

Hobart . . .

THE CUP AND THE SWORD. By Alice Tisdale Hobart. New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1942. 400 pp. \$2.75.

Reviewed by RICHARD ELLIS

THIS is a first-rate example of the family chronicle novel—it can successfully challenge comparison with Mazo de la Roche's *Jalna* books. It is, however, more than a skilfully, firmly seen, and rendered story of the Rambeau family: it is a history of an American tragedy. Here you have the wanton destruction, the subsequent degradation, and the slow, successful, and surely permanent restoration of a great American industry—the wine-growing of California. There was wine in the United States before California was a state; but only with the settling of California, with the Americanization of Swiss, Italian, German, and French vineyard experts, did the making of wine become a major national interest. And it was ruined, men heart-broken, grave, serious men disconcerted and stunned to discover that the authorities of the new land, to which they had given their allegiance and their best, suddenly put their life-work, their families' life-work on the level of the lowest crime. It is not the least merit of Mrs. Hobart's book that she stages that tragedy—stages it without melodrama, hysteria, or false pathos.

Against this tragedy we have the drama of young Elizabeth Rambeau who comes from France to California to stay with her grandfather, head of the Rambeau vineyards. Mrs. Hobart's portraits of old Jean-Philippe Rambeau, his formidable daughter Marthe, the reckless young nephew John, who plays ball with the bootleggers, of Elizabeth herself and her luckless husband Andrew, are tenderly and brilliantly painted. The lesser characters are equally successful: and Mrs. Hobart has the rare gift of showing people grow older, and in spite of the changes wrought by the years, remain recognizably the same. "The Cup and the Sword" is a fine, full novel, redolent of the earth, hot with the sun of California valleys, cool and peaceful with the shade of the tree-sheltered houses and patios.

In response to increasing inquiries pertaining to the Netherlands and the Dutch East Indies, a Netherlands Studies Unit has been established in the Library of Congress under the auspices of the Foundation for Netherlands-American Cultural Activities, of New York City. Dr. Bartholomew Landheer, of the Netherlands Information Bureau, New York, is director.



Alice Tisdale Hobart

Baur . . .

THE WHITE QUEEN. By Betty Baur. New York: The Viking Press. 1942. 491 pp. \$2.50.

MISS BAUR'S first novel is satisfying on a number of counts. Chief among them is her easy competence with everything she handles, and there are several themes handled here simultaneously, any one of which could provide serious difficulties. England in 1937 was watching an ominous cloud upon her horizon to the South, over Spain, to which she could assign no shape or name (how easily we can name it now). There was the stirring of social sensitivity. Into this atmosphere of doubt, fear, change, Miss Baur introduces a young American girl, as a kind of test or standard.

Deborah Abbott is herself seeking after verities, or perhaps groping would better describe her search. She has found no more clarity about Spain in England than she had in Boston. She is married to Richard Reddaway, good of heart, vacillating, fonder of Mozart and farming than of tiresome political matters. But their friend Sam MacDonnel was a Loyalist fighter in Spain. His return rings the changes in Deborah's life, and the turning toward him, spiritually, then physically, is the book's crisis.

It may perhaps seem too neatly symbolic, but Miss Baur brushes this aside with her talent for characterization, for, quite apart from her preoccupation with world politics, she has a keen flair for individual analysis, so that every person in the story stands cleanly portrayed. N. L. R.

Taylor . . .

UNTIL THAT DAY. By Kressmann Taylor. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce. 1942. 314 pp. \$2.75.

Reviewed by H. B. WREATH

THE author of "Address Unknown" tells another story of Nazi persecutions. Now it is the tale of what happened to Karl Hoffmann, the son of a pastor of the Lutheran Church, who realized that Hitlerism meant destruction of Christianity.

Miss Taylor gives us the story as it was told to her by young Karl Hoffmann after his arrival in America. In her introduction she says: "The story of what happened to him and to men like him in Germany is something of a modern miracle. The strange thing about his story is that it is a story of the defeat of the tremendous Nazi force, inside Germany. The men who trust the forces of physical power can conquer but they cannot win."

We hear how young Hoffmann was brought up in Magdeburg on the Elbe where his father, strongly conservative in politics and a staunch Monarchist, and his mother "a little woman, round as a butterball," gave him the usual education: "Gymnasium and University." When he knew that he believed in God he decided to follow in the footsteps of his father.

And from here we see him closely study the Nazi movement rampant at the Berlin University not less than among workers, officers, and government officials. He started to hate it. But his struggle was useless. Soon his father was arrested because he refused to preach the new doctrine from the pulpit. Karl joined the underground movement of the opposition, the "Confessional Church," against the Nazi German Christian movement. He became a follower of Pastor Niemoeller and distributed leaflets. Then stormtroopers killed his father and he himself was arrested. Friends succeeded in getting him out of Germany just as the Gestapo was on his heels.

"Until That Day" is remarkable because it gives evidence that there are many hundreds of thousands in Germany whose faith in Christianity and the ideas it stands for have not been shattered by Hitler's stormtroopers; that they are rebels without arms waiting until "that day comes" when their pastors will be allowed again to preach the word of God. "The fight is just beginning. I who have been there know that the battle is not lost. I who have fought without weapons know the sureness of the final victory."

It is a simply and movingly told story. It conveys hope and confidence.



Hughie Call

Call . . .

GOLDEN FLEECE. By Hughie Call. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1942. 250 pp. \$2.75.

Reviewed by ELIZABETH B. COX

HERE is another volume to add to the book shelf reserved for stories of women versus life in the Far West. It is a worthy companion for its predecessors—"A Cowman's Wife," "A Desert Wife," "The Land of the Burnt Thigh," "No Life for a Lady," "A Bride Goes West" and others. Whatever one may find to criticize in these books from a purely literary standpoint, one must recognize accurate reporting of the locale, the time, and the people. In each of them it is magnificently plain that the writer loves her country, not only the geographical stage for her story and the shifting scenery of the seasons, but each act and the players and the drama itself. It is no coincidence, either, that each writer is blessed with a sense of humor. In the final analysis that sense of humor is the *raison d'être* of the book. Without it no woman would last long enough on a cattle ranch, trading post, homestead, or sheep ranch to accumulate the makings of a book. The West, the saying goes, is "hell on women and horses." From the early days a woman's place in this man's world has been strictly utilitarian. Fortunate is the woman who has the fortitude and the inner balance to concede gracefully to this fact and oil her cog in the endlessly turning wheel of ranch life. It is worth all the chips.

Hughie Call's "Golden Fleece" is a casually told story of life on a sheep ranch, illuminated by a clear understanding of the problems, the difficulties, and the rewards. It is a personal record of experiences and observations

rather than an interpretation of a way of life. Like many ranch brides since the West was settled, Mrs. Call came unprepared for her new home by the circumstances of her background; unprepared that is for the practical aspect of ranch life. That she keenly felt her status as "tenderfoot" and was determined to take a hand, to be a working part of the ranch, made her more sharply aware of the innumerable angles and factors in the business of wool growing. She knows her ranch now from the kitchen pantry to the sheep wagon in the mountains. There is more detailed information about the operation of a present day ranch in her story than in any other book of its kind that I know.

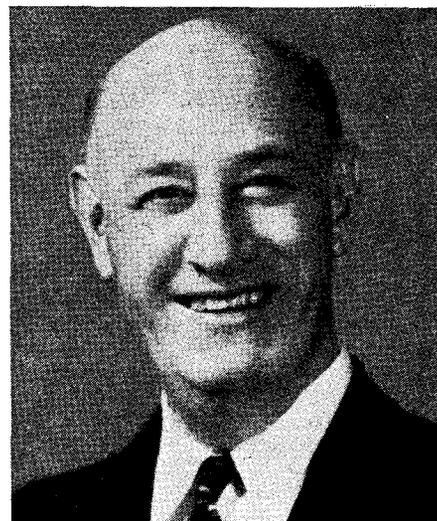
This is not the West of Zane Grey, the horse operas, or the dude ranches. This is the every day, twelve months out of the years West which knows the hard winters, the droughts, the bad roads, the jangling bell of the party line, the problems of stock growing, the behavior of live stock, the hard work, the catastrophes, and the struggle to make a living in a country which is still and will always be wild at heart. But if anyone feels that this life, particularly for a woman, would be unbearable, Mrs. Call's book will quietly inform them to the contrary. Her story, like her life, is welded together by her interest in and her affection for all the people who have shared her life.

Amrine . . .

ALL SONS MUST SAY GOODBYE. By Michael Amrine. New York: Harper & Bros. 1942. 309 pp. \$2.50.

NOW that Mr. Amrine has this novel out of his system perhaps he will go on to write a book that will give us a better view of his talents. A young man's first meetings with experience—school, college, love, sex, drink, ideas, the repressive father, the town philosopher, the Big Decisions—are traditional material for a first novel, and Mr. Amrine is close enough to them to feel them with their original keenness. But this kind of novel has to have a streak of originality, or a touch of genius, in it to live, and Mr. Amrine has not included either. "All Sons Must Say Goodbye" remains, then, the usual farewell to a young man's first fine careless raptures, too much like too many others. Mr. Amrine writes a swift and emotional prose which ought to show up to much greater advantage in his next book.

N. L. R.



Shine Philips

Philips . . .

BIG SPRING. By Shine Philips. New York: Prentice-Hall. 1942. 231 pp. \$2.50.

Reviewed by PHIL STONG

BIG SPRING, in west Texas, started out as a convenient water hole; when the white men came they shot the Indians and buffalo and slowly made a city that now has the staggering total of 14,000 citizens. The most eminent party in the place is, or shortly will be, the town druggist, Mr. Shine Philips, an old settler who has here put down the least pretentious and most effective biography of a small town this reviewer has ever read.

The device is the simplest; a stranger drops into Shine's drug store and asks for a chocolate soda. He makes some slightly disparaging remark about the town and Shine decides to tell him something about the place till the soda is finished and the fellow is eligible for shooting. There follow the jolliest reminiscences one can easily imagine about drug store business on the frontier; at the end of them the Scheherazade technique takes up in reverse—Shine has to spare the man to tell him about the frontier doctors the next night.

After the doctors come the preachers, the saloons, those glorious and romantic fellows the drummers, the barbershops, the critters of the ranches from rattlesnakes to dogies, the law ("Was there much lawbreaking?" "Well, we broke what we had"), book learning, girls, squatters, tenderfeet, and even plumbing ("The first time I pulled one of them chains it scared me half to death").

The stranger sticks manfully to his sodas though he does take up a bi-