

from his cabinet, saw the vigorous head-shakes of General March, he commented on the fact with some asperity. "Ah, General, you disapprove!" The General disapproved. He must have been a cantankerous individual to have around, but the troops flowed across the ocean in a steady stream and the most gigantic over-seas expedition of all time proved, finally, to be a success. Organization did it and General March and his superior, Newton D. Baker, were in charge of the organization.

The book makes no pretense of being a complete picture of this triumph. It does, however, present a graphic study of what faced the American forces and gives even more a notion of the complexity of the human element which enters into warfare. His praise of the Schlieffen Plan, which was the basis of the German general attack, is whole-hearted. The failure of the Germans to pulverize the Bel-

gian forts at the outset by big guns may have been caused by the incompetence of Von Moltke, but it seems suspiciously like the lapse in the efficiency of the general plan. The more one reads of generals and wars, the less there is to believe of their omnipotence. The French war plan was entirely wrong; General French, of the British, walked for years over the terrain of Belgium before the war, anticipating what eventually came, but there was little to show for it when he blundered about the same territory at the head of his Expeditionary Force. Plain military dumbness ruined the Germans in the first dash.

But General March's book will be remembered best for the body blows he hands about with such prodigality. His strictures on General Pershing are severe. Since Pershing had the first shot in their personal conflict, he may now make a rebuttal. If he should reply to General

March and General March should reply to him, ad infinitum, it would be very delightful. It would reveal the military mind, which is always something to be admired, and it would ease the tedium of a bad winter, which, some are cruel enough to suggest, may have been the result of that very war they are quarrelling over so interestedly.

K. S. C.

GUARDIAN ANGEL AND OTHER STORIES, BY MARGERY LATIMER. *Smith and Haas*. \$2.

Margery Latimer was one from whom important things were expected. Her death is a tragedy of unfulfilment, leaving in doubt whether she would have found what she was seeking. This book, coming so close upon her death, tempts the reviewer into considering her as a person and as a writer, for in her case especially the two seem so nearly one. Even the manner of her death has an ironic quality and her questing nature shines forth in all she wrote.

The title story of this book is in reality a short novel and as such it appeared in *SCRIBNER'S*. There are eight shorter stories, all showing extraordinary talent and intense emotion. Indeed, the intensity at times reaches the verge of hysteria, and there is a lack of integration which shows the work to be that of a seeker rather than a master.

"Guardian Angel" concerns the interweaving of emotions in the relationship of an older woman and a young girl. "Married" is a similar relationship between a young woman and her ex-husband. In both the emotional dependence, despite struggles to break away and establish independent and reasoned positions for themselves, of the younger person is the dominant theme.

"Death of Mrs. Vanderwood" is less well done than some of the others but it is important in understanding the significance of Margery Latimer. The old woman reminiscing on her death bed tells the girl who attends her: "I was unhappy that Sunday. . . . Anyway, I suddenly realized that I was in pieces. Just as if I'd been knocked apart and never got together again. Oh, when I knew, when I knew that why didn't I do something, why didn't I try to get all fitted close together again?"

Margery Latimer's writing seems to be the effort of one trying "to get all fitted together again," and in the process she has revealed much about human character.

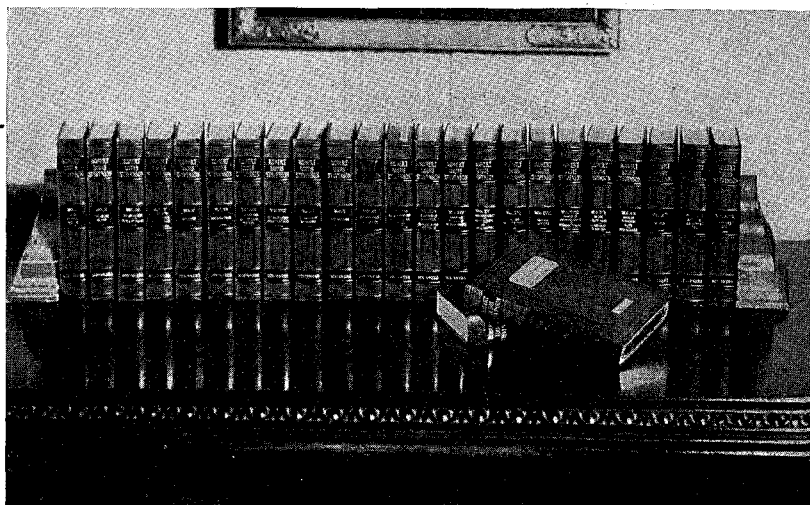
A. S. D.

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BY JOHN BUCHAN. *Coward-McCann*. \$3.75.

THE LAIRD OF ABBOTSFORD, BY DAME UNA POPE-HENNESSY. *Putnam*. \$3.50.

The Scott centenary is greeted by two books which do credit to him. There is quite general agreement that he was not of the furthest reaches of literary eminence but that no one, in any comparable period, had greater influence on his age. His success, financially at least, was overwhelming. I make the point because it brings up what must have been one of the most delightful features of life in that day: the universal and resounding excitement which greeted a new Scott romance. We have lost that ability to be aroused by literature and it is a sad thought. If one single feature of Scott's life has come down to us as a legend, it is his integrity in paying off his creditors following the crash of his publishing venture. The general impression is that he did this under the direct stress of despair and failing health, as was done by General Grant later in writing his memoirs, but Dame Una Pope-Hennessy shows that Scott worried very little over his misfortune. His private income was still secure and he set to work to pay off his debts. In twenty-three months he could reduce his liability by \$200,000. It was an amazing feat.

Mr. Buchan brings to his book a deep love of the man and his Scottish background. The



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ONE SET AT A TIME OR ALL AT ONE TIME—YOU SHOULD OWN THESE BOOKS

Lockhart will continue to be the definitive biography of Scott but Buchan has done well with the man who was so doubtful of the good taste of being a novel writer that he published the first Waverley novels anonymously and went to all lengths to cover his tracks. From the first they were world events and it has been said that Scott is the best known of English authors, Shakespeare not excepted. He may not last forever but he has lasted a long time, and the pleasure per square inch he has given mankind is not exceeded by many others, if any.

K. S. C.

THE INTIMATE NOTE BOOKS OF GEORGE JEAN NATHAN. *Alfred Knopf.* \$2.50.

Mr. Nathan is a man easy to dislike and you must be careful for that very reason. From his pages you get the idea of a gentleman a bit too cocky and disagreeable for his own good, but in the same breath you'll have to admit that his sketches of Sinclair Lewis and Theodore Dreiser, Clarence Darrow and Jim Tully and Ernest Boyd and Eugene O'Neill and H. L. Mencken are grand. Whether Mr. Nathan intended it or not, the sketches are reminiscent of Dreiser's own fine job, "Twelve Men," and they are hilarious pen pictures. In his theatrical criticisms, which fill the latter half of the book, he is a trifle more kindly than usual. Too far by half to Elmer Rice's "Left Bank," which I can't believe is as important as Mr. Nathan regards it, although I agree with him on the merits of Elmer Rice in general. But his artistic judgments are shrewd and accurate and when he belabors the American critics for their cruelty to the finest of our literary artists when they happen to lapse for a moment, we are with him full force. It seems to us the curse of American reviewing.

Either Mr. Nathan has ceased ringing in the names of foreign Czecho-Slovakia geniuses who are unappreciated in this sordid land, or we have been educated to strange sounding names and do not notice them. They didn't impress me in this volume, but before you gather the impression that I am being a trifle sardonic, let me hasten to say that the very insistence of Nathan on foreign stagecraft did a great deal to free America from the school of "Old Homestead" and "Up in Mable's Room." He has been from the first the artistic battering ram for Eugene O'Neill and many a man would be happy to allow that fact to stand as his epitaph.

K. S. C.

THE MARCH OF DEMOCRACY: THE RISE OF THE UNION, BY JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS. *Scribners.* \$3.50.

The vast success of "The Epic of America"—in which Mr. Adams provided an interpretation of American history apparently very satisfying to the contemporary American—derived from a talent that may enable his new work, "The March of Democracy," to ultimately achieve an even greater success.

This talent is, in its essence, a trick in writing. By means of it Mr. Adams allays the reader's fear that the subject under discussion is so complex it will be impossible to adequately master without endless reading, concentration, study, research, and other labor. Mr. Adams has the gift of so presenting his own simplification of an historical episode that the reader has a confidence he is getting all that is really essential for a perpetually true conception of that event.

Such a gift, which very few historians have enjoyed, is of greater value in "The March of Democracy" than it was in the former work. For Mr. Adams is now concerned with facts, with actual events and occurrences, and not with the inferences and post-mortems which follow them. It is much more difficult to provide a word picture of an event and convince the reader that that is the way it all was, than it is to evolve an explanation for an

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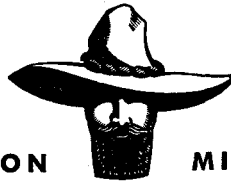
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