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## THINGS REMEMBERED

**The Unexpected.** By FRANK PENN-SMITH. Foreword by RICHARD HUGHES. *Cape*. 7s. 6d.

*The Unexpected* is a narrative of adventure: not one of those slick and debonair tales of amateur voyaging in a cockleshell across the Pacific, done by some American student for fun, a bet or a mere honeymoon, or one of those grim and professional accounts of exploration in some uncharted bit of Arabian desert. It belongs to the adventure of necessity. What happens in *The Unexpected* happened to Mr. Penn-Smith not by inclination but by sheer urgency, the inexorable necessity of making a living. True, he did not step off the safe lighthouse of Victorian family life into the barbarous waves of adventure with much joy. Seventy years ago the Penn-Smiths were a happy family: secure, serene, wealthy, cultured, as aloof and solid indeed as a lighthouse. They were an institution; nothing could happen to them. A little misunderstood, perhaps, by the people in the Lancashire seaside town in which they had a house—"my parents, of cultured and attuned minds, did not harmonise with the tedious people around them, with whom they found it difficult to communicate, except by polite signs"—but it was nothing. They were rich enough to go abroad when it pleased them, and in France they were understood, in both thought and language, by both the old noblesse and the moderns. Entrancing life! "Sojourns with friends at Cimiez and the Vallon Obscur." Sojourn! No other word is right. Old villas, old gardeners, old wine, old aristocrats. Fêtes and fashions, wit and beauty, leisurely drives behind leisurely horses to romantic castles in romantic mountains. All perfect, all invincible and unchangeable. "An outburst of small-pox did not touch us. Railway accidents occurred, but we were never in them." And then, flick!—suddenly, without warning, the light in the lighthouse went out. It was all over. "When everyone is paid there will be nothing left. Do you understand?"

So began a new life, for obviously the old could never be reconstructed. Impossible! The disgrace, the humiliation, the loss of the influential friends! A new life then: and as far away as possible. The Penn-Smiths chose Tasmania—"largely owing to the eulogies of Anthony Trollope." Unimpeachable recommendation! Were there touching scenes of decision?—feminine head on masculine breast, the hard dry tear falling on the proud whiskers, the gulp of resignation and fortitude? Mr. Penn-Smith does not say. He is concerned from this moment with the new life, his life, his own emotions and adventures. The charming serenity of the Victorian scene gives way to Tasmania in 1879—no Art, no Science, no Literature, no Style, no Breeding: the beginning, in fact, of reality.

There is a Russian proverb which says that if a peasant hasn't troubles enough he will buy a pig. Similarly the Penn-Smiths: having lost everything, and therefore not having troubles enough, they bought a farm. It conformed with tradition. "My mother offered up her trinkets." After the farm, they tried lime-burning. Oh! the aristocrats at Hyères! The lime-burning also failed. Hitherto Mr. Penn-Smith's narrative has been charming, his adventures more or less conventional, his style adequate. As soon as the lime-burning fails and Mr. Penn-Smith takes up what is to be his life's work and adventure, the mining of copper and tin and gold, the narrative becomes enthralling, the adventures anything but conventional, the style strong and fresh. "Has such a life," asks Mr. Richard Hughes in his preface, "ever before been lived by a man who was a poet and an artist to his finger tips; driven to a life of action not by inclination but by necessity?" Mr. Hughes has put his finger on the spot, though he might have added courage to action, for it needed a rare kind of courage to step off the safe door-mat of Victorian aristocracy, via a lime-kiln, into the Tasmanian bush of the 'eighties and so to the Australia of Henry Lawson's day and the fevers of West Africa.

The book is full of good stuff: a hundred-and-one thumb-nail sketches of old Australian settlers, miners, cattlemen, of African chiefs, lions and cannibals, all backed up by exciting descriptions and adventures, with authentic atmosphere. Mr. Penn-Smith has an abrupt, lively, take-it-or-leave-it kind of style that is both amusing and convincing. He is no amateur. In the old days he wrote stories for the *Sydney Bulletin*—rivalling Lawson perhaps? It seems that he is now seventy. From his book you would never know it. *The Unexpected* has the vigour of youth, untainted by the morbid philosophising of old age, free from the good-old-days and things-will-never-be-the-same-again sort of refrain. There is perhaps the faintest regret for the early Tasmanian days, the

sojourns with friends at Cimiez and the Vallon Obscur, the wit, the fashion and the gaiety, the aristocrats at Hyères. But it is a legitimate and forgivable regret. "To things remembered," says Mr. Penn-Smith, "there is no end." Let us hope he will go on remembering.  
H. E. BATES

## THE BRAIN TRUST

**The Industrial Discipline.** By REXFORD G. TUGWELL. *Oxford University Press*. 15s. 6d.

No more suitable book could be recommended for a study of the spirit which informs the present administration of the United States. Professor Tugwell is a member of the so-called brain trust, and if one compares for example the proposals for reform outlined in his chapter on Government and Industry with the actual procedure under the National Industrial Recovery Act, one is forced to the conclusion that he is a very active member. His book commands particular attention and respect since he is not one of the numerous band of American economists who a few years ago subscribed wholeheartedly to the doctrine of the new era and have now, with much trumpeting about the U.S. capacity for independent action, ratted to the doctrine of the "new deal."

Professor Tugwell has long been a radical, but this does not mean that he is in revolt against big business. On the contrary, he is obsessed by it. He envisages the whole economic system in terms of the conveyor belt. The forward march of industrial technique is not to be stayed, and the industrial discipline consists in learning the lessons of adaptation to it. The characteristics and methods of modern industry—the continuous process, serialisation, functional analysis and so on—must be extended into the field of social management. The orderly movement of the Ford factory is the ideal for society at large. Business must be linked with business and industry with industry in such a way as to ensure the continuous and uninterrupted movement of materials and forces to their planned end. We have the choice between a super-trust outside our political forms and an assimilation to the State of the going system. To pose this problem is to answer it.

Professor Tugwell has therefore nothing but rebuke for those who would question this development or put obstacles in its way. He condemns the outworn political institutions which have lost touch with advancing industry; he rebukes legislators for their ignorance, labour for its intransigency, and business men for their obstruction in face of the desirable trend in industry. Above all he is contemptuous of economists for allowing the developments which have remade industry under their very noses to escape analysis, for relying upon a classical structure built upon early nineteenth-century premises, and for remaining bogged in that tradition.

But very early on one has the suspicion that Professor Tugwell has never really understood that tradition nor the analysis on which it was founded. This suspicion aroused by incidental comments is confirmed by his chapter on the processes of the market, a very loose and uncritical account of the working of the price mechanism. Professor Tugwell is convinced not merely that the competitive system works badly but that it does not work at all. At least his language is uncompromising enough on this point. Competition is a regime of organised conflict, wasteful and costly, and *laissez-faire* is merely leave to engage in a street brawl. The complexity of economic processes, which constitutes the *raison d'être* of his science, only serves for him as an illustration to justify the use of the term chaos. The Ford engineers have tidied up in their limited field, but what do they know of the rubber, paint, fabrics and metals which come to them from the general market? Apparently these materials are produced without the slightest reference to the demand for them from the automobile industry or from anywhere else, since "there is no way of keeping a balance among the groups which function in our economy." The remedy lies in the new blessed word, co-ordination. Throughout the book Professor Tugwell uses this term as the antithesis of the competitive regime and in such an arbitrary way that it is not surprising to find such flagrant contradictions as the admission that any social plan would have to include for industry all the functions which are now performed by the independent agencies which have grown up because someone anticipated a profit from doing them. Incidentally, is it not time that economists and economic historians made up their minds about the material achievement of the nineteenth-century industrial organisation, or at least imported some consistency into their verdict? The current