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Leroy Thomas

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THE WORLD'S GREATEST HORSE RACE

A Review of Hazel Ward Adcock's PRAIRIE HOPE

by *Dr. Leroy Thomas*

PRAIRIE HOPE by Hazel Ward Adcock, formerly of Stillwater and now of Falls Church, Virginia, is an exciting frontier novel.

Although the plot unfolds slowly at first, which is fitting for the waiting around before the "world's greatest horse race" begins, the tempo never slows as we get into the famous land run of 1889 into Oklahoma.

Adcock has skillfully used three or four sub-plots, but the reader never loses sight of the main plot—the one dealing with Joseph Bonelli, an Italian sculptor turned sign painter in the frontier setting, his halfbreed wife, Ramona (Rainbow), and their son, Carlo.

The author has also shown poignantly that racial prejudice isn't a new thing—that it was very much alive in early-day Prairie Hope. For instance, Rainbow, although she is a well-educated, cultured, articulate woman, isn't socially acceptable to the Prairie Hope dowagers; and Joseph, a sensitive artist, is called "that Eytalian" and is the object of derision by both genders. After all, anyone who draws and sculpts nude women isn't decent according to the Prairie Hope vanguard.

One of the most amazing things about PRAIRIE HOPE is Adcock's ability to deal with the life process in a satisfying manner without vulgar graphic details. She demonstrates that it really is possible in the late twentieth century to write novels without emphatic crudeness and coarseness.

I have given my review copy to my mother; it's the kind of book that anybody's mother would appreciate. The publisher is Dr. Walter J. Raymond of the Brunswick Publishing Corporation (Route 1, Box 1A1; Lawrenceville, VA 23868); cost is \$18.95 plus \$3.50 for mailing. It's a "steal" for \$22.90.▲