

to make games of the catastrophic? To say that children are never so loved as in a disaster, when people are good, and united? But this latter message is weakened by the contrived quality of the novel.

If Mr. De Hartog wanted mainly to point out that children are unable to assimilate tragedy he was anticipated by Richard Hughes in "The Innocent Voyage." In this classic, it will be remembered, five children are shipped back to England after an earthquake in Jamaica. They are captured by pirates, have fun with a white pig, a goat, and a monkey, see a lion and tiger fight. A little girl commits a murder, and in the end causes innocent men to be hanged. "Children have little faculty of distinguishing between disaster and the ordinary course of their lives," says Mr. Hughes, but he proceeds to reveal the horror that may live beneath childish guile, while Mr. De Hartog confines himself to the sunny smile.

Mr. De Hartog would seem to be saying that nature provides children with a protection against extreme experience, and that trauma need not result. The human psyche is indeed tremendously resilient, but I doubt whether it can be agreed that such shocks are typically assimilated with lightness and joy. I saw many war orphans in France and in Israel; I saw small children making the difficult underground trek across Europe to illegal ships bound for Palestine. Like Jan and Adinda, they received much love from the adults around them, yet playfulness was extremely rare in them. The French film "Forbidden Games" came closer, I think, to rendering what Mr. De Hartog had in mind.

—MEYER LEVIN.

FOUR LADIES AND A COUNT: In Monica Stirling's new novel, "Ladies with a Unicorn" (Simon & Schuster, \$3.50), four women are in love with the same man, a situation guaranteed to lead to complications. The unfortunate gentleman's name is Count Anton-Giulio Sarmento, and he is both an Italian aristocrat and a leading director of the kind of films now known as "neo-realistic." All through Miss Stirling's novel he is so engrossed with the production of his latest masterpiece, then being filmed on location in Rome, that he remains almost completely ignorant of the tempests of emotion apparently aroused in feminine bosoms by the mere mention of his name. I say "almost" because he does fall violently in love with one of the ladies involved (just the one you would expect him to succumb to, by the way) and there is a satisfyingly happy ending to it all.

Miss Stirling tells her story through



Monica Sterling—"four terrifying women."

one of the women, a French composer whose husband was killed by the Gestapo during the Occupation and who is determined to remain permanently unhappy. The other three ladies are a beautiful English girl whose romantic wartime marriage to a French financier is souring on a steady diet of upper-middle-class living; an attractive but oh so terribly earnest and idealistic young actress; and Anton-Giulio's cousin Valeria, a Roman princess with an explosive personality and a mind full of shopworn ideas about the blessings of authoritarian rule and the need for keeping the lower classes in their proper place. These four terrifying women spend a great deal of time intriguing with each other for the unsuspecting Anton-Giulio's affections and having long heart-to-heart talks about love, life, and happiness.

Miss Stirling's novel is worth reading, if only because she writes with tenderness and an unusual skill for accurately recreating the sights and sounds of life in modern Rome. Some of her characters, notably Valeria and the young actress, are also real creations, human beings brought vividly to life by the author's understanding of their motivations and her ability to communicate this understanding to her readers.

—WILLIAM MURRAY.

TROUBLED REFUGE: Constantine Fitz-Gibbon's short novel "The Holiday" (Simon & Schuster, \$2.75) reads more like the remembered horrors of a guilt-ridden nightmare than the creative imaginings of a conscious mind.

The author would have us grant him a prosperous, middle-aged American doctor who, when he discovers his wife holding hands with another, drops her, his two children, and his practice in order to renew his acquaintance with Italy. Once in the

little town of Siano he promptly loses \$4,000 in traveler's cheques, and hastily seduces the innkeeper's daughter, Concetta. Concetta's father, Adelmo (on whose bounty, incidentally, Dr. Warren is subsisting), protests. Even Concetta is dismayed that Warren has been dilatory in bringing forward data relating to his American ménage. Warren further chafes the tempers of the villagers by interfering in the treatment of a sick child. When the child dies and Dr. Warren has been unable to raise any cash Siano decides it has had quite enough of him. Adelmo and a group of Warren's creditors beat him savagely. When he revives he goes back to Concetta, who, rather understandably, has no further wish to help him. The infuriated crowd—thinking him the murderer of the child—pursues him to the sea. As he flings himself, demented, off the cliff to his death by drowning on page 151 the reader experiences no considerable sensation.

—NICOLAS MONJO.

SOCIAL CLIMBER: In his new novel, "Willoughby Carter" (Norton, \$3.50), Humphrey Pakington tells a straight old-fashioned story from the birth of his hero to his wedding day. The period is from the 1880's to 1910, and the novel might have been written in that orderly and even time. It makes few demands on a reader and offers the small rewards of a sincere and well-mannered narrative about some uncomplicated people.

Willoughby Carter had a mildly uphill boyhood in the English midlands. Without birth, breeding, or connections, he possessed a spark of social ambition, assiduously fanned by his ambitious mother, which made him want something more than a commercial career in his father's small manufacturing business.

His medical studies at St. Kenelm's Hospital in Maddingham became an absorbing experience, "a narrow life, but he enjoyed the narrowness, the concentration on the work at hand." But the novel veers away from that pursuit to his mother's social calculations, and soon Willoughby develops an interest in the daughter of Sir Digby and Lady Royle of Chedworth Hall.

Mr. Pakington adroitly interweaves stories of medicine, business, love, and the social climb. In the end, after a dead-end amour with a girl who turned up at the Clapton Infirmary, Willoughby becomes a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons and wins a hospital post as well as a wife to his mother's liking. His story lacks the zest and pointed humor of Mr. Pakington's "Otterley" novels.

—WALTER HAVIGHURST.



NEW EDITIONS

Genesis of the Social Conscience

ONE CANNOT read far in the literature of modern social reform without coming on references to Beccaria and his importance as a pioneer thinker in the field of penology, but the short book to which he owes his fame has long been out of print in English. Now, thanks to Academic Reprints (Stanford, California), it is again readily available, in a reproduction of the second American edition of 1819—"An Essay on Crimes and Punishments," with a commentary by Voltaire (\$4). The fact that so many of Beccaria's ideas are today commonplaces is proof of the accuracy and power of his thinking; certainly they were not so when he wrote in 1764, nor for many years afterwards. A gifted mathematician, a lawyer, and an economist, Beccaria took a broad philosophic view of his subject, analyzed its elements, and reduced his consequent arguments to syllogistic simplicity. After establishing what he believed to be two truths—that the punishment should fit the crime, and that the measure of a crime is the amount of harm it does society—he proceeded by logical steps to his grand conclusive theorem: "That a punishment may not be an act of violence, of one, or of many, against a private member of society, it should be public, immediate, and necessary, the least possible in the case given, proportioned to the crime, and determined by the laws." Beccaria is one of the writers who have made history.

Speaking of which, Robert S. Hartman has given us an excellent translation of Hegel's "Reason in History" (Liberal Arts Press, 75¢), in which Hegel presents a philosophy of history that is, to my mind, one vast tautology. But, as Mr. Hartman says in his first-rate introduction, both Hegel's "revolutionary form" and "conservative content" have been widely influential. Not least of his sons by the left hand is Karl Marx—and that brings us to "Letters to Americans 1848-1895," by Marx and Engels, edited by Alexander Trachtenberg (International Publishers, \$4). This valuable collection throws much light on the rise of Communism and Socialism in the United States, reveals the Marx-Engels determination to keep their special brand of Communism undefiled by other left-wing thought, and exhibits conspicuously the doctrinaire narrowness, short-

sightedness, wishful thinking, and ill-temper that made Marx call all who disagreed with him rogues, rascals, scoundrels, jackasses, and nonentities.

From Marx it is a natural step to what he called the opium of the people—of which I find a goodly supply on hand at the moment. Here is "The Belief of Catholics" (Sheed & Ward, \$2.75), by Ronald Knox, a vigorous, brilliant, famous apologist who cogently presents the credentials of the Catholic Church; who logically contends that, if the doctrines of his Church are true, other doctrines are not; and who refuses to have any truck with "the milk of nineteenth-century liberalism" or "cloudy formulas and indefinite compromises." Here is "Seven Words of Jesus and Mary" (Garden City, \$1), by Fulton J. Sheen, who believes that "if a sufficient army of us said the Rosary every day, the Blessed Mother would now, as in the past, obtain from her Divine Son the stilling of the present tempests, the defeat of the enemies of human civilization, and a real peace in the hearts of tired and straying men." Here is "The Church and the Catholic and the Spirit of the Liturgy" (Sheed & Ward, \$2.50), by Romano Guardini, who tells us that the Church, because it liberates man from "the tyranny of the temporal," is the "road to freedom" for everyone who lives in her; and that it is through the liturgy that a man's life is made one with the life of the Church. Here are "The Confessions of Jacob Boehme" and "The Spiritual Maxims of St. Francis de Sales" (Harper, \$2.25 each). And "How to Know God" (Harper, \$2.50), the Yoga aphorisms of Patanjali, translated with commentary by Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood. Here is Roland H. Bainton's "The Church of Our Fathers" (Scribner's, \$3), with 200 illustrations, an attractive book for youthful readers that recounts the stormy history of the Christian Church from its beginnings until now. And, finally, here is a beautiful, scholarly edition of Sir Thomas Browne's "Religio Medici" (Cambridge, \$5), with 3,450 variant readings, prepared by Jean-Jacques Denonain from manuscripts and early editions . . . "to believe only possibilities," wrote Browne, "is not faith, but mere philosophy." —BEN RAY REDMAN.

What happened to the Liberals?

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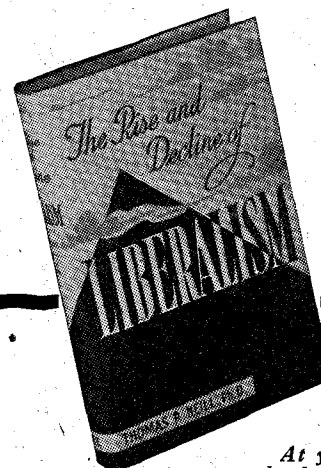
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