

Reproduced by kind permission of Evensford Productions Limited and
Pollinger Limited. Copyright c Evensford Productions Limited, 1937.

falling naturally back into the earth. As for the anodyne of the idyllic, he has had his misgivings of his pleasure in rural peace, and, facing them, found a reality in values which can discern between tractor-bluster and the purely picturesque.

The need for this is what makes the writing of a country book difficult. The mere mention of such words as "scythe," "farm-house," "harvest-waggon," carries with it a pressure of sentiment which hampers clean and clear statement about the country. Mr. Warren's country diary comes pretty well out of this test, particularly in view of the fact that he has not been, apparently, technically implicated in the life he describes. On the other hand, he has been always ready to lean over a gate and chat with farmers and labourers, listen to the stories of tramps. The extracts—here the diary form helps again—are quite short and break off cleanly. Perhaps most successful are certain moments, encounters with itinerants, given without comment.

He includes with Woodend the great view of the Severn valley to the Black Mountains, which is spread before it. Storms brew there; the fume of Gloucester is always visible, reminder of a different life. He explores that view, by bus and local train (which themselves provide humanities from which the owner-driver is insulated), and on foot. Wild life and human intercourse succeed each other; glimpses of old crafts and modern innovations; the ruin of the Stroudwater Canal and the interior of a modern milking shed.

One gets the impression that Mr. Warren has been fortunate in his Woodend. It seems more remote and self-contained than many villages these days. But perhaps that is merely saying that he has managed to convey something of the native quality of country life in his diary of a Cotswold year.

ADRIAN BELL.

FOOL'S GARDEN, by Muriel Stuart
Cape. 7s. 6d.

THE GARDENER'S ENGLAND, by
Eric Parker. *Seely Service. 8s. 6d.*

**THE OLD HALLS AND MANOR
HOUSES OF NORTHAMPTON-
SHIRE**, by J. Alfred Gotch. *Batsford.*
21s.

EACH of these three books is, in its own way, very good indeed; but *Fool's Garden* deserves to be spoken of with some high superlatives. It is the right sort of gardening book, well removed on the one hand from the authoritative, on the other hand from the sloppy. Miss Stuart, as her index shows, has a shrewd knowledge of plants; she adores this garden of hers. But one never has the feeling, as with, for instance, Robinson, of crabbed and disillusioned age frowning on youth or, as with the popular garden fictionists, that in another paragraph she will pick up her skirts and run. She strings off her high-sounding names, but it is really to amuse herself and to oblige us. Occasionally she is sentimental, but it is the best kind of sentimentalism; she is certainly romantic, but it is the romanticism of nature. Her garden was small and, when she took it, appalling: a strip, like thousands of strips, boxed in by hideous fences. The story of how, with her son Adam, she planted it, transformed it, idealised it and finally had to leave it is told in *Fool's Garden*. And it is very well told, with genuine feeling, with knowledge and humility, humorously and with gusto and delicacy. Miss Stuart is, in fact, a poet first and a gardener afterwards, and if her garden was half as good as her book it was truly enchanting. Finally, a double bouquet is due to Miss Irene Hawkins, whose fifteen lithographs of fruit and flowers are superb. They have a kind of delicacy hard to describe: it is powdery, almost shadowy and yet quite alive. Altogether this is marriage of true minds, and a very happy book. With all this Mr. Parker cannot really

compete. He is a star fixed in a definite orbit: a good writer, sober, un fanciful, with a sound background of knowledge. His book, however, should have been called "Mr. Parker's England," for we are offered only the things of his own special delight, his childhood garden, his garden in the Surrey hills, his own fancies and predilections. His book will not blow the roof off, but it has deep delight in it and warmth and a kind of affectionate solidity. It has none of that cheap transparency and paltriness now, unhappily, so profitable and popular.

Lastly, a book that is less of a book than a memorial to one of the best and now least-known of English counties, the once elegant, park-like and now half-industrialized Northamptonshire. Lying on that rich stone backbone that runs from Rutland down through the Cotswolds to Somerset, it has, at one time and another, produced a wealth of domestic architecture that is staggering. There are houses pictured in Mr. Gotch's book that make one weep: the half-ruined Kirby Hall, roofless, windowless, standing in isolation at the end of a cart-track in fields, and yet absolutely incomparable in line and feeling, indisputable in its air of being an epic; Deene Park, solid and yet almost shining by the lake; Burghley, incredibly vast; new Lyveden, roofless, never finished; Apethorpe, extremely stately and yet somehow as homely as a manor; Easton Neston, grandly eighteenth century; and many others, houses as lovely as their own names—Stoke Bruerne, Castle Ashby, Sulgrave Manor, Aynho, Stoke Albany, Rockingham Castle, Lamport Hall. It is a richness that quite transfigures the otherwise plain bread-and-butter Northamptonshire country on which, since before Elizabeth, artists of all classes from local masons to Inigo Jones and Wren, have conferred incomparable legacies. Kirby alone, even half ruined, is unsurpassed anywhere.

H. E. BATES.

WHICH WAY TO PEACE? by Bertrand Russell. *Michael Joseph.* 7s. 6d.

MR. BERTRAND RUSSELL answers the question posed in his title by pointing the road of absolute pacifism, but admits that he came to this position only after a long period of genuine doubt as to the right policy. It may be surmised that the present order of his chapters reproduces something very like the movement of his mind through that period to his final conclusion.

First, he confronts—or, more exactly, is confronted by—that "imminent danger of war" which is the common fear of every responsible man and government in the world today. Next he inquires what will be the nature of that war, and consults and quotes the military experts to discover it a mainly aerial matter, soon over perhaps but only because intensely destructive of civilian life, morale and organization, and leading almost inevitably to stringent military control as the only means of coping with widespread social chaos. It will be a war in which, as Mr. Baldwin has said, "the only defence is offence, which means that you have to kill women and children more quickly than the enemy if you want to save yourselves."

No man clearly, he feels, can contemplate such a prospect without seeking by some means to avert it. One by one he studies the more widely advocated preventive methods. There is the policy of Splendid Isolation. But an imperial power, it seems to him on examination, cannot isolate itself, for the world from which it wants to hold apart will turn against it a combination needing both great strength and geographical remoteness to withstand; the British Empire might achieve the former, but the latter is in its nature impossible. There is the policy of Collective Security. The theory of it seems to him admirable: "I believe the ultimate cure for war will be found through a development of the