

In The World of Books

With Will R. Bird

Madame Germaine Guevremont, author of "The Outlander," when speaking to the Kiwanis Club of Montreal recently said that if each Canadian citizen bought but one Canadian book per year Canadian writers would be able to live by their pens.

MIDDLE HEAVEN by Mona Gardner; Doubleday Publishers \$3.00. At this period when most of us are trying to know more about our neighbors and to understand better the other races of the world, such books as this are most desirable. Miss Gardner knows the Japanese. Since 1926 she has lived in the East and spent eight summers among the people of whom she writes. An abbreviated version of her book appeared in the Ladies Home Journal but in it one missed the full flavor of southern Japan as produced by the longer narrative.

This is no story of the past. It is a novel about the modern-day life of the peasantry of the northern areas, who depend on their farms and the sea for a living. It is seldom that a first novel is so well-written. Miss Gardner has pictured her characters with quick, sure prose and the daily routine of village life is absorbed by the reader as perfectly natural. Tomo, the heroine of the book, is a person of great courage and endurance. She observes and every custom of her people but is ever on the watch for means to improve the life of her family. The story opens with her going to meet her husband who is returning from the war, a war which the people of the village did not understand. Every detail of village life is given so delicately that no lead is carried at any part. Each resident knows the other, and his or her affairs, the fish dealer, the sandal maker, the policeman, the ferryman. They exchange the customary greetings with the same courtesy that had been used by their ancestors for a thousand years, and bowed "three times overlong" when they felt the honor was due. Few of them had been more than ten miles from home in a life time, and few had wish to go. Their life was a hard one, but they knew no other and so made no complaint. Miss Gardner depicts the region extremely well. "The main street turned at right angles once again, past the rice miller's powdery steps, past the sweetly sour door of the sake shop, and past the tangy onion fragrance of the baker's cake irons, before it led them out on the beach strewn with sampans and salmon-fishing boats."

Rice was the all-important crop, and the weather a main topic of conversation. The veteran who returned was morose and without spirit, minus one arm. When the earthquake came, and the sea rushed in to destroy the paddies, he marched to meet the tidal wave, making the Honorable Departure. The descriptions of the devastation are dramatic, and the death of the husband made Tomo but a minor person in the family. Her battle against every handicap is well described, especially her winning much silver at the Festival from a drunken landowner who wished to seduce her. It was silver she had to have if she were to save her daughter from being sold to a house of ill-fame by the uncle who was then in charge.

The coming of American officials, with proclamations about a new way of life and justice for those who farmed the land is highly colored and at times reads like a governmental circular. Only the last few pages are so tainted, however; the book itself is a visit to northern Japan and a glimpse of the people that one will remember. The pioneers of our continent endured great hardships for a few years and the nation pays homage to their memories but here are people who have accepted hardships for centuries as a matter of course. One of our truest sayings is "one half the world does not know how the other half lives."

Visitors Barred From Magnificent

BELFAST, Sept. 16 — (Reuters) —Visitors were barred from the Canadian aircraft carrier Magnificent in Lough Foyle, Northern Ireland, today after two children had been stricken with infantile paralysis in a nearby village. The Magnificent, with the destroyers Huron and Micmac, has been carrying out anti-submarine training. The health of all on board was said to be good and no cases of infantile paralysis were suspected.

LONDON, Sept. 15—(AP)—Princess Anne, third in line of succession to the British throne, cried like any other month-old baby on being photographed for the first time. After a while it got so boring she fell asleep. Photographer Cecil Beaton said the tiny Princess showed a good deal of animation when she wasn't crying or sleeping. He even caught her in a rare smile.

Chevrier Suggests Canada Act Alone In Seaways Project

CORNWALL, Ont., Sept. 16 — (CP) — Transport Minister Chevrier said tonight it is time for Canada to proceed alone with St. Lawrence power and waterway schemes if the United States Congress does not want to approve the projects. Asserting that the time has come

for "plain speaking," he said: "If there are interests in the United States that are going to stand in the way of the development for ever, Canadians ought to be told. "After we are convinced that no progress can be made on the combined scheme — and unfortunately

that seems to be the case — then I believe that Canada should consent to the reference of the (power) applications of Ontario and New York state to the International Joint Commission for consideration. "In that event, I personally believe that Canada should also explore the possibility of constructing a deep waterway on the Canadian side of the boundary." Ontario and New York State have made a bid for development of the hydro phase of the project alone but, while the Canadian Government has indicated its agreement, the U.S. government has said both the hydro and seaway projects must come together. However,

the larger scheme never has succeeded in winning approval in the U.S. Senate. Mr. Chevrier made his statements in an address prepared for delivery in this St. Lawrence River town on the 100th anniversary of the union of the Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry. Bespeaking the "impatience" of the Canadian people with American inaction, he said he was making his observation "at a time when for military, economic and strategic reasons, we should press for action." On the question of Canadian development of the seaway alone, Mr.

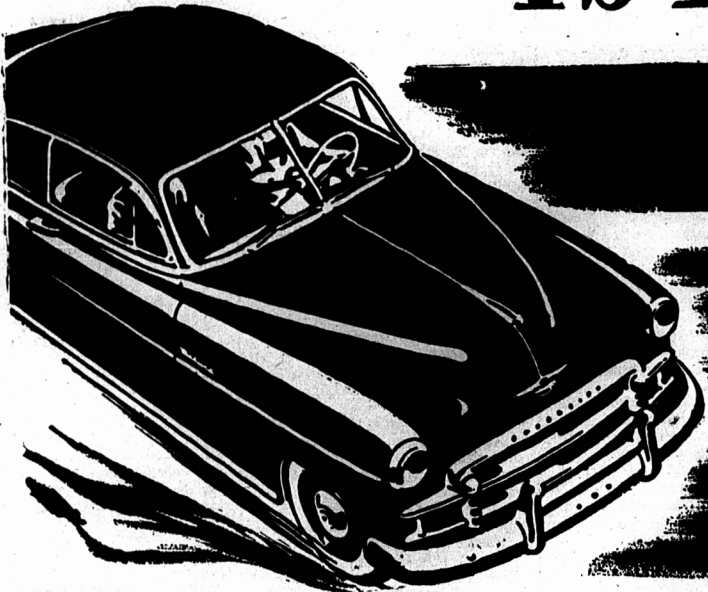
Chevrier noted that 14-foot canals already exist on the Canadian side of the St. Lawrence and that they could be deepened to 27 feet. Engineers have "clearly demonstrated" that this was feasible "and we would have a perfect right to proceed with such a development." He said there was "every reason" for proceeding with the project "now." "From the military, economic and strategic viewpoints, the combined development of navigation and power on the St. Lawrence should be carried out at once and should no longer be delayed." It was "inconceivable" that lake

carriers should continue to be bottled up in the Great Lakes, that vital iron ore should be blocked from moving westward and that power urgently needed for military and industrial purposes, both by Ontario and New York state, should "go to waste."

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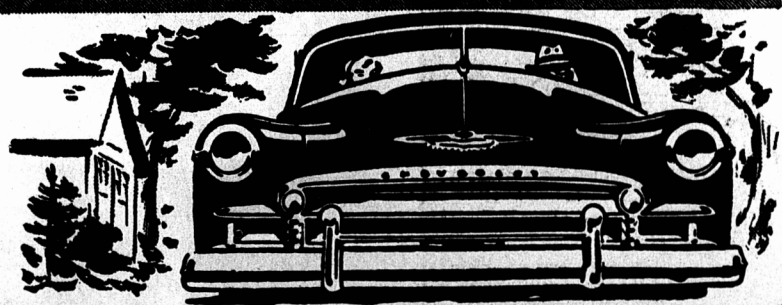
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