

am sure that he would be able to sit down at once and describe it under the title *A Turn of the Wheel*, or *A Surprise for Our Side*.

I don't know how seriously Mr. Brophy takes the work of a novelist in wartime. But since he is apparently prolific and likely to write another book, he might seriously ask himself: just *how* is the war effort served by making an escape novel of material that is not escapable? Or does he really think that we can escape the complex claims of this period by hanging on for dear life to the demi-tasse formula of a gentler time?

HELEN CLARE NELSON.

Pilots in Action

WILDCATS OVER CASABLANCA, by Lt. M. T. Wordell and Lt. E. N. Seiler, as told to Keith Ayling. Little, Brown. \$2.50.

THE "Wildcats," of course, are the famous carrier-based fighter planes made by Grumman and known (to the trade) as F4F-3. And this narrative of aerial combat over Casablanca during our invasion of French North Africa is concerned largely with the activities of the "Red Ripper" squadron of Wildcats, based on the American carrier *USS* —.

As told by two fighter pilots to Mr. Ayling, the narrative roars with action over the ancient city where the Vichy French put up the greatest opposition to our landing forces. Navy planes prepared and covered this action, knocking out shore installations with dive-bombing attacks before General Doolittle's army planes shuttled across from Gibraltar and took over the inland airports.

Strictly as narrative Mr. Ayling's transcription of the action leaves much to be desired. It is endlessly repetitious—as any narrative of individual combat is likely to be—and it rises to few climaxes. And its greatest interest, strangely, is to be found in its revelation of what was going on on land. Several of our pilots were shot down and made safe landings in Africa, and their narratives are far more interesting from that point on.

For it seems to have been their common experience to discover that the rank and file of the French Army, Navy, and Air Force definitely did not want to fight against America. Universally they hated the Germans and universally they resented having to take orders from Vichyite officers. They took those orders, however, and made considerably more than a token resistance. But there were many instances of Vichy pilots avoiding combat, not pressing their advantage—when they had it—having their commissions revoked for refusing to fight, and expressing their delight at the hasty end of hostilities.

DONALD LARSEN.

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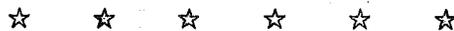
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WAR BONDS

Romanticized Years

WORLD OF YESTERDAY, by Stefan Zweig. Viking.
\$2.75.

FOR everyone who knows the work of Stefan Zweig, his posthumously published autobiography does not reveal anything new about his ideas and conception of the world and the arts. Still, in reading the *World of Yesterday*, I was shocked time and again by the bluntness of its admission that a man of great literary fame lived in our time of world wars and revolutions and general upheaval and yet confined himself to an existence in a neatly arranged Japanese flower garden of purely literary and esthetic interests.

Theater performances, strolls through Paris streets, literary societies, fashionable cruises to India and America, witty conversations, meetings with great artists—this, and almost nothing else, is described in Zweig's autobiography. The odd thing is that the reader has the impression of seeing gay flat water colors glide swiftly by while he sits in an easy chair and looks at them. When there is a somewhat broader picture of a period, a city, a society (for instance, the old Austrian upper middle class in the years before 1914) it is a safe bet that everything is romanticized.

In his autobiography, as in his fiction, Stefan Zweig appears as a bearer of enlightened entertainment, as a spiritual *causeur*. One can easily understand why this man, who did not endure any material hardships from his exile, committed suicide: he simply could not survive the death of his cherished illusions and the downfall of the society in which he had lived and flowered. For him, when fascist barbarism took over his native country and a great part of Europe, it was a world's end—for he did not know, he did not see the power of popular forces. In this respect the chapter about his first visit to the United States before World War I is most revealing; almost the only thing which delighted him was the "freedom" to get a job "without unions."

Still, as always in Zweig's books, there are parts, such as a little scene in a Paris courtroom, which one does not easily forget.
O. T. RING.

Brief Review

BENEATH ANOTHER SUN, by Ernst Lothar.
Doubleday Doran. \$2.75.

IN A FOREWORD to *Beneath Another Sun*, the author says, "No novelist's imagination can even approach the unthinkable course of history since the rise of Hitler." On the book's jacket there is the simple subtitle "The Story of a Transplanted People."

It is where he acts almost entirely as the chronicler of what Hitler did to one peo-

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