see merit even in newcomers. "Silver Bugle," just published, should set its author fairly on the road to general recogni-tion.

It may even be that we have here an-other John Buchan in the making. The spare, vigorous style and the skil-ful knitting of episodes in a crowded plot recall the older writer, apart from the fact that "Silver Bugle" itself, in both theme and treatment, strongly recalls "The Thirty-nine Steps" and "Greenmantle." True, it is still very many steps behind the Richard Han-nay classics, but at least it walks firm-ly along the same path.

Central figures in this exciting tale are two English brothers who take a holiday in Paris in order to race their horses there. Purely by chance, they stumble on what they believe is a plot to steal thousands of pounds' worth of jewellery. They would not be sporting Englishmen, of course, if they did not follow up the trail—and the trail leads them to a beautiful American woman posing as a peace worker, but appar-ently all the time secretly directing a gang of thieves and cut-throats who will stop not even at murder to gain their ends—or the creation of one of those dangerous political "incidents" which have so often lately had the world reeling on the brink of war.

The mixture of political intrigue makes "Silver Bugle" a timely thriller; but its qualities of simple and swift-changing incident, its crisp dialogue, and romantic element nicely constrain-ed, would in any case recommend it.

There are, unfortunately weaknesses, if not actual holes, in the plot; and the villains behave so much like ordinary American crooks they lose half their power of spine-chilling. But ah! if only Gordon McDonnell would fulfil his promise and send us, later on, some of the wide-eyed nights that Buchan did, how much could be forgiven him!

"Silver Bugle," by Gordon Mc-Donell (Harrap and Co., Ltd.). Our copy from the publishers.