

Rosamond  
(Arlington Books)

WE are so hardened to novels in which the 1914-1918 war is either glamourised or debunked that it is refreshing to find one where it is put into perspective.

Masefield's novel covers the separate and then conjoined lives of Meriel Llewellyn, daughter of a Welsh mining engineer who moves with his family from Australia to Britain, then to

FOR those familiar with Fitzroy's Mallamshires series, this title should make entertaining reading.

It is the second book in a trilogy portraying life in a small English county and this time the wealthy Mrs Cross is about to subject all in the area to her latest fit of megalomania — a cultural centre in the heart of the countryside.

She is eventually stopped by a cunning old dame also involved in all manner of intrigues, including the marriage of the duke's grandson to the daughter of the Rockport Arms' landlord.

It's light and funny and pokes a very wry finger at the English and their preoccupation with aristocracy and class.

Dan Maivha

Debra Cleveland

in the foggy End of London and moves to the wild Cornish coast where Nathan plans to start a drift-fishing business.

But it is the age of seine-netting, drifters are ahead of their time and inevitably, Nathan runs into trouble.

Elinor Hearle, headstrong daughter of the local landowner and Amy Hoblyn, a

Beate really Trude's twin sister, or are the girls one and the same?

If they are, which one is real and why is she pursuing the strange relationship with Lucio? As the story unfolds, more mysteries and twists come to light, adding to the

from her country and the inevitable stepfather and ugly teenage daughter.

It all adds up to a badly-written allegory. I found it unamusing and tedious.

Yvonne Makings

Sue Fox

# An exceptional, articulate look at life in the townships

**FOOLS AND OTHER STORIES** by Njabulo S Ndebele (Ravan Press)

THIS is an exceptional piece of work by an African writer.

It reveals the author's vast experience and is articulate and incisive in presentation.

The characters are credi-

ble and the reader can identify with them.

In the book Ndebele describes, in simple terms, experiences in black townships and the frustrations which arise from them.

But the tone is not bitter or anguished. Such happenings are as natural as breathing, this is life for thousands of people.

The story "The Test"

paints one of the most vivid pictures of the kind of life urban blacks live, as does "The Prophetess".

In the latter we are made aware of negative aspects, like hooliganism and crime.

But in the background is the South African political situation which, as Ndebele illustrates, plays such a contributory role in these evils.

"The Music from the Vio-

lin" tackles the controversial issue of friendship between races.

Blacks still argue among themselves who are their genuine white friends.

"Fools", the last of the four short stories, is another masterpiece.

The central character, Zani, is the youngster who cannot ignore the evils of a system that govern his life.

Sunday Times 9/1/1984