



BLOWGUN HUNTER OF MAROA
From "Journey to Manaos."

he recounts in "Journey to Manaos" took him up the Rio Orinoco and down the Rio Negro to its conflux with the Amazon. What he found was a temporarily abandoned empire returning to its primitive state, the forgotten battlefield of an imperialism defeated by its own social and economic vagaries. Old cannon scattered in the jungle still tell of the struggle between Spanish and Portuguese for possession of its wealth, and of the long quest for Eldorado. Rotting beams and a broken mirror were all that remained of what had been a thriving town fifteen years earlier. This region, which has, in a sense, always been Eldorado, has always had the curse of gold upon it. Tempted by the abundant natural wealth of the forest, men have never thought of laboring to produce it. They grew rich on the wild "Peruvian bark" that supplied the world with quinine, until the Dutch began its cultivation in Java. They grew rich on the rubber which they bled from wild trees, until the British and Dutch laid out rubber plantations in the East Indies. Now they seek for still new vegetable gold from which to enrich themselves without the labor of production—until industry and enterprise shall again catch up with them.

Hanson is one of those rare travelers who really seem to gain an enlarged perspective from their travels. He sees the history of Amazonia as an integral part of the history of Western civilization, and the lessons he draws from it are of universal application. His story of the tyrant Funes fits the pattern of tyranny the world over. The many characters whom he met and describes are the victims of world-wide forces. Besides the entertainment of a good travel-narrative, this book offers genuine information and enlightenment.

Mr. Halle is the author of "Transcaribean" and "Birds against Men."

Cases Alter Circumstances

THE LAW AND MR. SMITH. By Max Radin. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1938. \$3.

Reviewed by MORRIS L. ERNST

MAX RADIN, professor of law at the University of California, author of many books on legal subjects, is my favorite popular writer on the subject of jurisprudence. In a world gone mad with one-man-law, that is, dictatorships, our continuation of the democratic process increasingly depends on the effective working of our court structure. Far too long have lawyers endeavored to exclude laymen from the discussion of law problems. We have behaved like parish priests, always eager to mystify our clients. Law should be administered by a group equipped with the technique of the processes, but the objectives must be fashioned for laymen. Many of the complexities of legal procedure have no doubt derived from the desire of the bar to mystify all laymen.

It is high time that a book of this nature was written for the benefit of the general public. I should imagine that every author of a play, a novel, or a non-fiction volume could benefit by reading the book. Max Radin starts with a discussion of the nature of law, writing in a light, entertaining style about the original rituals, the early identification of law-givers with the founders of religion, the ancient law of The Twelve Tablets, and the progressive administrations of the legal process. Law itself is a forecast. In an era such as this, increasing pressures and fast changing mores constantly demand certainty on the one hand and flexibility on the other. Of necessity, as the author points out, justice is the valuation of human conduct in accordance with a particular current standard. Ineluctably the valuation must be made by human beings and must concern itself with the balancing of human desires, rights, and privileges. No one is entirely free and in every case one of the parties must be deprived of complete freedom for the advantage of the other party. Furthermore, during times of war or threat of war, the effect of human behavior is realistically different from what it is when society is running on an even keel.

Not only does Mr. Radin explain in simple terms the derivatives of the common law, the relation between civil and criminal law, the gradual evolution of statutory law, but he gives a proper place to the importance of procedure. Being a realist, he makes clear why justice differs from law and why, in the final analysis, justice cannot be reduced to scientific tests by judicial slide-rules. His discussion of the law in relation to contracts, real estate, negligence cases, and slander

actions will be illuminating to every reader.

Society such as we know it today and such as history shows it for thousands of years, cannot exist without some form of law. Each human being wants to be superior to some other human being in his possessions, or in other more subtle ways. This makes inevitable a law-giving process imposed upon or adopted by the community. Under dictatorship of the left and right it is imposed from on top. This spells mass trials, purges, concentration camps. A people's law process is one of the guarantees of democracy.

If each decision reached by a court was arrived at without reference to anything but the facts in the particular case, as Mr. Radin wisely points out, no one would know how to behave in the future and no one would feel certain of not being hailed into court. On the other hand, for the courts to listen to arguments of contending parties and merely pick up a musty law book of a century ago and apply a century-old decision, spells a frustration of communal development and impresses on us of today the mores of a forgotten era. But the author never forgets that the old decisions are of value to the law-giver if for no other reason than that they contain, at times, wise reasoning and clearly show the trends of human desires. The fact that the United States Supreme Court has reversed itself in several scores of cases, sometimes within a span of a very few years, is not a recognition of the ineptness of our bench, but merely evidence of the judicial ability to adjust to changing times.

Some years ago I wrote a magazine piece called "I Don't Like Fish." The point was that at every dinner party, the fair ladies on my right and left would be fairly considerate until the fish course, at which time they would ask questions on income tax, the right to move out of an apartment because the electric icebox was not working, the rules of residence for a Reno divorce, or some other legal question of immediate concern to them. Of course the type of question changed with the seasons. Rent problems are important in October, and separation agreements are thought of when the sap runs in human bodies in the spring of the year. Income tax law emerges in March. And so the calendar runs.

If you want answers in general terms to the philosophy back of law problems and the approach of courts through the ages, read this book. If the author uses a Latin phrase, you can rest assured that he promptly explains it, so that even the readers of this magazine can understand it.

Morris Ernst is the author of "The Ultimate Power" and other books on law for laymen.

Teaching as an Art

PREFACE TO TEACHING. By Henry W. Simon. With a Foreword by Abraham Flexner. New York: Oxford University Press. 1938. \$1.50.

Reviewed by CHARLES ALLEN SMART

TEACHING is like writing in that most amateurs and mere observers consider themselves competent critics and potential superiors of the professionals. In addition, the volumes of discourse on teaching have a very high content of sentimentality, and of ill-founded and irrelevant theory. The percentage of sheer twaddle is so high—approaching that of political discourse—that one must begin a book like this with little hope. In this case, the ensuing surprise, relief, and delight are great. In eighty-eight small pages, Mr. Simon has said more to the point, and packed more good sense, than you can find in almost any eighty-eight other volumes, articles, and addresses on the subject.

The book is divided into two parts, "What the Job Is," and "How to Do It," with a salty "Interlude on Parents." In the first part, Mr. Simon shows that a school is an instrument of society, and so cannot be radically reformed alone, or reasonably used as a tool of minority parties or theories. But he also puts his finger precisely on what can be done to make good citizens of a democracy. Mr. Simon then demolishes whole libraries on the fallacious distinction between liberal and practical education. With his eye still on the ball in another confused mêlée, he picks out the "three indispensable requirements" of a good teacher, knowing the subject matter and how to teach, and "having a vital pattern of life that stimulates you and, indirectly, your pupils." He develops the implications and conflicts here, and adds worldly and humane advice on "How Not to Be a Schoolmarm," with facts and figures on "Your Future." In the second part of the book, teaching is considered as an art, to be learned from study, apprenticeship, and experience. Many conflicting theories are precisely evaluated and integrated in few words, and there is a wealth of specific, anecdotal advice such as a young teacher can get only from a rare master of the art who is realistic, warm-hearted, and workmanlike, and who has not forgotten his own youthful blunders.

Mr. Simon is a professor of education, and "Preface to Teaching" is intended for young teachers, but like first-rate shop-talk in any field, it can be listened to with interest and profit by many others. There are plenty of old teachers

who have never acquired these fundamentals. There are plenty of parents who haven't the vaguest idea what their children's teachers can and should be doing. And there are plenty of the rest of us, interested in our world and its future, who can consider ourselves lucky to overhear this master workman talking about a job that cannot be on the "social frontier," but that is very close to any excuse you can find for all the fighting, or for life itself.

Flashes of Brilliance

PAVEMENTS AT ANDERBY. By Winifred Holtby. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1938. \$2.75.

Reviewed by MABEL S. ULRICH

IT was in the columns of Lady Rhonda's lively *Time and Tide* that I first met Winifred Holtby and learned to watch for her name. The wit and vigorous keenness of her comments challenged attention even in the group of British young women who, in the twenties, made the early years of that sheet a memorable experience. Then came the ironic and brilliant "Mandoa, Mandoa!" the finely conceived and executed "South Riding"—and the tragic end.

It was extraordinary the feeling of personal sympathy her writings evoked. It was not merely that you "knew" her as you know many admired authors, but that she became as a friend whose thoughts you have shared and with whom you exchange foolish little jokes. And when she died as gallantly as she had lived, the loss was so poignant it seemed inconceivable that you had never been in her physical presence.

It is not easy therefore to judge this collection of short stories with the detachment demanded of a reviewer. I am not sure that Winifred Holtby would have wanted them published this way, for I do not believe that she herself would claim for them permanent distinction. Here and there occur flashes of the brilliance, humor, and ironic observation that made her last two novels such

civilized achievements. Her earlier stories are interesting mainly in that they indicate the stages through which an eager young intelligence passed on its way to maturity. For this reason, too, it is well that the last story, "Episode in West Kensington," concludes the volume. In this omitted chapter of "Mandoa, Mandoa!" the Winifred Holtby of the last years emerges and we are left with the conviction that had she been allowed to live, her rare combination of talents might well have carried her to a high place among Great Britain's most distinguished writers.



WINIFRED HOLTBY

How a Fish Gets Along

THE LIFE STORY OF THE FISH. By Brian Curtis. New York: D. Appleton-Century Co. 1938. \$3.

Reviewed by CLIFFORD H. POPE

THE information in this book is the kind that one often searches for but seldom finds. This means that the author has done endless searching for his readers. He has, moreover, put down his findings in clear, simple language that is a pleasure to read. Excellent judgment in choice of subjects is shown, and a delightful sense of humor permeates the book from cover to cover. I venture to say that few readers will leave this book unfinished and many will read it at a sitting. Another feature is its elimination of the usual lag that exists in nearly all popular books on scientific subjects. Science moves so fast that its most recent discoveries usually remain buried in technical articles for years before getting into popular print. The author is in close touch with ichthyological research and this has enabled him to give up-to-the-minute information.

Brian Curtis has undertaken to tell us how a fish manages to get along in its world. Water sounds like a pleasant medium to live in, but living in it is not without drawbacks. For instance, when a shallow water fish looks up he sees a mirror with a round hole in it and only through this hole can he peer out into the air world above him. The reason for this and many other even more startling facts about the fish's vision are explained in the chapter on the senses and the nervous system.

Although the chapter headings have a distinctly anatomical terminology, the book nowhere reads like a descriptive anatomy, for each organ or part described is done so from an evolutionary or functional point of view. Body covering, framework, internal workings, and the air-bladder are taken up in due course. There is a chapter on reproduction and growth as well as one on habits and adaptation. Two chapters, one fifth of the book, are devoted to game fish as such although much is said about them elsewhere.

This book should appeal to a great range of age and interests. The intelligent sport or professional fisherman will find answers to many questions that have repeatedly invaded his mind; the layman interested in natural history will enjoy it; the biologist will find it useful as well as instructive, and to the ichthyologist it will be indispensable as a means of saving time and even embarrassment when too many questions about the general biology of fish are asked.

Clifford H. Pope is the author of "Snakes Alive and How They Live."