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people?" "If that's how you feel," I said, "I'll just stop taking pictures right now. Will that suit you?" "No," he said, in a voice that dripped with the Moscow winter, "you may still continue to use your camera."

While flying long distances over the broad Soviet Union in Aeroflot's twin engine airplanes, we both thumbed through the supply of Soviet magazines, for I was curious, but Dimitri was not. He was not tempted by paperbacked copies of Hemingway, Han Suyin, or Budd Schulberg, which were stuffed in my flight bag. I thumbed through *Krokodil*, the Russian humor magazine, and found cartoons showing three American generals dancing on a drum. One carried a hydrogen bomb in one arm, an atom bomb in the other. The second toted a tank of poison gas, and the third was a bilious green-faced monster who juggled test-tubes and hypodermics, for he was in charge of bacteriological warfare. "Positions of Strength Policy!" They were shouting. And the caption read: "Same Position, No Change."

I handed Dimitri a copy of *Time* I had picked up in Stockholm and showed him the story of the two American missionaries Wilda and Homer Bradshaw, who had finally been let out of China—she insane, he a withered wreck.

"Fish story," said Dimitri handing it back. "If the story is true why would the Chinese have been such fools to allow them out of the country and let the world hate China." The hostess emerged from the front cabin in her own blue knitted sweater and black skirt. "Comrades," she said, "we will be in Kharkov in ten minutes." Once we were on the ground Dimitri walked off the plane and I followed him. He was carrying his own bag.

—HORACE SUTTON.

## Fiction

Continued from page 13

reader's interest from the central figures; but gradually they are relegated to the subordinate positions in which they belong. In his treatment of Captain Michales, too, the author plays a risky game. At the outset, and for much of the novel, "Captain Wildboar" dominates the scene, but his part dwindles even as he becomes the prime leader of the rebellion, and his place at the center of the stage is taken by old Sefakas, who shares his eminence at the last with the newly introduced character of Kosmas, the captain's nephew and Sefakas's oldest grandson. With the final curtain, however, the author's management of his characters and his shifts of emphasis are felt to have been justified; and it is Michales who speaks the immortal curtain line. But above all the characters towers Crete itself.

"FREEDOM or Death" is animated by primitive passions and ancient traditions. It is a bloody book which takes murder and massacre in its stride. But all its violence, horrors, and exaggerations are set forth with a kind of Homeric matter-of-factness, are uttered in a tone befitting an author who has worked for sixteen years at a 33,000-verse sequel to the "Odyssey." Mr. Doolaard is probably right when he speaks of this novel as an epic. In any case, it is the work of a master, and a work of filial piety, written from heart, mind, soul, and entrails, written with power and pervasive humor. Every novel worth its ink is at least a portion of the world. "Freedom or Death" is a whole world. It is, too, a book with a message, voiced by Polyxigis—"freedom is not a cake that drops into one's mouth and is there for the swallowing, but a citadel to be stormed with the saber."

## Notes

**SOUTH AFRICAN CLICHE:** On page 65 of Joy Packer's "The Valley of the Vines" (Lippincott, \$3.75) there is a passage that caused this reviewer a moment of unexpected pleasure. It reads:

"Thinus, for God's sake, leave me before I give myself away. I can't act much longer—go, go!"  
As if in answer to her unspoken plea, he slid off the corner of the desk.

These lines characterize the novel. If there is a cliché in language, situation, or character that can possibly



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be lugged in—or impossibly, as above—it is done.

The plot and characters are not worth discussing. The story is laid in South Africa, and its thesis is, roughly, that the gracious plantation life of the white English and the fine farming life of the Boers must not be destroyed, and therefore the colored people and the natives—the tribal Africans—must be kept firmly in their places. The natives are unruly, dangerous brutes, to be handled by firm police. The colored can be given more scope, many of them are good and faithful, and the whites love the equivalents of their mammies, but they, too, must not get out of line. It is for their own good that they should stay in their proper stations.

The jacket says this is the first novel of a writer whose non-fiction has had considerable success throughout the British Empire. If so, she should stick to non-fiction.

—OLIVER LA FARGE.

**PRIVATE LIFE OF THE ARCHITECTS:** Edwin Gilbert may not be just the person you would call upon to calculate the cost per cubic foot of your new house, but it is evident that he boned up on the shop talk of our modern architects before writing "Native Stone" (Doubleday, \$4.95), a novel about three young graduates of the Yale School. What is more, judging from his frequent allusions to the blessings of modern technology, he must have sat in on more than one discussion at the Museum of Modern Art.

No doubt about it, Mr. Gilbert takes the profession pretty seriously. Unfortunately, so do his three heroes, Rafferty Bloom, Vincent Cole, and Abbott Austin. In the first few pages, when Austin is about to fall in love with Nina Wister, we are reminded that a boy with a t-square is a boy with a mission in life. Nina, it seems, "had sloping shoulders, and the gentle protrusion of her breasts gave perfect balance and proportion to her body—this kind of near perfection which, to him, had the same attraction as the purity of the architecture of Miës van der Rohe (Miës, the brilliant, pioneering German architect whose main creative work in America was the new campus of the Illinois Institute of Technology—the school Abby had wanted originally to attend.)"

Mr. Gilbert informs us that "though some actual places, institutions, and persons are mentioned by name in this work, the characters of the story itself are purely fictitious." Modern architects who hope to find any of their friends or enemies portrayed in "Native Stone" will be disappointed.

—WAYNE ANDREWS.



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