

*The Last Pioneers.* By MELVIN LEVY. (New York: Alfred H. King, 1934. Pp. 368. \$2.50.)

A picturesque romance, bordering on extravaganza, *The Last Pioneers* seems to attempt to be at the same time a serious sociological study. It covers the third of a century beginning with the gold days in Nome and ending with the financial debacle of October, nineteen-twenty-nine.

According to a foreword: "The people in this book are imaginary. So is Puget, the city. Indeed, on the spot which I visualize as its site, there is another and different town."

In spite of this statement, any person familiar with the scenery of Seattle and the more notorious characters and episodes in its history will readily identify the sources from which material has been taken. This material has been used with appreciative abandon and without literalism, as a modern artist uses pure color. Landmarks of local history swim into view strangely transformed. The big fire, for instance, occurs on the first night of the new century, and the episode of the Mercer girls is changed into the arrival of a shipload of prostitutes during the gold-rush days. Not all the incidents are taken from Seattle history. The dock-massacre derives from Everett.

No decent people appear among the characters, with the single exception of the one resembling Seattle's most distinguished minister who figures in a recall election. The so-called "churchy people" appear briefly in the same connection. The central character is a Jewish hotel-keeper who at various stages in his career is a gambler, pimp, receiver of stolen goods, the brains of a vice ring and, ultimately, a millionaire. His best friend is the town's richest man, a banker, sub-divider of real estate, traction magnate, "sawdust baron" and war-time patriot. An assortment of other rascals circulate through the novel. What holds it together and gives it unity, like light over a picture, is the yellow lure of gold. The age of get-rich-quick is the subject, and the pursuers of riches, who exploit human passion, greed and folly are the last pioneers.

CHRISTINA D. SMITH

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*Heaven High—Hell Deep.* By NORMAN ARCHIBALD. (New York: Albert & Charles Boni, Inc. 1935. Pp. 350. \$2.50.)

The day after Norman Archibald celebrated his twenty-third birthday in his home in Seattle, the United States declared war.