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REVIEWS

Alan Sharp. *A Green Tree in Gedde*. New York. New American Library. 1965. 371 pp. \$5.00.

Alan Sharp, a Scot now living in London, maintains a Scottish flavor in his novel by using Scottish characters, conscience, locale, and language. This work is the first volume of a trilogy and in itself tells three stories concerning the psychological-sexual problems of wartime friends.

John Moseby, a Glasgow student, is resident in Greenock, a locale symbolic of his conflict with oppressive sexual mores. Held off by a proper and frigid wife, he seeks sordid release which a Presbyterian conscience will not brook. Harry Gibson, a rugged middle-class Scot who seriously doubts his manhood, leaves Greenock for a trip to Paris with his friend, Peter Cuffey. Harry learns to know himself as a man and returns to Ruth Cuffey in England. It is really Peter, whose frantic sex life had started with his sister, who shows that his manhood is dubious, that his life is a conflict with the spectre of impotence.

Sharp leaves little to the imagination, detailing most of the bedroom scenes with clear sensuality, but his poetic style, certainly a Scottish element in the novel, transcends the sordid, and the sexual problems involved are really problems of identity and purposefulness. Other profundities in this book, which occupied five years of the author's life, wait to be revealed. Sharp's reputation as a stylist and as a thoughtful writer will increase as further volumes of the trilogy appear.

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