

The Book Mark

By Joseph C. Keeley

NORTHERN PRIVATE

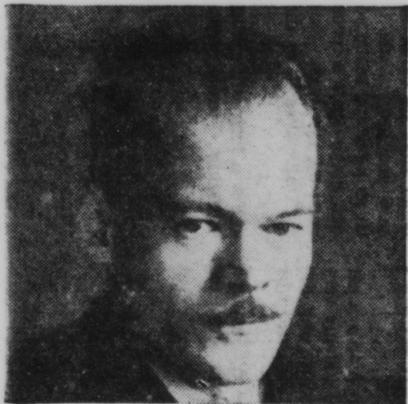
BOY IN BLUE. By Royce Brier. 322 pp. New York: D. Appleton-Century Co. \$2.50.

THERE is little of the glory of war in the experiences of the "Boy in Blue," Robert Thane, private in the 157th Indiana Infantry in the Civil War. As sensed by this uneducated farm boy, the war, or more particularly the campaign in the Valley of the Cumberland, was a succession of dysentery, lice, dust, incessant marching and other inconveniences.

"Boy in Blue" is the work of Royce Brier, Pulitzer Prize winner for reporting in 1934, and the book shows evidence of a master reporter's descriptive power in every detail. With the background of his canvas depicting the scene in the vicinity of Chattanooga, Mr. Brier has presented in the foreground a picture of Robert Thane, a soldier and individualist.

It is this Robert Thane who, disappointed in love, joins the army, hoping for a speedy and, if possible, dramatic death. What the conflict costs him physically, however, is more than compensated for by his gain in ideals and the love of the Southern girl, Ann Countiss.

The romance of Robert and Ann, while providing a motivating force for much of Mr. Brier's story, is



ROYCE BRIER

yet subordinated to the realism of war, which is intensified by contrast. To Thane and his fellows, the war was neither a fight for ideals nor the opportunity to achieve glory. It was just a nasty job that had to be done. Everything about it was selfish. For reasons he could never understand the private was made to do things he didn't want to do—things that made him feel uncomfortable or worse.

The author in telling all these things and the soldiers who had to do them, has succeeded in painting an impressive picture of the Civil War and its rank and file.

LIGHT READING

BEAU. By Mrs. Harry Hugh Smith. 286 pp. New York: Arcadia House. \$2.00.

The story of Carolyn Webster, spoiled young aristocrat, who falls in love with an independent young fellow who runs a filling station to support a family of seven and who plays football for his college tuition. Their marriage results in problems and a certain amount of friction which of course are worked out to a happy ending.

IMPASSIONED FOOTHILLS. By Kathleen Rollins. 287 pp. New York: Arcadia House. \$2.00.

Laid in the Carolina foothills, this story tells of a mountain feud which threatened to destroy the happiness of Gloria Crosby and Tevis Malone. How they freed themselves from the web of tradition makes good light reading.

POMP AND CIRCUMSTANCE

KING EDWARD VIII, An Intimate Biography. By Hector Bolitho. 328 pp. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co. \$3.00.



FOR those who have largely forgotten David, Prince of Wales, because of the pyrotechnics of the reign of Edward VIII, the shortest reign in the history of England, this book of Hector Bolitho's will prove valuable. For Mr. Bolitho, the official narrator of Edward when he was Prince of Wales, here tells the entire story of the now Duke of Windsor, calmly and dispassionately, from the time he played around the lawns of his great-grandmother Queen Victoria's White Lodge, to the time he made his famous speech of abdication.

Foregoing the sensational, Mr. Bolitho traces the course of the promising heir to the throne, telling of his student days in France, Germany and at Magdalen College, Oxford. He describes the four years spent by the young prince at the battlefronts of France, where he fought continuously for the privilege of remaining in the danger zone. He follows the still youthful David, after the war, in his career as England's Prince of Salesmen, in all corners of the earth.

It is here that the narrative glistens with the color and pomp of empire pageantry, as the Prince of Wales was welcomed not only to Britain's dominions, but to other countries where the hand of friendship would help home industry. "Older people," says Mr. Bolitho, "were almost shocked by his business-like air, and they sometimes hinted that his dignity was risked when he made so many practical efforts to catch business for Britain in the countries which he visited."

Year after year the Prince continued his triumphal procession, marred only by such incidents as Gandhi's attempts to boycott the ceremonies. If there is a villain in the book, it is the Mahatma, and his attempts at

sabotaging the Prince's triumphal tour of India are considered by the author as being in decidedly poor taste. However, in spite of Gandhi's efforts, the splendor of India was made David's. In Gwalior, for example, "... the Prince traveled to the palace at the head of a procession of jeweled elephants; the one upon which he rode was a hundred years old, and when it moved its colossal gold legs a hundred silver bells tinkled on its crimson mantle... and when the great men of Gwalior came to the Prince they carried trays of precious stones, and the table upon which the banquet was served was a stream of silver and gold."

Upon the completion of his tour of South America the Prince ceased his roaming, but, according to Mr. Bolitho, something was missing from his life. Instead of freedom he was faced with rigid court discipline. Naturally self-willed, he made a life which took him into three worlds. One was that of his good deeds; another was that of his father's Court, which irked him; and the third was a circle of friends which distressed his father "who suspected their influence."

The change in the Prince's life was reflected in his personal habits. Once kind and considerate toward his servants, he became petty. Again, on the death of his father, the Prince stayed away from his mother, at Fort Belvedere, when he should have been with her. "He apparently suffered no self-reproach," says the author. As for the new King's apparent wish to do what was right, he adds, "It was not in his nature to deceive other men, but it was a sad fault in his nature that he was able to deceive himself." Thus, he says, the Prince was sincere in his promises to his subjects, whether they were Maoris, Hindus or Welsh miners.

Naturally, there is a good deal of attention paid to Mrs. Wallis Simpson, even though a relatively small portion of the book concerns her. The sensational episode is handled sanely by the writer. Viewing the tragic denouement of Edward's reign from the standpoint of one inside, Mr. Bolitho sympathizes with the monarch, even though "sympathy is not enough." By his own shortcomings, or by his changed character, if you will, the King has failed and no longer merits the throne. And yet the King is shown ending his reign "wisely and unselfishly towards the country." In his last days and hours the unhappy King is shown at Fort Belvedere acting in a way that makes the world echo Mr. Baldwin's words, "I honor and respect him for the way in which he behaved at that time."

FOOTNOTES

If you want to write a best-seller, it is a good idea to become first of all an international figure. The next best system is to write about someone who will be certain to do something sensational about the time your book is published.

Of the first category of best-seller writers, Adolf Hitler and Mussolini are excellent examples. Lately to join them has been Premier Leon Blum. Back in 1912 the French Premier wrote a treatise on marriage. It advocated many unorthodox theories of matrimony, but few people bothered to buy or read it. Lately, however, it has been re-issued and has become a best-seller in Europe, to M. Blum's embarrassment.

Several months ago, Hillman-Curl, Inc., published "God in a Rolls-Royce" the story of Father Divine. The book sold for a time, then languished. However, immediately following the arrest of the Negro evangelist, a few weeks ago, sales of the book soared to a new peak.

Hervey Allen, whose "Anthony Adverse" sold well over a million copies is working on "Action at Aquila". The book has not been definitely scheduled for publication, although it is expected for the Fall of this year.

A new organization of book-lovers known as The Discoverers and with membership limited to 2,500 operates in an unusual manner. As in other book clubs, members agree to take a certain number of books during the year. For these, the regular list price is paid. However, subscribers receive first editions that are autographed by the authors. Since care is taken to select only books that bid fair to become of lasting importance, members of the club secure books that may become highly valuable.

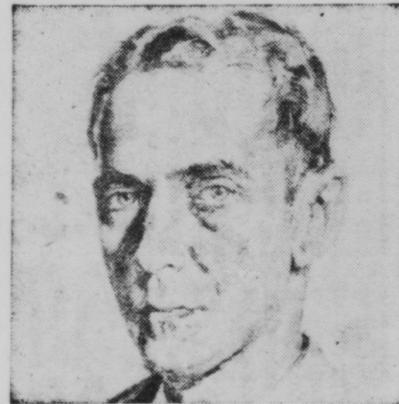
PASSING PIONEERS

THE LAURELS ARE CUT DOWN. By Archie Binns. 332 pp. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock. \$2.50.

THE story of two brothers of pioneer stock is combined with an unforgettable account of the American expedition to Vladivostok during the World War, in "The Laurels Are Cut Down" by Archie Binns. The author of "Lightship" in his new book has again presented a significant and finely written story.

It is the story of the brothers George and Alfred Tucker, their background, and their adventures. The two boys grow up at the turn of the century in the Puget Sound country. On their characters is the mark of the vast forests about them, and in their hearts the adventurous spirit of their pioneer forebears.

Then there is a girl, beloved by both of them. But even Clarice Jackson cannot come between George and Alfred. It takes a war to separate them, war and a grave in Siberia for George. Alfred returns to find his country and Clarice strangely changed. Forces almost as destructive as those he saw at work in Siberia are laying waste his beloved Puget Sound forests, and old ideals are being replaced by a passion for the shoddy of material things.



ARCHIE BINNS

Distressed at what he sees, Alfred Tucker yearns for the America he knew before the war. Yet, by attempting to explain the Russian uprising as a result of oppression, he is looked upon with suspicion—as a Communist. Clarice herself cannot understand it when he refuses to return to the land of the Soviets, even in her company.

Most readers of "The Laurels Are Cut Down" will find their greatest enjoyment in the account of the trip the boys made to Alaska in a home-built sloop and/or the story of the American expeditionary force in Siberia under General Graves. These chapters are Archie Binns at his best.

DIVORCE AND AFTER

PATTERN OF THREE. By Mary Hastings Bradley. 305 pp. New York: D. Appleton-Century Co. \$2.00.

The triangle formed by Eve and Dick Kendall and Kay Hardy form the "pattern of three" which Mary Hastings Bradley employs as a case to work out two problems of marriage. One of the problems is: How far should a woman go in trying to regain the affections of her husband in love with another woman? The other is: What responsibility should a man feel for the happiness of his divorced wife after he has married a second time? In her working out of these two highly debatable questions, Miss Bradley has come to conclusions that are wide open to argument. Undoubtedly, many of her readers will consider that the author has done the first wife wrong. There will be few arguments, though, about the merits of the writing. For Bradley enthusiasts this a "must".