

High Adventure

SAILS OVER ICE. By Captain "Bob" Bartlett. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1934. \$3.

Reviewed by JEANNETTE MIRSKY

THIS is primarily a love story, the love of Captain "Bob" Bartlett for his own schooner the *Effie M. Morrissey*. It is a tale of high adventure in the North Atlantic and the North Pacific; the tale of a gallant skipper and a gallant ship. Those who know the Arctic know Captain "Bob." He was Peary's skipper; he is, perhaps, the greatest Arctic navigator alive. And a grand story teller. This is no ordinary book, because Bartlett is no ordinary man. He is of the race of giants, and he has the gift of imparting to his words all of his own vivid personality. The book lacks only the boom and the brogue of his voice.

Born of a long line of seafaring folk, Bartlett followed the sea all his life. But "Sails Over Ice" is not an autobiography, since "Bob" Bartlett shares his yarn with his beloved *Morrissey*.

Since he bought her in 1924, through the generosity of the late Commodore James B. Ford, Bartlett and she have survived many a wild moment. They have sailed along the forbidding Labrador Coast, tilted with the ice of northern Greenland, dared the uncharted waterways north of Hudson Bay, Bering Strait, Iceland, East Greenland; each trip has had a different purpose, from codfishing to archaeological investigation.

Many times the *Morrissey* was in a tight pinch; many times it was touch and go whether she was to take the plunge to Davy Jones' locker, or bring Bartlett safely back to his home in Brigus, Newfoundland. Of one voyage he writes: "Incidentally, we had a damned fine sail, and established a new precedent . . . by never once even so much as threatening to lose our little schooner and ourselves along with it. God, sir, that's sort of a record."

Captain "Bob" and the *Morrissey* were in Foxe Channel, in a "super-fog," so thick you could bite chunks out of it . . . We were lost, all right . . . Then our keel bumped a couple of times. That was enough for me. I anchored right away and sent up a prayer to all the gods I could think of that it was low water. The rise and fall of the tide up here was about forty feet." They had grounded at about half-tide and were on for fair. "You could walk around the *Morrissey* and not wet your feet." They waited for the flood tide. They never saw it come until it hit them.

It was a solid wall of water, dead black beneath the foam and spray. Six feet high it was, if it was an inch, and it might have been more than that . . . The force of that tide snapped the five-inch kedge line as though it were a thread . . . And that damned fog shut us in so that we couldn't see a thing . . . As soon as we had decided that the anchor would hold, we found that the tide had another trick up its sleeve. It brought the ice in with it, growlers and floes. And, my dear man, ice floes the size of a city block moving at a speed of seven knots are dangerous playthings . . . To tell the truth, I'm free to admit I wouldn't have given a torn spinnaker for our chances of coming through when those Arctic subway expresses were roaring down on us out of the black fog.

At the end of "Sails Over Ice" Bartlett writes of the *Morrissey*:

I love her as a man can love his vessel, and if she is not as young as she was once, neither am I. Together we have much to do in the North yet, and I know that neither of us feel old. And I pray that we may be able to do it together.

Yes, and may "Bob" Bartlett write more books to stir us with grand adventures.

Jeannette Mirsky is author of "To the North," a history of Arctic exploration recently published.

Maryland Cases

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MARYLAND COURT OF APPEALS, 1695-1725. Edited by Carroll T. Bond with the collaboration of Richard B. Morris. Washington, D. C.: The American Historical Association. \$7.50.

Reviewed by CHARLES M. ANDREWS

IT has long been recognized, by students of American history and by historically minded members of the legal profession, that in the preservation and printing of historical texts relating to our colonial and national past too little attention has been paid to the material embodying the procedure and practice of the courts of law. While records of county courts have found consideration, notably in Maine and Massachusetts, largely because of their importance for the social and economic aspects of colonial life, those of the higher common-law courts, and the courts of vice-admiralty, chancery, and exchequer have been ignored, except in the case of occasional papers and monographs, inevitably incomplete and limited in range.

This neglect of important primary sources for the better understanding of our history has been in the last few years a matter of concern to many of our scholars. When, therefore, an opportunity arose, through the gift to the American Historical Association, by Mrs. Frank T. Griswold of Radnor, Pennsylvania, of a sum of money to be known as the Griswold-Littleton Fund, under which a series of volumes containing the records of colonial and national courts of law might be issued, a conference was held in New York in January, 1930, for the purpose of launching the undertaking. Through the activities of a committee, appointed by the Association, on the recommendation of the conference, to take immediate charge of the enterprise, there has now appeared the first volume of "American Legal Records," a handsomely printed work of 673 pages, containing the full text of the Maryland Court of Appeals from 1695 to 1725. This volume deals with "the work, two hundred years ago, of a fully developed tribunal applying the law of England, but adapting that law to the needs of a new environment." Two other volumes are in preparation, one to contain the records of the mayor's court of New York, the other the records of the vice-admiralty court in Rhode Island before the Revolution. Additional volumes are under consideration.

This is not the place to enter upon an analysis of the contents of the volume, which must be left to the more technical journals. Suffice it to call attention to the scholarly and illuminating introduction by Judge Bond, in which the significant features of the text are brought out in a manner readily grasped by the layman.

The New Books

Fiction

TENDER CHEEKS. By Wolfe Kaufman. Covici-Friede. 1934. \$2.50.

Ralph was not his real name, but he could not remember the "T" that he might once have been, so Ralph was as good a name as any. He was a bum, born that way. He knew he was lazy so he never thought about "hard times" or relief bureaus. Now and then he thought he would go around to the agencies some day and get a job, but he was used to flop houses and subways, and you could make twenty cents in an hour or two panhandling on Times Square. Willard was a soda-jerker, ex-school-teacher and would-be actor. He got in the habit of picking up boys in front of the automat because he was tired of eating his half an apple alone every night before going to bed. His laziness was worse than Ralph's because he fooled himself. He had what he called "hopes" or "prospects." He became a school-teacher again out of loneliness for his dead father, but he still hung around Broadway. It was better that way. You had not quite gone back on yourself. You could still remember the "ideal."

This is a story without a hero, and perhaps it is no tragedy, in the classic sense. It does not inspire fear or pity. It contains no climax or promise of regeneration. The characters exist on a level so anonymous that it seems almost to exclude emotion. Yet, partly by violence of understatement, the book startles. With brutal care the author has shown human beings sniveling before the dark god of their own aimlessness. His method is an artful imitation of the characters' cryptic unconcern.

E. C.

HOW LIKE AN ANGEL. By A. G. Macdonell. Macmillan. 1934. \$2.

A mixture of farce and satire is like a combination of orange and magenta. It may work, but the chances are against it. Mr. Macdonell was an accomplished satirist of national manners and character in "England, Their England"; in his new novel, he takes on Western civilization, but the result is mostly shadow-boxing. He contrives to look at Europe and America through the eyes of Hugo Bech-

stein Smith, a youth brought up on a South Sea Island by three missionaries—French, German, and English—with whom he had survived a shipwreck at the age of two. After his rescue, and en route to civilization, Hugo is found to be indistinguishable from the husband of a certain movie actress, and is promptly kidnapped by the actress's publicity man. The resulting episodes are sometimes funnier than you might think; but the mixed-identity plot never produced very good farce, even in "A Comedy of Errors"; adding this to the reversed "Robinson Crusoe" plot, you will see that Mr. Macdonell is not leaning over backwards trying to be original. Nor are his cracks about the movies, or about the economic experts who are overcoming the depression, or about the American immigration laws or the English divorce laws, on a much higher level of invention. There are some passages, however, which would be very good if they were not struggling under the weight of the second-hand devices of farcicality; and no doubt the whole book would seem better to a reader who had never heard of "England, Their England," and could thus approach "How Like an Angel" without expecting more of it than a scenario for Jean Harlow and Lee Tracy.

G. S.

MR. FINCHLEY'S HOLIDAY. By Victor Canning. Reynal & Hitchcock. 1935. \$2.50.

Even though Mr. Finchley was middle-aged, stout, and slightly bald, he needed only a three weeks' unconventional holiday to change him into a resourceful and roguish wayfarer of English fields and roads. His wanderings were at first involuntary, for he had intended to spend the holiday sedately, at a hotel in Margate. This was not to be, however, for before he could take the train from London, a suave scoundrel in a "low green six-litre Bentley" had snatched him off to a hide-away somewhere in the southern midlands. After the first shock and resentment had worn thin, Mr. Finchley came more and more to like the idea of an unusual holiday, and less resistant to the new way of life. The latter two-thirds of the book show him as an eager vagabond,

Over the Counter

The Saturday Review's Guide to Romance and Adventure

Trade Mark	Label	Contents	Flavor
ONE WOMAN'S STORY <i>Mary Britnieva</i> (King: \$2.50)	Personal narrative	Another lady's tale about what the Russian revolutionists did to her small family.	Familiar
THE SEVEN OF DIAMONDS <i>Max Brand</i> (Dodd, Mead: \$2)	Western	Veteran writer of powder-smoke epics tells how young Mike Tirrel won a horse and a lot of trouble.	Red-eye
CRISS-CROSS <i>Don Tracy</i> (Vanguard: \$2)	Novel	Hard-boiled tale in which the driver of an armored truck climbs to success through plot threaded with cross and double-cross. Good timekiller.	Cain-Hammett
THIRSTY RANGE <i>E. B. Mann</i> (Morrow: \$2)	Western	Gun-toting Mr. Day finds himself tangled sweetly in one of those range wars.	Standard

Here's the book of **DYNAMITE**

which — according to WILLIAM SOSKIN — goes "back of the scenes with the prima donnas of peace who are leading the world to new wars".

★ ★ **THE AMERICAN DIPLOMATIC GAME**

by **DREW PEARSON**, co-author of **WASHINGTON MERRY-GO-ROUND**, & **CONSTANTINE BROWN**

New York American Prize Book for January. Just Published — \$3.00 — Doubleday, Doran

roaming wide-eyed through the southwestern counties—Somerset, Devon, and Cornwall. The face of pleasant, rural England becomes familiar to him as the mishaps of the road take him along, and by the time he returns to his office he has gained a wide, if not deep, sympathy with his own land and with his fellow wanderers.

Readers who are content to follow a familiar pattern in a light, variegated adventure story may relish these pages. There is much superficial charm and brightness, and each chapter is wholesome down to the very last word. Through the book there passes a rapidly shifting procession of quaint or eccentric characters. But, looking more closely, we observe that the notable novels of this type—the picaresque—have a heartiness and vitality that have escaped Mr. Canning; where a better story would have moved effectively toward some high point of interest, "Mr. Finchley's Holiday" is content to admire a sunset, retail a bit of gypsy lore, or sketch a grotesque figure, remaining all the while essentially thin and treacly. To be sure, there are good chapters and amusing episodes, but they do not come often enough, or with sufficient accumulation, to make the whole a good novel.

R. B. M.

Miscellaneous

THE ROOSEVELT OMNIBUS. Edited and annotated by Don Wharton. Knopf. 1934. \$3.50.

If you would like to know how old the President is, what he likes and dislikes, whom he is related to and how closely, what kind of an experience a fifteen minute conversation with him might be, this is the book that will tell you. Politics is nothing if not miscellaneous and this collection of pictures, articles, dates, and cartoons has made the most of it. The text cannot compare in incisiveness with the photographs, with the exception of a shrewd article on the "brain trust" by the editor of *Today* and of a more or less prophetic picture of the youthful State Senator, written in 1911 by W. A. Warn. Apart from the usual data of biography, there is also an account of what the President thought of the attempt to assassinate him, how foreign periodicals react to his policies, and an excellent bibliography of the hasty surveys that have already appeared. As the raw material of a growing popular legend, such as develops around every chief executive, it is interesting to every citizen, before putting up on the shelf beside Dorothy Sayers, E. Phillips Oppenheim, and O. Soglow.

R. G.

Brief Mention

Theodore G. Joslyn, who was secretary to Mr. Hoover in 1931-1933, has written *Hoover Off the Record*, to give the background of important aspects of the ex-President's official life (Doubleday, Doran, \$3). *** To the increasing number of histories of transportation in more picturesque days in the Middle West is added *From Canoe to Street Barge on the Upper Mississippi*, by Mildred L. Hartsough (University of Minnesota Press, \$3.50), a historical survey from the beginning to the present. *** Those interested will find some puzzling material in Joseph J. Williams's *Psychic Phenomena of Jamaica* (Dial Press, \$2.50). The book is elaborately documented and while exposing a good deal of superstition, leaves a residuum of the supernatural. *** A convenient manual is *Modern Thought and Literature in France* by Régis Michaud (Funk & Wagnalls, \$2). *** Two recent books on Japan are: the provocative volume by Upton Close called *Challenge: Behind the Face of Japan* (Farrar & Rinehart, \$3) and *Riding the Tiger*, by Harry Carr (Houghton Mifflin, \$2.50), the latter a newspaper man's account of experiences in China as well as in Japan. *** President H. Noble MacCracken of Vassar has after many years added to his final text of Lydgate in *The Minor Poems of John Lydgate*, Part II, devoted to Secular Poems (Oxford Press, \$12). *** A study of William Vaughn Moody, by David D. Henry, has been published by Bruce Humphries Inc. (\$2.50). *** Edward Garnett has edited a selection of *Letters from John Galsworthy, 1900-1932* (Scribner's, \$2.50). *** An interesting and useful anthology of world opinion on the immortality of the soul has been edited by Nathaniel Edward Griffin and Lawrence Hunt, with a foreword by Alfred North Whitehead. The book is called *The Farther Shore* (Houghton Mifflin, \$3), and beginning with Egypt, Homer, and authors of the Far East and the classical period runs down to Osler, Lodge, and Theodore Roosevelt.

"A tale which is both thrilling and tender." — PERCY HUTCHISON

THE WORLD WENT MAD

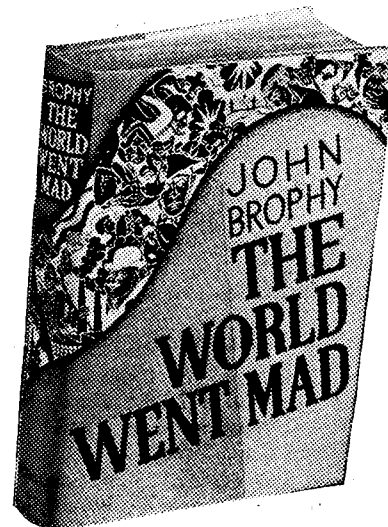
by JOHN BROPHY

author of "Waterfront"

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"He has written something both tender and blistering, a tale which is both thrilling and beautiful." \$2.50



How Like An Angel

by A. G. MACDONELL

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