

chief groups of letters included by Professor Griggs: to Byron, to Derwent, Edward, George, Mrs. S. T. Coleridge, to the Morgans, to Poole, to Sotheby the epic poet, to the other epic poet Southey, to Daniel Stuart and to Josiah Wedgwood. And another little group to Mr. Dunn, Chemist and Druggist, Highgate, discloses Coleridge's occasional 'recourse to an Anodyne' under Dr. Gillman's very nose.

EDMUND BLUNDEN.

AND THE NOVEL ?

FOUR TIMES AND OUT ?

SARTORIS by William Faulkner (Chatto and Windus, 7/6d.)

Mr. Faulkner's *Sartoris* will make him a popular novelist. It may, in fact, bring the Faulkner Club to an ignominious end by making him a book-society choice. Mr. Gerald Gould, whose proud immaculateness prevented his reading *The Sound and the Fury*, can venture inside its covers without any fear of meeting a Freudian bugaboo. It may even please him.

If one were feeling that way, one could suggest that the story of the Sartoris family, and in particular of young Bayard's tragedy, was evolved by crossing *Beau Geste* with *Death of a Hero*. There is, aside from certain impressive episodes which were bound to be sharply told since Faulkner is telling them, a noticeable effort to derive some meaning from the tale of a family whose men fling their lives recklessly away while their women-folk with a resigned impatience watch them die. But the comment does not go beyond interjected notes on Bayard's inescapable doom and the 'blind fate' which controlled the family fortune. Clearly Faulkner never decided what this doom was.

In two earlier novels Faulkner invented a new style and wisely or unconsciously limited himself to the kind of story which demanded no other skills than those he possessed. Again here he has augmented the technical resources of the novelist by showing how unnecessary it is to tell a story covering several generations by the linear method. *Sartoris* has an extraordinary depth because

events widely separated in time, but spiritually akin, are made to seem simultaneous. In this respect it is an achievement, for it puts to new uses the discoveries of Proust, Joyce and Virginia Woolf.

But Faulkner proposed to do more than write a saga in a new way. He not only attempts irony and the sinister, in which modes he is accomplished, but true tragedy as well. We are, that is, asked to believe that young Bayard is a tragic hero though he has not as much right to the dignity as Hotspur. The author of his being was rebuffed by the cold despair which kept everyone except his twin and idol from knowing his heart. It is impossible to have much sympathy for a skyrocket.

The novel was put to press too soon. There are bad repetitions, dissonances and absurd echoes, *e.g.* that sour reminiscence of Keats which closes the book, particularly unfortunate because of its association with (of all people) Horace Benbow. Faulkner, if he goes on at this rate, can easily lead the pack that help the *Saturday Evening Post* sell mouthwash to 50,000,000 Americans. He probably will. That way passed Robert W. Chambers—he, too, wrote a first novel—and Hergesheimer and others. Only the propagandists among American novelists, Dreiser, Sinclair, Dos Passos, are sufficiently self-willed not to succumb to the disease of mediocrity.

WILLARD THORP.

A SERIOUS ARTIST.

MANHATTAN TRANSFER by John Dos Passos (Constable, 7/6d.).

THE FORTY-SECOND PARALLEL by John Dos Passos (Constable, 7/6d.).

NINETEEN-NINETEEN by John Dos Passos (Constable, 7/6d.).

After *Manhattan Transfer* (1927) one remembered the name of John Dos Passos. After *The Forty-second Parallel* one looked eagerly forward to the succeeding members of the trilogy (for something of that order seemed to be promised) in the conviction