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of adolescent life; and he can contrast that life, its hopes and absurdities and uncertainties, with the sunset years when "one's happiness is no longer at one's own command. We become dependent on what others can spare from their happiness." In the long run, his work will be remembered, like that of Maurice Baring, because it presents a civilized society rebelling against or conforming to a settled creed, that of the Roman faith.

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Mr. Nikolai Gubsky's new story, *The Man Who Dared* (Heinemann, 8s. 6d.), is a most entertaining thriller with a great deal of worldly experience packed into it. The hero is a tense young man who reminds me of Paganini because of his hypnotic powers, and of Hector Berlioz because of his white passion for virtue. And oddly enough, after many essays in the exercise of will and the lust for power, he too becomes a musician, and so diverts a personality from pursuits that might have been a menace to mankind to those that are a blessing.

ORDINARY PEOPLE

Reviews by H. E. BATES

MR. CHRISTOPHER WHITFIELD'S first and most notable contribution to the short story was a kind of semi-allegorical fantasy, *Mr. Chambers and Persephone*, which had in it a flavour hard to define. It recalled a taste of Mr. David Garnett, Mr. T. F. Powys, and Miss Sylvia Townsend Warner, with a touch of George Moore. Its delicate gravity was memorable.

In his first collected volume of stories, *Miss Piper's Trouble* (John Lane, 6s.), Mr. Whitfield shows little sign of trying to recapture this flavour, to which the great objection was a slight preciousness; he has set out instead to try his hand, wisely I think, with new material. The stories here are of a more everyday world; they are peopled with the common folk of Cotswold and Midland small towns and villages. Firmly tied to earth by pubs, gossip, the wash-tub, and the untidy meal on the kitchen table, they have little to do with the strange world of Mr. Chambers. Mr. Whitfield's touch, however, remains refined; the woman washing the clothes with her baby in the kitchen, the spinster who flings away her savings on an expensive coat because after all she is not going to be married—the drab lives are touched in with delicacy and poetry.

If little happens in these stories it is only right that little should happen; if they are less exquisite than *Mr. Chambers and Persephone* and at the same time less immediately satisfactory, that too is a good thing. The world of Mr. Chambers was dangerously precious and perishable; the new world will, when Mr. Whitfield gets a firmer hand on it and a sharper perspective, yield the permanent results.

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Mrs. Powys Medd is closely related to the famous Powys family, but there is little of the grandiose manner of J. C. or the sly humours of T. F. in her volume of stories, *Six Months' Playtime* (John Lane, 5s.). Her stories are as quiet as Mr. Whitfield's, but the technique is that of amateur carpentry; she strives hard to give the finish of poetry when the work is knotty with clichés; she works desperately for the surprise effect in the story of the miser haunted by the ghost of his partner, but the story has no root in character, and fails lamentably.

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Miss Kay Boyle is among the most distinguished of modern short story writers, but the load she carries in *The Crazy Hunter* (Faber and Faber, 8s. 3d.) seems to me astonishingly pretentious and complicated. A hard struggle

with these three long short stories has failed to reveal any of that direct, acid talent which made *The White Horses of Vienna* and the earlier stories so notable. The same voice is talking, but what it is talking about, for many of these three hundred pages, it is sometimes hard to say. If this is an attempt to out-do Henry James in complex irritation, then it must be held successful.

IN EXILE

Reviews by LILIAN ARNOLD

PARIS GAZETTE, by Lion Feuchtwanger (Hutchinson, 9s. 6d.), is historical in an unusual sense of the word.

Its characters are not drawn from actual persons but from life in general during those faintly understood years between the close of the last war and the beginning of the present one.

Presenting a group of refugees taken from every class and type, the author has woven their humiliations and privations into a tragedy only to be likened to the Captivity of the Jews in Egypt.

One of the more subtle injuries inflicted on its victims by the Third Reich was the confiscation of identity papers. Existing passports were not renewed, so that "people who had no papers were secretly conducted by the police of one country across the frontier of the neighbouring country, only to be brought back just as secretly next night by the neighbouring police."

It is difficult for Englishmen to realize the full wretchedness inherent in the word exile. Kipling came very near it when he wrote:—

"How stands the Old Lord Warden?
Are Dover's Cliffs still white?"

But of the headlong flight from a beloved country which ironically enough denies its citizens *Lebensraum*, how many of us can realize the true horror?

The *Paris Gazette*, then, is the newspaper, run by a few courageous souls in exile, in whose

BOOKS ABOUT

JUST ten years ago, Mr. F. L. Lucas published in *Eight Victorian Poets* essays on Tennyson, Browning, Matthew Arnold, Clough, Rossetti, Swinburne, William Morris, and Thomas Hardy. In *Ten Victorian Poets* (Cambridge University Press, 7s. 6d.) studies of Coventry Patmore and Christina Rossetti are added to the other eight. Mr. Lucas thinks "the modern reader has lost all sense of reality," since "a hundred people will finish a new book on Tennyson for one who explores *In Memoriam*."

He regards as a sad sign of the times the fact that the present age reads too little poetry. "The Church," he says, "was once, for the masses of the people, the stronghold of a certain culture; the Bible was literature; now they crumble." Science, with its mechanical devices, has made of us barbarians. While he admits that poetry "has been at times a great civilizing influence," Mr. Lucas pessimistically believes "it would be rash to expect very much of it in that way to-day." But he allows that our age is neither "insensible to beauty" nor "denuded of imagination."

The truth is that we are either lazy or pressed for time, and so hesitate to seek for ourselves in the vast works of the great poets the inspiration our hearts desire. Such books as Mr. Lucas's save us that trouble; he supplies a trustworthy guide to the brightest landmarks on the landscape of Victorian poetry. Except that he over-emphasizes Browning's vulgarity and accuses him of making a pose of his