

The Book Mark

By Joseph C. Keeley

Nero's Double

THE PRETENDER. By Lion Feuchtwanger. 440 pp. New York: The Viking Press. \$2.50.

Almost legendary is the story of the manumitted slave who bore such an amazing resemblance to the Emperor Nero that he was used after Nero's death as his double—to the point that he was able to rule in the dead Emperor's place, and by his rule arouse the Roman world to madness.

This obscure event on which Lion Feuchtwanger has based "The Pretender" is more than legend, however, since references to it can be found in Tacitus, Suetonius, Dio Cassius, Zonaras and Xiphilinus, as well as in the Apocalypse of John and in the Fourth Book of the Sibyl.

"The Pretender" is the story of a potter in the city of Edessa, who had been a slave, and who was given the power of an Emperor. It tells of this mad impersonation, as it was engineered by a small group of influential citizens who saw in the resemblance the opportunity to capitalize on the death of their ruler.

When Nero died, there was cause for rejoicing in the Rome he had ruled with such cruelty. There was less joy in the East, however, for Nero's rule of the Tigris-Euphrates valley had been tolerant. It was because there were such conflicting feelings concerning the dead Nero that the ex-slave Terence had his opportunity to rule in the conquered Eastern provinces. And rule the fraudulent Emperor did, so ruthlessly that his inevitable downfall was precipitate.

As in his historical novels, "Josephus" and "The Jew of Rome," Lion Feuchtwanger has brought the past to vivid life in "The Pretender." Those who like their fiction tinged with the authenticity of some history, no matter how slight, will find Mr. Feuchtwanger's latest book a rare treat.

Wrote Best Seller



Pinchot, N. Y.

GLADYS HASTY CARROLL

Young American author whose "Neighbor to the Sky" has become a best seller.

Alaskan Journey

NORTH TO THE RIME-RINGED SUN. By Isobel W. Hutchison. 262 pp. New York: Hillman-Curl.

Since Miss Hutchison was recently awarded the Mungo Park Medal by the Royal Scottish Geographical Society, it can be taken for granted that the story of her travels through Alaska, as recorded in "North to the Rime-Ringed Sun," is the result of well-trained powers of observation.

Apart from this official sanction of her ability as an explorer, Miss Hutchison is an engaging raconteur: of the things she has seen and the stories she has heard. With a friendly, easy style she describes Alaska in such a way that the reader gets a finely rounded picture of our sprawling northwestern possession. Proving her skill as an authoress, she does this largely through telling of the people she finds in Alaska—Eskimos, old sourdoughs, and new settlers. And, with great effectiveness, throughout the book she graciously steps aside and lets her Alaskan acquaintances speak for themselves. As a result we get frequent vistas of Alaska from the viewpoint of the people who know the country best.

The book is persuasive reading, and will be found particularly so by those who dream of places where adventure can still be found. There is much of this yet to be found in Alaska, and Miss Hutchison makes the prospect inviting. But for those not contemplating the trip, an excellent substitute is "North to the Rime-Ringed Sun."

Post-War Germany

THREE COMRADES. By Erich Maria Remarque. 480 pp. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. \$2.75.

It is almost unfortunate that Erich Maria Remarque wrote "All Quiet on the Western Front," since subsequent books will always evoke comparisons with that masterpiece. That was the case when he finished "The Road Back," and the same comparison must be made now that he has completed "Three Comrades" after the passing of six years.

No apologies are in order because this new Remarque book is of less heroic proportions than "All Quiet on the Western Front." It is in its own right an excellent novel, and only because of the author's previous achievement is it necessary to make use of that annoying phrase "not quite."

The three comrades are young men who, in the year 1928, are earning a meager living as automobile repairmen living on the outskirts of a large German city. The war in which they had participated together has returned them, unstable creatures, to a world that has no stability. Upon their generation is crowding a new youth which understands little of the lesson taught by the World War. In this brutal, materialistic world the three friends manage to hold their own, and the chaos about them disturbs but little their friendship.

It is in the midst of this scene that Patricia Hollmann enters, found by Bobby, the youngest of the three, on his birthday. Pat becomes one of them, and the love of the girl for Bobby, and the mutual comradeship of the three men and the girl become the story of the "Three Comrades."

While not of the scope of "All Quiet on the Western Front," this book is another "must" for your list. It is one of those rare books that you cannot bear to have out of your sight once you read the first page.

Gallic Humor

THE SCANDALS OF CLOCHERLE. By Gabriel Chevallier. 318 pp. New York: Simon & Schuster. \$2.50.

The publishers of "The Scandals of Clocherle" are fair enough to warn prospective readers not to venture into its pages if they are allergic to rough, Rabelaisian humor. The point is well taken. This account of the stirring events in the little French town of Clocherle is, as the publishers say it is, "completely irreverent and unregenerate."

At the same time it is enjoyable in its corporeal wit. Sometimes in the form of rowdy slapstick and at other times in the form of sly satire, the book pursues its way with a merriment that is as intoxicating as the heady Beaujolais wine that is the product of the region's vineyards.

"The Scandals of Clocherle" is the story of a town divided against itself because of the erection of a public edifice. In passing, it may be pointed out that the edifice is the French equivalent of the American comfort station. The townspeople array themselves into two camps, those who oppose the edifice in all its implications, and those who advocate it.

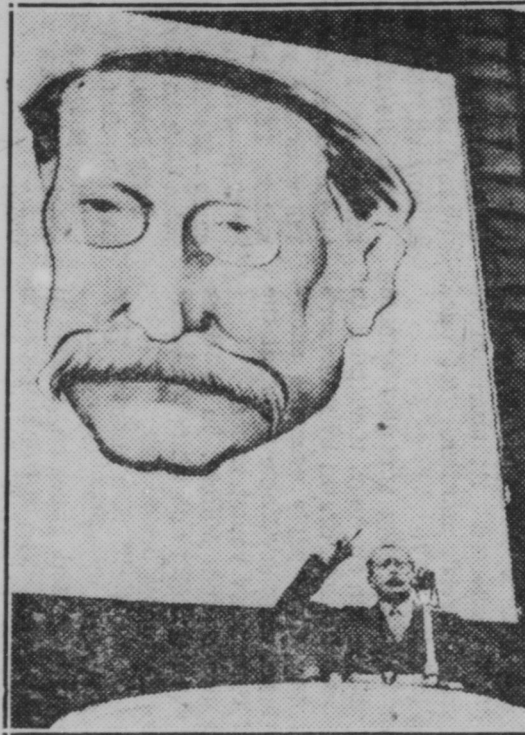
The events leading up to the building of this specimen of sanitary engineering, and the turbulent happenings that it caused—even to the disruption of a Geneva Disarmament Conference—cannot be related here. Nor can any but the fainter idea be given of the vivacious characters who participate in the scandals. Provincial French as these characters are, they have been delineated in such a way that they will be recognized as universal types.

You may or may not enjoy "The Scandals of Clocherle," depending upon your temperament, your blood pressure and possibly your religious upbringing. But if you don't like it, don't say you weren't properly warned.

"The Road to Happiness," by Dr. Charles Gray Shaw, Professor of Philosophy, at New York University, and to be published by Hillman-Curl in September, will be a guide to a simple philosophy of happiness in life.

"England Expects Every Man to Do His Duty," by Quincy Howe, and published by Simon & Schuster in July, is described as a book that will "show how the same influences that brought the United States to the rescue of the British Empire in 1917 are pushing the country in the same direction in 1937."

Ex-Premier - Author



International News Photo

LEON BLUM

addressing a political meeting in front of a giant portrait of himself. His book, "Marriage," has just been published by Lippincott.

Out Of The West

MEET MR. LOCHINVAR. By Marie Blizard. 284 pp. New York: Arcadia House. \$2.00.

The imaginary hero of a pretty young keeper of a bookshop causes a great deal of trouble in this romance whose setting is Maine. Cecily Stuart, the attractive librarian, annoyed by the remarks of catty friends, picks a hero for herself out of one of her books—and promptly the difficulties begin.

Because, hardly has Cecily taken "Philip Callen" out of the book than rivals appear in the forms of two real Philip Callens. One is a suave Easterner, while the other is a whimsical young Irishman from out of the West, who chose to be called "Mr. Lochinvar."

Of course, confusion results, as does mystery and romance. But the story has been adroitly worked out by Marie Blizard, so that the complications seem plausible and interesting.

FOOTNOTES

OUT OF THE CALABOOSE

Lee Forest's best-seller, "Rebels' Rendezvous," published by D. Appleton-Century, was written while Mr. Forest was in jail. The author was not serving time, though—he just lives in jail as a regular thing. The jail is in Tyrone, New Mexico, which was a boom town during the World War. But after the war the town's population dwindled, and it seemed as though Tyrone would become another ghost town. Then a number of well-to-do people moved into the place, among them Lee Forest. Mr. Forest decided the old calaboose would make an excellent studio. It is perhaps ironical that in the confines of the ex-prison he wrote "Rebels' Rendezvous," a story of fierce, hardy mountain rovers.

JOB WANTED

An unusual letter of application for a job was recently received by Hillman-Curl. The writer of the letter, a new college graduate, stated that he had just finished reading "They Sold Themselves," which Hillman-Curl publish. He had learned many things about job-hunting from the book, said the young man, and he was employing in this very letter the technique suggested in the book. "If you are sincere in publishing this technique," he said, "you cannot refuse to give me this job." The most amusing part of the whole affair was that the job-seeker, in his letter, had done just the opposite of everything that had been advocated in "They Sold Themselves." P. S.—He didn't get the job.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Since publishers credit word-of-mouth advertising for such a large proportion of book sales, it is this writer's opinion that Harper & Brothers have another best-seller on their hands in "Serve It Forth." Although the book has been out only a short time its merits have been dinned in my ears by at least a dozen friends. In case a friend hasn't already told you, "Serve It Forth" is a book

Court Matters

THE ART OF TENNIS. By Henri Cochet. 182 pp. New York: Hillman-Curl, Inc. \$1.50.

Henri Cochet, the famous court wizard who was a member of the French Davis Cup Team that wrested the cup from America in 1927, presents in "The Art of Tennis" an easily followed yet highly detailed account of how tennis should be played.

Illustrated with scores of action photographs and diagrams, the book is one that should help to correct many of the customary beginners' faults, and at the same time give some practical pointers to expert players.

There is little time wasted by M. Cochet in talking in generalities. With a brief reminder that there is such a thing as sportsmanship and a philosophy of sportsmanship, he starts right in to explain how the reader should decide on his style of playing. From this point the book is entirely teaching. Like all positive teachers, M. Cochet discards what he considers useless fetishes. For example, the matter of attaching great importance to the grip. Of course such a stand will undoubtedly arouse those of the opposing school of thought, but the author makes his point very convincingly.

For that matter he makes all his points convincingly. And, excellent and enthusiastic mentor that he is, he makes tennis sound very easy. So easy that your reviewer will be on the courts bright and early tomorrow—just to see.

To Look Forward To—

"Oh, Say, Can You See!" by Lewis Browne, and published by Macmillan on August 17, will tell of the mad adventures of a young Soviet scientist who comes to America to do marine biological research in California.

"If War Comes," by Major R. Ernest Dupuy and late Major George Fielding Eliot, and published by Macmillan on July 27, is a picture of the world's war strength today and how the nations are moving into positions that will be most favorable "if war comes."

"Russia Twenty Years After," by Victor Serge, and published by Hillman-Curl in September, will describe the land of the Soviets from the viewpoint of a former high official of the Comintern, who was banned from Russia after one of the recent trials.

about food and lovers of food, from the time of the Pharaohs to today. After having listened to so many adjectives, I'm convinced it must be a most commendable book.

KNOW ABOUT RILEY?

If you happen to know something about the origin of the expression "The Life of Riley," the editorial staff of Alfred A. Knopf would like to hear from you. This publishing house is issuing a novel by Harvey Ferguson called "The Life of Riley," and is curious to know more about the original Mr. Riley. It couldn't be, of course, that Knopf would like to see a controversy over this phrase carried on in newspapers. That might cause publicity!

NEW ASSIGNMENT

That colorful young Southerner, James Street, whose stories of Americana have a wide following, has left the New York World-Telegram, where he was one of that newspaper's ace feature writers, to give more of his time to magazine articles and books. If at some future time you notice in his books an occasional reference to radio, it may be traceable to an assignment he is now doing. Radio Guide, the weekly listeners' magazine, has engaged Mr. Street to do a series of articles on broadcasting's personalities.

NINETY-ONE YEARS IN PRINT

D. Appleton-Century Co. boast of the fact that among the titles on their publication list are three which have been kept continuously in print for ninety-one years. These are "500 Sketches and Skeletons of Sermons," "Pulpit Cyclopaedia and Ministers' Companion," and "Cyclopaedia of Sermons," all edited by Doctor Jabez Burns. The three books have rolled up a record of 145 printings between them, and sales of the three volumes maintain the same general average year in and year out.