

tre, capricious censorship and police control presented then about the same problems as it does now.

For those who do not consider a book wholly adequate unless it contains some elements of controversy Lochner has obligingly inserted two items which undoubtedly will provoke spirited debate.

IN THE first instance professional jealousies and narrow partisanship by the Roosevelt Administration leaders are held responsible for the scuttling of a nearly successful, semi-official American peace mission to Europe in 1939. A lively controversy is indicated if one considers that Robert Sherwood in "Roosevelt and Hopkins" identifies the emissary in question, James D. Mooney, as a member of the America First Committee and as a man who "believed that Hitler was going to win and that the United States had better plan to 'do business' with him."

The other item tends to support the thesis presented by Constantine Fitz-Gibbon in his "20 July" (SR, Jan. 14), namely that the United States failed to take advantage of the political and military potential offered by the German resistance movement. Lochner goes one step further and asserts that efforts to bring facts concerning the German resistance to public attention were deliberately frustrated on personal orders of President Roosevelt, "who was determined to establish the guilt of the entire German people." That controversy too will not soon subside.

The foregoing allegations and the sympathetic treatment accorded certain controversial personages may tempt some readers to arrive at hasty conclusions about the author's political leanings. This reviewer is inclined to take a broader view. To him many of Lochner's experiences reflect significant aspects of our national history. This applies particularly, though not exclusively, to his intimate association with efforts to spare the United States the horrors of two world wars. His reminiscences are therefore more than personal, partisan expressions; they represent important bits of Americana.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S

KINGSLEY DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 1144)

OLIVE ECKERSON: MY LORD ESSEX

He was to please the Queen's grace, to beguile her, to charm the gold right out of the royal pocket. It all had something to do with his father, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whose money boxes were empty. . . . For his father he would give his heart's blood.

Notes

FRENZIED AND HUMAN: Zelda Popkin, a woman of ferocious courage, has written an autobiography, "Open Every Door" (Dutton, \$3.75), that teems with emotion, passion, hatred of cruelty, bitterness, self-pity, and compassion. From her earliest childhood she has hurried from difficulty to difficulty, enduring hardships with angry nobility. As a social worker she has thrown herself into violent centers of crime, poverty, bloodshed, starvation, and war in the United States, in Europe, in Israel. During her marriage she was her husband's partner in a field which she disliked—the strange press-agent antics of the years after World War I. The choice was her husband's. She filled the many functions of wife, mother, and businesswoman with frenzied activity and human devotion. As a sideline she has written half a dozen mystery stories and a novel about the displaced persons for whom she worked as a member of the American Joint Distribution Committee in World War II.

Autobiographies can be truthful on many levels. Their authors usually make themselves the heroes of their own books. Mrs. Popkin has made her heroine a strong, durable figure whose childhood is made difficult by her environment and who subsequently throws herself headlong into difficult situations. She emerges from each with new power and new scars.

This is a painful book to read. It is also a difficult book because the author rushes like a cyclone through fields of activities without stopping for details or for style values.

—DORIS FLEISCHMAN BERNAYS.

CHARMER FROM MOSCOW: "Nila" (Simon & Schuster, \$3.50) is life story of Neonila Shevko Magidoff "as told to" Willie Snow Ethridge. Is book written like speak Nila herself. For why? Why need collaborator for pidgin English? Nila—she American citizen in United States since fifteen years. O. K., she no speak—but Mrs. Ethridge, she wife editor *Louisville Courier-Journal*: why she write like Muscovite Uncle Remus? In Kentucky they so speak? I think no. Better to write like M. K. Argus in "Moseow on the Hudson" and give flavor of Russian idiom in correct syntax. But—*nitchevo*—we forget style and look on book.

Anyone who has spent part of his adulthood in the USSR has usually harvested a bumper crop of misery, and the indefatigable Nila is no exception. A grim childhood spent partly in an orphanage, a turn in the Lubyanka prison, an interlude in Siberia, and a



series of dismal tête-à-têtes with the NKVD punctuated Nila's life in her native land. Between involvements with the authorities Nila Shevko married, taught hygiene to the bathless natives of the Khirgiz Steppes, and did a one-year hitch in the merchant marine. Her first husband died a political prisoner in the wake of the 1936 purges, and Nila drifted into a job on a Government puff sheet entitled *Journal de Moscou* aimed at the French trade. Through it all Nila retained a flair for plucking roses from among the thorns; even in Siberia she adored the magnificent pumpnickel doled out to the inmates. Eventually she married the American newspaperman Robert Magidoff, and in 1941 emigrated to the United States.

Mrs. Magidoff is evidently quite a charmer, and some of the impact she must have had on the lecture circuit comes through in Mrs. Ethridge's pages—though a less frenetic diction would have been welcome.

—MARTIN LEVIN.

SICILIAN BAD MAN: The young Sicilian bandit Salvatore Giuliano was known to the American public only through occasional Sunday supplement stories and newspaper accounts of his death-by-shooting death in 1950. But to many Italians, as well as to other South Europeans, he was a flaming example of the bandit-hero. In the years since his death the Giuliano legend has flourished, and in "Bandit" (Harper, \$4) Gavin Maxwell writes a biography of the twenty-seven-year-old whose life and death were so violent. Mr. Maxwell works hard to do a professional job—perhaps too hard. For in the absence of specific details about Giuliano he is forced to reach into Sicilian history and customs, the *mafia*, and geographical descriptions to make a full-length book. All of which impedes the real narrative, but cannot entirely kill the fire in the story of the youth who after a minor infraction of law was threatened with the *bastinado* (beating with rifle butts). Trying to escape this he shoots and kills a *carabiniere*. Slightly wounded himself, Giuliano took to the hills, where his ingenuity, courage, and ruthlessness made him a challenge to all Italian authority. He did not hesitate to kill, or order killed, any who informed against him, leaving notes on bodies which read: "So perish all who spy against Giuliano." Again, he was pure Robin Hood, tell-

ing wealthy farmers: "If ever again you turn away a poor man and revile him you will have Giuliano to reckon with." Finally, in his account of the handsome, dashing young man's death, Mr. Maxwell's book attains a brooding atmosphere almost operatic in flavor. But, again, it is impossible to be totally satisfying. For who betrayed Giuliano no one really knows. Mr. Maxwell says he does—but he won't tell.

—ALLEN CHURCHILL

OLD DAYS IN EAST AFRICA: Once upon a time in the Old Africa a white hunter could make a fortune poaching ivory, and could wander about the bush indefinitely, living by his gun and his wits. But this was before the First World War, when John Alfred Jordan was still a young man. Now seventy-five, this British-born, Oregon-raised, and Africa-scarred hunter has, with John Prebble, written a colorful narrative of those wild and dangerous years in British and German East Africa. The reader may be a little annoyed with the Hemingwayesque rhetoric of these stories, but he will soon forget that as he becomes engrossed in hunts for elephant and man-eating lion, an encounter with "leopard men" (who turn out actually to be rather squalid bush-bandits), a hilarious magic competition with a witch-doctor, a barroom fist fight in a Kenya frontier town, and countless anecdotes about snake-bite, crocodile shooting, Cape buffalo, gorillas (who grieve over their dead like human beings), and pygmies. Despite their pretentious style of writing Jordan and Prebble have produced a book about Africa that has much more dash and flavor than is usual in that genre.

—THOMAS E. COONEY.



—By Paul Galdone for "A House of Children."

"... a celebration of an idyllic childhood."

FICTION

The Shimmer of Youth

"A House of Children," by Joyce Cary (Harper, 276 pp. \$3.50), one of its author's early novels now published in this country for the first time, is an autobiographical celebration of an idyllic boyhood summer in Ireland.

By Milton Crane

THE gratifying success of Joyce Cary's works in the United States in the past several years has sent his publishers back to those earlier novels, which long ago won him deserved renown in England. One of these, "A House of Children," now offered for the first time to American readers, shows Mr. Cary in an (to us) unfamiliar role, half-evoking, half-creating the memory of a boy's summer in Ireland in a house of children half a century ago.

Those who (with good reason) regard with misgiving every novel of childhood or adolescence, fearing an undigested mass of hypersensitive sentimentality, may be assured that Mr. Cary has brought his own highly individual approach to this material as to everything else he touches. The story of Evelyn Corner's summer in Dunamara is the story of a child's world, as blissful in its promise of eternal sunshine as Kenneth Grahame's wonderful "Golden Age." Mr. Cary himself said that he intended "A House of Children" to be "a book full of that clarity, the large skies, and wide sea views, which belong to the vision of my childhood."

All this the book is, and more. For some of Evelyn's cousins are already leaving the world of Dunamara, the gentle Frances for marriage, the unsure Robert for boarding school, the headstrong Delia for elopement with the children's former tutor, Pinto. And Evelyn himself is changing, as he abruptly realizes in the middle of the Maylins' party, a long and brilliant narrative that catches up most of the threads of the first part of the book. Until this time Evelyn and his fellows had "gathered sensations, smells, various excitements; only now and then consolidated into an idea by an accident of attention, some remark. But at the party, while Evelyn is alternately dancing sedately with his cousin Kathy and frolicking wildly, a

strange boy speaks slightly of the children's antics, and Evelyn feels himself suddenly drawn apart:

I don't mean that nature or some mysterious power ended my childhood at eight years old. I don't know when my childhood ended or if it is all ended now. The only certain distinction I can find between childhood and maturity is that children grow in experience and look forward to novelty; that old people tend to be set. This does not mean even that children enjoy life more keenly than grown-ups, they are only more eager for experience. Grown-ups live and love, they suffer and enjoy far more intensely than children; but for the most part, on a narrower front. For the average man or woman of forty, however successful, has been so battered and crippled by various accidents that he has gradually been restricted to a small compass of enterprise. Above all, he is perplexed. He has found out numerous holes and inconsistencies in his plan of life and yet he has no time to begin the vast work of making a new one. . . . I think that is the reason for the special sadness of nearly all grown-up faces . . . you read in their lines of repose the sense that there is no time to begin again, to get things right. The greater a grown man's power of enjoyment, the stronger his faith, the deeper and more continuous his feeling of the waste of life, of happiness, of youth and love, of himself.

But for children life seems endless, and they do not know a grief that has no cure.

Above all, "A House of Children" is a celebration of an idyllic childhood, caught for all time by an artist who knows that the past can be recaptured only if it is recreated. Hence, as Mr. Cary disarmingly tells us in the prefatory essay to the Carfax edition of this novel (and could not Messrs. Harper & Brothers make available all these remarkable essays in self-criticism?) the young Joyce Cary was divided for the purposes of this book into Evelyn Corner and his elder brother Harry (an invention), lest a fusion of the two characters mar the simplicity and clarity for which Mr. Cary was striving and which he so signally achieved.