

Landscape

Hooves of far cattle tap on his brain
Crutches of wind rattle dry branches
"Carry me home" he cries to a train
Send the drums forward, death advances

Ourbody soldier in shrapnel bed
White with wounds like a burning candle
Three crows shuffle at his spirits head
Red ants march on bayonet handle

"He is alive," little grass whispers
"We shall wait," cough guns across the hill
A childish plane is saying vespers
A red ant stands serious and still

Now the great fish is loose in his veins
Birds in his breath beat a wing of ice
The hearts last lions lick their gray manes
And a cloud looks deep in his eyes

Now from the wood howl the dog-wild dogs
And in a dark cave the drums riff twice
Mushrooms and violets dream by logs
And a cloud falls asleep in his eyes

The weather of death blows in his ear
And silence lies down in his voice
The lilies and field mice come to stare
And across the hill the guns rejoice

Hooves of far cattle mourn in the sky
A lost wind nests in low branches
"I'll take him home," is the trains faint cry—
Beat all the drums, death advances.

FLOYD WALLACE.

Mr. Wallace is the author of "Soldier Song," published in NM of July 31 as the prize-winning poem of NM's recent Art Young Memorial Award Contest for Poetry.

in her new book, and tells it very well indeed. Prefacing her narrative with a thirty-six-page summary of the war itself, she follows with the personal stories of many exiles—distinguished and humble—who were driven from their native land by the invading armies of Hitler and Mussolini.

These stories gain poignancy over other refugee stories by virtue of the fact that the Spanish refugees alone among the European peoples oppressed by fascism have no place to go. Their homeland, protected by a spurious neutrality, has not yet been liberated, and this fact alone is of consummate irony. For the neutrality of Franco served only to guarantee the continuity of international fascism, to guarantee the continuing

murder of Spain's republican populations.

While Senora de Palencia tells her many stories with patent heart and sound conclusions, one has the feeling that there is something lacking in her book. I would describe it as partisanship—not for republican Spain, for she is an iron-bound partisan of the Republic. What seems lacking is a proper allegiance to those forces within and outside Spain who are going to liberate her country in the near future. By maintaining a strange neutrality between the contending groups of Spaniards in exile, Palencia fails to strengthen the hand of the one group she concedes is really capable of rallying the majority—the Negrin group.

It is a sad fact that the recently con-

vened Cortes in Mexico succeeded in isolating Juan Negrin—together with substantial groupings without whose support no unified movement for the reconquest of Spain is possible. While admitting that the Prieto group now holds the balance of power among the exiles, it is curious not to find Palencia evaluating Prieto and his *junta* as they must be evaluated. For Prieto himself has long since been exposed by Premier Negrin as a traitor to the Republic, and Prieto's influence at all times has been toward a narrow, nationalistic understanding of the Spanish problem—and toward a vicious anti-Sovietism and anti-Communism that is the hallmark of greater villains than he.

Spain will be reconquered, however, by the people who remained behind after the war, and while the exiles (if they achieve real unity) can help materially toward the reconstitution of their Republic, the fight itself when it comes, will be carried on by those who could not escape from Spain. They will bring to life a slogan whose memory depressed us all for many years: *Madrid Will Be the Tomb of Fascism*. That slogan has been reborn again, and it will triumph. Isabel de Palencia's new book will add to the understanding of those people whose assistance and understanding is needed to make it reality.

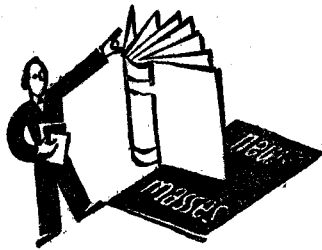
ALVAH BESSIE.

Industrialized Farm

NOT IN OUR STARS, by Josiah E. Greene. Macmillan. \$3.

THE first prize for fiction in the Macmillan Centenary Awards, open to American citizens in the armed services, went to Sergeant Josiah E. Greene's *Not in Our Stars*. Its setting is a large dairy farm, a sort of company town, with its barns, bottling plant, offices, and cottages for the dairy workers. The major theme is the conflict between the manager and the drivers over better conditions and wages. It is a chunky novel, almost 600 pages. The writer bit off quite a piece; but it is the reader who does the choking.

Some secondary stories in this novel are handled more effectively than the main plot. This is particularly true of the sex-hounding of young Freda Ellis by a pack of bigoted women. While the main conflict becomes involved, weighed down by the sinkers of interminable dialogue, this story gains in intensity and suspense as the daughter of the leader of the sex-hounders goes "bad" and through her mother's agency



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dies after an abortion. This Freda Ellis story points to a major weakness of the novel, for it seems to this reader that had Sergeant Greene used it as the hub and axle of the novel with the other conflict on the rim, so to speak, the result would have been a stronger novel, and it would still have been the story of the Weyland Dairy.

Not in Our Stars is further weakened by the stand of Sergeant Greene in the struggle between the drivers and the dairy. He would have us believe that he is objective and nonpartisan. He chooses two characters to act as mediators, to scold both sides and dump live coals on their heads. What is illuminating about this device is that the middlemen (the office assistant and the young driver Sam Roberts) are sophomoric gasbags; they are unreal, the weakest portraits in the whole gallery. Significantly, also, the chief "troublemaker" among the drivers is a cripple, whose brother is a Communist, one of the "weaselly men" who slings a jargon full of "trite phrases and stencilled ideas." The reader is pushed to a violent dislike of this crippled ringleader and nuzzled to a sneaking admiration of the boss-manager, who refuses to install a new furnace in a cottage during the winter because it might be interpreted as a sign of weakness.

The workers in this novel then are underlings, cripples, and buffaloes people, who learn nothing at all in their dealings with the manager. But this is not a true or typical picture of a group of American workers, even though they are handicapped by working in a rural section. Having been on dairies and plantations with a setup similar to the one described by Sergeant Greene, worked with the men in barn and lot, slept with them in the dormitories, and gone to the town of a Saturday night for beer, I maintain this picture is cut on a wild bias, is even slanderous.

Obviously, the experience of Sergeant Greene demonstrates again that it is no light job to write an industrial novel, one truly grounded in the character of the American worker and the shop and the farm. For it requires a technical skill and an understanding of the economic and social forces not easily or cheaply acquired. It demands love and compassion for the people, a deep sense of responsibility to them. And humility. One does not drink of this spring without kneeling.

The country is in the throes. The working people are girding themselves for one of the great struggles of their history. What lights up the confusion

and postwar wreckage like a huge flare is this fact: in the forefront of the battle to protect the fruits of victory and to ensure for all a just, democratic, and prosperous peace stands the American worker, a gusty, cocky guy, who with all his limitations and strong prejudices has heart and guts. Cheap generalizations about unions cut at his hamstrings. So do "trite phrases and stencilled ideas" about "weaselly men." The author, as a soldier, may weigh the charge that, perhaps unwittingly, he is giving ammunition to those who are once more mining the world for another war and are the most violent and uncompromising enemies of his people.

BEN FIELD.

Tests for Teachers

MORE THAN AN ACADEMIC QUESTION, by
Franz Schneider. The Pestalozzi Press. \$4.

MANY a college graduate has asked himself in later years, "Was it worth all the time and effort?" In this scholarly work Professor Schneider gives us one good reason why such dissatisfaction is widespread.

"The greatest obstacle," he declares, "in creating high teaching standards and in raising teaching to eminence, lies in the hybrid nature of our larger colleges and universities and in their domination of the educational scene. They are supposed to function as 'teaching institutions' for the nation's superior young people and they receive as such large public and private sums of money, yet actually they are primarily concerned with wanting to be 'research institutes' and the nesting places of great scholars. In consequence, they hire predominantly men who are devoted to 'scholarship,' and pay but scant attention to their qualifications as teachers with social vision, courage, and leadership."

For this state of affairs Dr. Schneider has a remedy. "If we want better teachers," he maintains, "we must above all else have teachers who are ever willing to submit to checks on their performances, lest they fall into dull routine, loose thinking, or noxious smugness. The scientist checks up continuously on his techniques and experiments; the doctor is ever ready to have his skill and knowledge challenged, for every case he takes is such a test. Why should we glibly assume that the teacher alone, whatever his age, experience, or natural endowment, is always right and steadily efficient?"

The means he proposes for checks on the performance of teachers is the use of