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and is divided nearly equally between historical and analytical studies of anti-Semitism. The historical essays, though very brief and sketchy, contain illuminating data on the social and economic origins of anti-Semitism; and the essay on Polish anti-Semitism by Raphael Mahler, a Polish refugee, seems particularly adequate in this respect. But the second half on the analysis of anti-Semitism is to some extent subject to similar strictures as the first book under review. The *Essays* conclude on the pessimistic note: "Let us submit to our fate with reserve and dignity."

For the most part these two books belie the hope for equality for the Jewish people that is one of the objectives of our war against Hitlerism. We do not come from them with an adequate theoretical weapon to fight anti-Semitism.

LIONEL FERRIS.

Rich Land, Poor Land

OLD McDONALD HAD A FARM, by Angus McDonald.
Houghton Mifflin. \$2.75.

WHERE I work there are signs planted at crossroads like huge blackboards to teach the farmers the value of soil conservation. In spite of all efforts of the government, men like my boss will allow their best land to be washed down to hardpan because of prejudice against "outside" interference and fear of "experiments."

In *Old McDonald Had a Farm* you have the story of how a good farmer exploded these fears and prejudices and went on to become an outstanding success on a rocky farm in Oklahoma. The country is the country of Steinbeck's Okies. The story of the McDonalds in certain ways is the reverse of that of the Joads; telling of an unusual successful farmer, it proves to the handle-end the thesis of the novel.

James McDonald was born in a log cabin in 1850. At the age of sixteen he could split 320 rails in a day. At the age of eighteen, while out plowing, he received the call to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. He left home, got a college education. Graduating at twenty-nine with the highest honors, he pursued his calling, living in towns and cities.

McDonald was not a whole man, however, living away from the soil. For forty years he kept alive his interest in farming, and at sixty-one, when most men are on the downhill, this remarkable Scotchman bought himself a farm and set out to put into practice soil conservation methods which made him the talk of his county.

Long before he had begun farming, McDonald had preached soil conservation, and he availed himself fully of the opportunity to put his sermons into practice. The land which he bought was worn out, washed out, dust-blown, gullied. He built dams, sowed Bermuda grass to keep the soil from blowing, practiced contour farming. A firm believer in diversified farming, he would have none of cotton, which to him was the Biblical horse-



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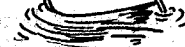
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leech, crying, "Give, give," making the land barren, sucking the very life out of the farmer. In short, McDonald used successfully new methods of farming, which if applied on a grand scale under proper government control can go far toward ringing down the curtain on one of the great tragedies of the land.

At the end of a decade of unremitting toil, McDonald made a go of it. Not only had he reclaimed his home farm, but he was operating several other farms. In the meantime he had worked himself to the bone, driven his wife and children, been a severe taskmaster to his hired hands. This vigorous, ingenious man, who had started farming with progressive ideas about society as well as farming, found himself on the side of the commercial interests he had so often condemned. The Christian in McDonald said one thing, the successful farmer did the opposite, and while he fought successfully the erosion of his land, he allowed a moral erosion in himself.

Reviewers have been quick to point out that this book shows how one-sided is the picture of the struggling farmer in *The Grapes of Wrath*. Behold a successful Okie! It is true that McDonald succeeded, but only because he was an unusual man with additional income as a preacher, able to put into practice methods beyond the reach of other, poorer men. And then in this very book there are ten hard-pressed farmers to the one successful Brother Mac, as he was known. Besides, though the Joads lost their land, they did not lose their dignity, the respect of their fellows, their integrity. McDonald in his herculean labors did violence to his own soul. Thus, those so anxious to hide the truth of conditions in the South haven't got a leg to stand on.

In the camp of the soil conservationist are those who assert that dry farming, Bermuda grass, etc., will solve the farmer's chief difficulties, show him the way out, open the pearly gates to him. With all the sincere attempts of the Roosevelt administration—and this book is written by McDonald's son, an ardent New Dealer—the problem of the Okies has not been solved by a long shot, and erosion has not been stopped. Progressives in such quarters will admit that only coordinated attack on these problems in which the mass of farmers will cooperate will prove successful.

The market is glutted with books about American farmers. *Old McDonald Had a Farm* is not the ordinary farm book. It does several things remarkably well. It preaches eloquently soil conservation, gives us pictures of conditions among Oklahoma farmers which hold true for all sections of our country and help us understand our hard-working farm people, and it shows us tenderly and gently what it is that has kneaded many a farmer into a hard, sour lump. Written in a style simple and clear and vigorous as running water, it pictures for us colorful people, Uncle Josh, Will Trimble, Mrs. McDonald, and above all, the shrewd, crabbed, mighty James

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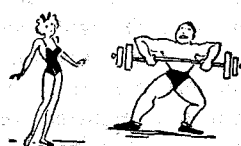
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LOW RATES - - - BOOKLET

McDonald, Brother Mac, preacher and soil conservationist, as truly American as the earth into which he sank so much of himself.

This is a good book. It begins well. It has body. It ends with a couple of ironical sentences which sum up the man's life in a remarkable way. James McDonald worked himself to death on his farm and was buried in a steel box to keep the water out. The author reporting the funeral says: "The minister told what a good man he was and how many souls he had saved. He didn't mention the soil he had saved."

BEN FIELD.

Merry Was a Lady

DRIVIN' WOMAN, by Elizabeth Pickett Chevalier. Macmillan. \$2.75.

CONSIDERING the number of southern ladies of superb executive ability who keep popping up in novels, it's a wonder that the movement for women's rights never did any better south of the Mason-Dixon Line. The latest example is Miss America Collier Moncure, who was eighteen years old in Charlotte County, Va., when Marse Robert surrendered. (If you think it's annoying to be confronted by a heroine named America, cheer up: her sisters were called Palestine, Arabia, and Andorra.)

For all she was always at heart a lady, Miss Merry was a drivin' woman, and she certainly got a lot of things done. For one thing, she ran the old plantation while her brothers were off fighting, and that was just the beginning. She killed a "damyankee" who tried to rape poor Palestine, and so had to flee to Kentucky (this in a period when no lady traveled alone), where she married a handsome and useless cousin, gave birth to his children on the kitchen floor, grew tobacco with her own white hands, endured the censure of the community because her husband was supposed to be dead and she kept having children (he was only hiding, really, on account of there was a murder charge against him), peddled her own tobacco on the Cincinnati breaks (not ladylike, either), and dashed up to New York to straighten out the household of sister Palestine and Tugger Blake, a piece of No'th Ca'lina "white trash" who was in with Dan Lord (Duke-Lord; Lord-Duke?) in organizing the tobacco trust. And that ain't all. She also married again in her fifties and in her sixties organized the Equity Association, an organization of Kentucky tobacco-growers that finally broke the power of the tobacco trust by just plain not selling to Duke's buyers and by getting pretty touchy with scabbing growers who did. Quite a gal, Miss Merry.

I doubt that I need point out that this little fable is dished up with the usual collection of moonlight-and-magnolia concepts. The portrayal of Negro characters is stereotyped and false. There is the notion that robber barons like James Duke and the hypothetical Tugger Blake formed the tobacco monopoly that starved and throttled the

growers only because they were Tarheels and no gentlemen, suh. *Damyankee* is always one word. The most sturdily propounded theme is that the only really nice way to live is on a refined farm, and that everything connected with industry (this includes the "cramped" lives of the workers as well as the expensive vulgarities of the Blakes, Dukes, and Lorillards) is definitely regrettable, if not plain nasty. Even in the account of the Equity struggle, the implication is that nobody would have done anything really unpleasant to the scabs if a lot of po' whites hadn't got into the movement. The Moncures would have done it all by speaking to them severely.

SALLY ALFORD.

Brief Review

REBIRTH IN LIBERTY, by Eva Lips. Flamingo Publishing Co.

The author of *Savage Symphony* here recounts her experiences from the day of her arrival in this country as an "exalted green-horn" to the day of her "patriotic wedding" seven years later when she became an American citizen. Primed with her husband's advice to be unbiased, open her heart first, then her mind, she regards each experience with the fresh curiosity of a child, thrilled by letters that have not been opened and by people that have not come to spy. Her visit to Canada, from which she was free to return, and her welcome at its borders, restored for her the human dignity which she had seen so devastatingly trampled upon in Europe.

There are interesting incidents told with warmth and humor of her adjustments to people, the language, and customs; but despite the book's positive qualities, it is a disappointing sequel to *Savage Symphony*. Its defects stem mainly from the limitations of the writer's sympathies. Although she and her husband saw the betrayal of the Spanish republic by British and French appeasers, she shows no awareness of the sacrifices being made for the democracy she was destined to enjoy here in America. Always, one senses her isolation from anti-fascist struggles. While lecturing before women's clubs, she visited many factories, "monuments of American spirit of enterprise," but alas, she was so dazzled by the products, textiles growing on magic looms, that she somehow failed to see the human hands that made these things possible.

The book ends on a passionate appeal to guard and cherish liberty before it is too late. But her failure to link liberty up with battle dooms her concept to an abstraction. Only once are the enemies of liberty identified by name: Quisling, Laval, and Coughlin. This is hardly enough. Perhaps it is a fear of giving offense that motivates her restraint, her timidity. She argues in defense that her experiences with Hitlerism had burdened her with a task not "against Nazism" but for America. But only by fighting against Nazism can one be for America.