

THE VENABLES, by Kathleen Norris, \$2.50. *Doubleday, Doran*. Mrs. Norris seldom gets much notice in the literary reviews though she is a drawing feature in the women's magazines. As a matter of fact, *The Venables* is a better book than the bulk of the largely reviewed novels. It is an account of family struggles in San Francisco. The author knows family life and San Francisco at first hand and is deeply interested in both, consequently she makes the people and the place alive to readers. The book has an engaging quality, somewhat like Louisa Alcott's *Little Women*, but the style and outlook is about the same date.

THE DON FLOWS HOME TO THE SEA, by Mikhail Sholokhov. \$3.50. *Knopf*. Now that the war takes us to the black earth and along the rivers of the Ukraine, Sholokhov's immense novels are likely to recruit more and more readers. The latest is the second of a series which deals with Cossack soldiers and Cossack peasants during the internal wars that began after the revolution of 1917.

Something of the enormous vitality of the country emerges in the book. One finds in it that quality inherent in the first and greatest of the Cossack novels, "Taras Bulba"—a sense of a pastoral civilization, with immense distances, with horses that men are always riding, and a murderous and at the same time friendly folk.

### NON-FICTION

AMERICAN ISSUES (Vol. 1, The Social Record. Vol. 2, The Literary Record), by William Thorp, Merle Curti and Carlos Baker. Each volume, \$3.00. *Lippincott*. These volumes make the most remarkable anthology of American writing now on the market, chosen with care, scholarship and critical insight. The two volumes, in fact, form a complete record of American life, more than any political history or literary history that has been written up to the present.

AMERICAN JOURNALISM, by Frank Luther Mott. \$5.50. *Macmillan*. There are other histories of journalism but Dr. Mott's 733-page volume merits the abused accolade, definitive. It is at once scholarly and dramatic, comprehensive in scope yet finely detailed. Pulitzer Prize Winner Mott (he won it in 1939 for the first three volumes of his five-volume *History of American Magazines*) deals impartially with the men and institutions involved in 250 years of American journalism from 1690 to 1940. He has been so successful that only partisans and super-critics will object to the inevitable errors of emphasis.

DEAR ME. Leaves from the Diary of Agnes Sligh Turnbull. \$1.75. *Macmillan*. Without any of the egoism common in diaries, the author's account of her family and home life makes up the most attractive book of the kind we have read since *Elizabeth and Her German Garden*. For readers who want a book about people but who are estranged by the horde of dully written novels that come from the printing presses, *Dear Me* is the book to read; it is full of wit and wisdom.

MY FATHER IS A QUIET MAN, by Tommy Wadeldon. \$1.50. *Coward McCann*. Tommy Wadeldon wrote another book, *My Mother Is a Violent Woman*. Here is one about his father. It reads as though it were an embroidery by a grown-up on a youngster's notions. Still, it is an oasis of diversion.

YOUR PERSONALITY: INTROVERT OR EXTRAVERT? by Virginia Case. \$2.50. *Macmillan*. A popularization of Jung's *Psychological Types*, and a very readable book, giving a good deal of information on psychology. It contains useful accounts of the most common nervous and mental troubles. *Your Personality* has the great merit of being clear and easily understandable. It will enable the non-hypochondriac reader to know himself better.



# THE OPEN FORUM

## JANE WARD HITS THE JACKPOT

*(The article by Jane Ward, "Don't Have An Abortion," evoked a great many approving letters. The score as we go to press is 245, subdivided into 181 women, 54 men, one joint return and a single dissenting opinion. Two women doctors and one R.N. sent their compliments and on the male side, approval came from nineteen doctors, six educators, three clergymen.*

*We print one typical letter of commendation, together with the lone disapproval. — THE EDITORS.)*

BIRTH CONTROL FEDERATION OF AMERICA,  
INC.

SIR: On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Federation may I express our grateful appreciation for the splendid article regarding abortion by Jane Ward in your August issue.

Mrs. Ward's article is such a warm, human, personal presentation of the facts underlying one of America's great health problems that we are grateful for its publication. It will correct many misunderstandings and will help to clarify in the minds of thousands who read the article in *THE AMERICAN MERCURY* or in the *Reader's Digest* the basic difference between abortion and birth control. It seems incredible that such confusion should still exist, but it does. Most articles about abortion have begged or soft-pedaled the logical conclusion that the wider spread of contraceptive knowledge would reduce the number of abortions by making abortions unnecessary. Your publication of Mrs. Ward's article, therefore, constitutes a very real public service.

D. KENNETH ROSE  
National Director

New York City

SIR: In the past I have derived considerable

useful information and enjoyment from your magazine, but am at present impelled to express my dissatisfaction over a certain aspect of the article by Jane Ward. . . .

With due appreciation for Mrs. Ward's charitable motives in wishing to prevent the suffering and deaths to women who risk abortions, I wish to protest her implied sanctioning morally of the act of abortion, this sanctioning being implied by her admitting that she has had one and by the fact that in her entire article she included not a single word of censure based upon the fact that the embryo, as a human individual created by God with the cooperation of its parents, has just as much right to life as has any other human being.

She has devoted pages to telling mothers to avoid murdering their unborn, merely because of the physical hazards to themselves. If a man wished to beat his wife, would you appeal to him to desist merely on the strength of the argument that he might injure his knuckles?

In emphasizing the physical dangers and *not even mentioning* the moral responsibility, she has evinced a seriously mistaken sense of values.

Or perhaps Mrs. Ward happens to be one of those who claim that the human embryo has no soul. If so, I'd be interested in learning by what process of reasoning she arrives at the conclusion that, although it is a new, individual organism, possessing a new life of its own since the moment of its conception, God waits until some later date, which perhaps she will name, before creating its immortal soul.

Boulder City,  
Nevada

HARRY ALLWINE