

analysis in Vienna. His account begins with his first hallucinations. These were of an auditory character and hardly alarmed him. But as the symptoms progress and other senses are involved, despite the interpolations of humor and philosophy, the horrors of the threatened doom mount to an almost unbearable tension. He visits many specialists and succeeds for a time in confusing them and reassuring himself. He makes rounds in an insane hospital and succinctly describes the types of brain disease he sees there. He goes to a sanatorium for observation and comments wittily and shrewdly on his doctors and visitors. At last the verdict is read. He travels to Stockholm to one of Cushing's brilliant students, and after a tortuous operation the tumor is successfully removed while, conscious throughout, he notes his impressions and psychic agony. (He feels no physical pain for which the reader is immensely grateful). Such is the story.

The reader must decide for himself whether or not this "tale" provides for him the entertainment Somerset Maugham maintains is the essential quality of fiction. Physicians will marvel at the clinical verity of its medical comments, and they should find valuable food for thought in the reactions of a highly intelligent patient to their professional mores. The quality of the writing is far more distinguished than that of most novels, and as a horror story it unfolds with devilish ingenuity. The character of the hero is charming and provocative, and the translation is quite surprisingly good. Nevertheless it can be recommended only with reservation and to those of the steadiest nerves. Because of the art of its telling, it is far more disturbing—more convincing—than a straight medical treatise, and it is so detailed that if widely read might well result in crowding the offices of the brain men with affrighted hypochondriacs!

*Dr. Ulrich, a graduate of The Johns Hopkins Medical School, was for some years a practical physician in Minneapolis.*



Jacket design for "Ararat." From a watercolor by James Reynolds.

## Epic Vicissitudes

ARARAT. By Elgin Groseclose. New York: Carrick & Evans, Inc. 1939. 482 pp. \$2.50.

Reviewed by RAYMOND HOLDEN

IN this sincere, sober, and often moving novel, Mr. Groseclose has set himself a task of great difficulty. His major theme is, it appears, the reconciliation of the dynamic and static attitude toward human life, the Promethean and the mystic. His setting is an unfamiliar one—the region, lying south of the Black Sea and the Caspian of which Mt. Ararat is the topographical center and which is bounded today by Turkey, Persia, and the U.S.S.R. His people are Armenians, Russians, and Turks, plus one all-important American. The events of the narrative are mainly those vicissitudes which befell a village of Armenians during the thirty years between the time when the Turks decided that all male Armenians must be destroyed and the close of the Russian Revolution.

The story opens in the village of Dilijan, Turkey where, in 1895, an American missionary, an ex-cowboy from Texas who has made the Armenians his flock, was interpreting to them his personal God. Through massacre, migration, and maltreatment of all kinds the indomitable Armenians survive—at least their children do—always presided over by the booming evangelism of Amos Lyle, who, incidentally is the only character of any importance to get from the first half of the book into the second.

This shift of persons, although it enables Mr. Groseclose to get through three decades of narrative and still have two young people to bring together at the end, has the unfortunate effect of sidetracking the narrative. Thus Paul Stepanovitch Markov, a Russian bourgeois officer, son of a character in the opening section of the book, is introduced on page 183 and does not reach Amos Lyle's side until

page 320 or thereabouts. In the intervening space the fortunes of the Dilijan Armenians are left in suspension while the reader is carried with young Lieutenant Markov through the Russian Revolution and thence into exile. Only when Paul Stepanovitch reaches Amos Lyle, does the conflict of his self-reliant individualism, his mild cynicism, with Lyle's massively sublime faith in God, the Provider, bring the two threads of the story together and run it toward its quite noble if somewhat inconclusive conclusion. Markov ends by thinking that he has saved the Armenians and then catches himself and thanks God for doing the job. Mr. Groseclose concludes that all that is necessary to reconcile the apparent conflict between man's will and God's will is love,—“the understanding from which all harmony proceeds”—“the sanctuary and salvation which all men desire.” This is an agreeable belief with which the reader will not be disposed to quarrel even though he may feel it rather more than Mr. Groseclose could handle.

The difficulty of the book lies in pulling unfamiliar elements into a whole with the intensity and grandeur required by the epic quality of its material. Mr. Groseclose has not been quite successful in a large scale task. His book, however, is stimulating for all its structural weaknesses.

## Poor Woman

“... to keep back Beauty, keep it . . .”  
Gerard Manley Hopkins

By SARA HENDERSON HAY

FIND something equal to replace  
The shape of Beauty in your  
face,

This transient honor time disproves.  
Oh, is there not some worthier gift,  
Some cancelling comfort better still?  
More durable to serve, to lift,  
To minister to your self, your loves?  
This is too slight to wring you so,  
(I say) that time has done you ill,  
(I say) that Beauty is brought low,  
That the hight breast, the cheek, the  
thigh,

Will droop, fade, slacken; the curved  
arm

And kindling hands less quick, less  
warm,

The guarded panic in the eye  
Tell you again the thing you know.

Oh find some wealth more sure, more  
true—

Poor woman. Poor myself. Poor you  
Who read, if you be woman, too!



Samuel Selden Partridge turned to the little town of Phelps . . . to try his luck.

## A Man to Remember

*COUNTRY LAWYER. By Bellamy Partridge. New York: Whittlesey House. 1939. 317 pp. \$2.75.*

Reviewed by MELVILLE CANE

THIS book about a country lawyer makes a welcome addition to the growing body of material which sets the rural American scene for the period beginning with Andrew Johnson, and ending, say, with Calvin Coolidge. Its author, Bellamy Partridge, has done more than write an affectionate biography of his father; he has presented him against a background of village types, in relation to the mores of the time. The result is a work of atmospheric color, a Currier and Ives series, rich, humorous, and of historic verity.

After Samuel Selden Partridge passed his bar examinations in central New York in the late sixties, he turned to the little town of Phelps in the Finger Lakes section as the place to settle down and try his luck. While his belief that the cities were already overcrowded with lawyers is arguable, his choice of a small village for his career was surely rewarding and fortunate. Starting from scratch, he lived there for more than half a century, married, reared eight children, owned a huge house and farm, acquired a competence, and, by integrity, shrewdness, and warm human sympathies, achieved the status of a "leading citizen" along with the local clergymen and doctor, dying serenely with the era that produced him.

In this post-Civil War period, there were no law schools, no public service commissions; corporate growth and

monopoly were still in their infancy. Minority stockholders' suits were to come later. To a country lawyer there was no such thing as "Big Business." To Samuel Partridge, starting out in his early twenties, no business was too little. His first local success occurred before a justice of the peace, in defending five overpatriotic boys for making a Fourth of July bonfire out of somebody's barns. For obtaining an acquittal he received fifty dollars, ten dollars for each defendant. He likewise specialized in disputes over the sale of horses whose fitness did not come up to warranty. Which serves to date the age.

In those days you drew wills for as low as a dollar apiece, retaining the originals in your files, in the hope that eventually you'd be retained to administer the estate, if you outlived the testator. Sometimes people who weren't lawyers prepared wills, deeds, and other legal documents. This bootleg practice often resulted in defective draughtsmanship,—a flaw in title, a violation of some rule in the descent of property, thereby creating for accredited attorneys litigation in the Surrogates' and Supreme Courts. That was big business.

All this happened before the introduction of the typewriter, the invasion of any "foreign" element, the establishment of a local water-supply, the advantages of concrete pavement.

The book is full of bucolic incident and character. How about a movie? Another "Man To Remember," set in General Grant's day?

Melville Cane is a practising lawyer as well as a poet.

## A Small Great Country

*BELGIUM. By Hugh Gibson. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Company. 1939. 347 pp., with index. \$3.50.*

Reviewed by JAMES FREDERICK GREEN

MR. HUGH GIBSON, who retired from the Foreign Service last year, has been one of America's most capable and charming diplomats. After many years in our embassies at Brussels and Rio and on our delegations at Geneva, he now shows a talent for writing as well as for negotiation. Mr. Gibson's latest book is at once a guidebook for the tourist and a tribute to a country which he knows and loves. The former Ambassador describes his work as "an attempt to write the sort of book I wish somebody had written for me years ago."

This introduction to a small but great country contains almost everything that the ordinary traveller requires, except hotel and transport information. There are chapters on Flemish painting, and on Belgian history, architecture, carillons, food, and lace. After extensive discussion of each of the chief tourist centers—Bruges, Ghent, Brussels, and Antwerp—even more interesting sections are devoted to lesser known towns and villages. With an eye for picturesque survivals of the Middle Ages, Mr. Gibson lists many of the religious processions and ceremonies that the visitor can find in odd corners of the country. His discussion of Flemish art includes even an appendix on the saints and their symbols. Dozens of fine photographs greatly enhance the text.

This reviewer, having spent exactly thirty minutes in Belgium (at the Brussels airport), can hardly vouch for the accuracy of Mr. Gibson's praise of kidneys à la Liégeoise or the Hôtel de Ville in Louvain. The book as a whole, written in a slightly casual style, contains an enormous amount of useful information, artistic erudition, and sympathy for the national traditions. One occasionally wishes that Mr. Gibson had departed from the custom of guidebooks by commenting on contemporary political affairs or pointing out a few modern buildings and social projects. "Belgium" is, however, a credit to both its author and its subject. It is the sort of book that can be used as an adjunct to Baedeker while the traveller is on tour, and that, when he wishes to relive his experiences in memory, will be just the stimulant to recollection that he needs.

James Frederick Green is on the staff of the Foreign Policy Association.