

big brass appears in "Lunch at Honolulu," of which its author mildly approves. Mr. Marquand may underestimate his reader's intelligence when he remarks that "only people who know the Islands can see that the story is social satire."

In his criticism Mr. Marquand is deeply concerned with the overdramatic and often coincidental climaxes forced on his young alter ego by the necessities of commercialism, forgetting that the reader can take them for granted, or avoid them by skipping the last two or three paragraphs; and for that reason it is usually better to read his often caustic remarks after finishing the story.

There are two stories written in 1952 and 1954 of which he thoroughly approves. They concern the idiocies of a colony of rich Americans spending their indolent winters on a Bahama island. He considers them in many respects to be "the end result of many rather groping experiments in short fiction. Their endings are neither happy nor unhappy, nor contrived." They are indeed excellent stories, social satire at its best, but they necessarily lack the exuberance of the commercial tales of an earlier Mr. Marquand, and their youth and optimism, which the elder Mr. Marquand envies. There is a hint in the foreword to these island tales that he is through with the short story forever. If that is his intention we will lose one of the most sensitive and observant creators of this form of literature now extant.

Beggarwoman's Song

By Sara Henderson Hay

POVERTY, that dull knife,
And worse, the fear of hunger.
Prods at my life—
Not strong enough for anger,
Nor armed for strife,
Around my chattering soul I fling
These ragged syllables' cold
comforting:

Clogging the frozen furrow,
Canceling out the road,
The sky lets down its load
Of swirling flake on flake.
For my thin spirit's sake
I must, in this black season,
And watching the snow swarm,
Cry not to the year of treason,
But think how it makes warm
The woodchuck's hidden burrow,
And seals the ground-squirrel's door
Where, on his leafy floor,
Secure he lies, and deep
Out of such storm, asleep. . . .

Science Fiction's Second Wind

Every now and then SR calls on Fletcher Pratt, close student of the science-fiction field and himself a seasoned contributor to it, to bring its readers up to date on trends. Here's his latest report.

By Fletcher Pratt

THE science-fiction field is going through a period of catching its second wind. The myriad new magazines have vanished from the stands; there are more publishers trying their hand at it, but they are producing fewer books, and the publishers seem to have decided just what they have here.

The decision in most cases appears to be that they have something similar to the detective story, with rules as case-hardened as the one in favor of at least one murder with a strong preference for three. We have to be in the future or in space, preferably both. The surroundings include mechanical wonders, lovingly described. Let the action be rapid and emotional material be held to a minimum.

Of course, most of the specialty publishers thought in these terms all along, and it is no surprise to find E. E. Smith's "Children of the Lens" (Fantasy Press, \$3) the sixth repetition of essentially similar material in the interminable "Lensman" series. Nor Thomas Calvert McClary's "Three Thousand Years" (Fantasy Press, \$3), a patched up old-timer. Nor Murray Leinster's "Forgotten Planet" (Gnome Press, \$2.50), in which a classic short story of the field is built out to novel length. The oddity, if oddity it be, is how the regular publishers have fallen into the pattern. Jerry Sohl's "The Altered Ego" (Rinehart, \$2.50) is an exciting, but highly conventional version of the personality-switch story, and J. T. McIntosh's "One in Three Hundred" (Doubleday, \$2.95) is the escape from a dying earth to another planet where conditions are tough.

Even "The Fabulous Journey of Hieronymus Meeker," by Willy Johns (Little, Brown, \$3.50), which though labeled "future" seems to be intended as satire, falls into pattern. Pattern also is Wilson Tucker's "Science Fiction Sub-Treasury" (Rinehart, \$2.75), a collection of his short stories, and a rather bad pattern at that; Tucker's longer stories are a lot better. On the other hand, if Eric

Frank Russell's "Deep Space" (Fantasy Press, \$3) is pattern by title and preoccupation, the stories of which it is made up would get high marks in any company. The same goes for C. M. Kornbluth's "The Explorers" (Ballantine Books; clothbound, \$2.50; paperbound, 35¢) with perhaps a little extra for the fact that his tales, beside an extraordinary closeness of structure, exhibit to the full that extraordinary diversity of theme which is the special merit of science fiction and fantasy. He has a special talent for interesting rascals.

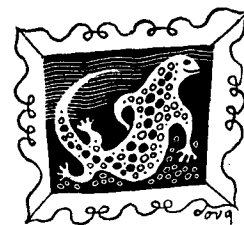
WHICH leads to the thought that the publishers have perhaps decided that their readers will stand for much more literate material in the short story than the novel. Exhibit A in this vein is "The Second Galaxy Reader of Science Fiction," edited by H. L. Gold (Crown, \$3.50). There is some specialist material here, to be sure, and the ideas put forth in many of the stories will strike the non-specialist as decidedly strange, but the important thing is that every one is logically developed from the hypothesis which is the basis of the story and that every story in the collection has something quite definite to say to the tune of events that cause the reader real concern.

"Beyond the Barriers of Space and Time," edited by that seasoned anthologist Judith Merrill (Random House, \$2.95), is a "theme" anthology about mind and its possible manifestations. Whether it is more fantasy or science fiction may be left for the reader to judge; the main reaction from this reviewer is that it is perfectly amazing to find so good a collection never before in hard covers in these days when nearly everything is being raided for new anthologies.

In "Stories for Tomorrow," edited by William Sloane (Funk & Wagnalls, \$3.95), there has been no effort to avoid the previously anthologized, and quite rightly, for the twenty-nine stories here are intended less for the specialist than to show the "ordinary" reader that there is something real in this particular specialty. There could hardly be a better selection for the purpose. Mr. Sloane has studiously avoided the pattern story, and has studiously sought out stories that not

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The Cornucopia That Is the Sea



"The Sun, the Sea, and Tomorrow," by F. G. Walton Smith and Henry Chapin (Charles Scribner's Sons, 210 pp. \$3.50), discusses the potential sources of food, energy, and minerals from the oceans. Daniel Merriman, who reviews it here, is director of the Bingham Oceanographic Laboratory, Yale University.

By Daniel Merriman

IT WOULD be unfair to blame the success of "The Sea Around Us" for all the books and popular articles on the oceans which have been spawned in the wake of Rachel Carson's best seller. Yet a year ago Phyllis McGinley was moved to write:

Speaking in thunders
Through its sleep—
Ah, rife with wonders
Is the deep!

The waters tell it,
The billows shout it.
And I'm fed to the teeth
with books about it.

More unfortunate than the quantity has been the lack of quality, particularly in those volumes concerned with the oceans as a greater potential source of food. In view of the problems posed by the explosive increase in human population, speculation on the role of the oceans in supplying our daily needs is fully justified. Oceanic productivity is not so well known as that of the land, yet the seas cover the larger part of the surface of the globe. However, much of this speculation has been roseate-tinged, some of it absurdly so; thus deluged, we can scarcely escape the conclusion that the oceans offer a panacea for the problems of world food shortages.

F. G. Walton Smith and Henry Chapin do service in correcting this impression. Two-thirds of their book, "The Sun, the Sea, and Tomorrow," deals with the food potential, most of the remainder with minerals and power from the oceans. Careful reading will be discouraging to those who swallowed the earlier bait. Optimism abounds, but reasoned qualification follows; and the last chapter, appropriately called "No Eldorado," is a sound recapitulation of the authors'

inventory of present and future resources.

We are incurable optimists when it comes to the sea. We want, first, to be told it is mysterious, and, second, that it is a cornucopia which will solve world food shortages. Give us an inch and we take a nautical mile. For this reason writers on oceanic resources need to be especially circumspect, and here Smith and Chapin are remiss. In speaking of the richness of life in the waters off Peru, they state that the sea birds on the little Chincha Islands consume "as much fish, according to R. E. Coker, as a quarter of the entire commercial catch of the United States of America." They neglect to mention that Coker's estimate was made in 1908, with the result that they are in error by over 500 million pounds. Misinterpretation is made easy in this book.

"The Sun, the Sea, and Tomorrow" makes reference to the economic, geographical, and sociological factors which affect the catch of fish, but it fails to include in its bibliography the notable work of Harden F. Taylor, whose well-documented thesis is that the demand for fish is the chief determinant of production in North America. Taylor holds that the landings of fish from 1887 to 1940 have increased in proportion to the increase in human population, and that the more-than-doubled catch has been made by fishermen whose number is only

slightly greater than it was in 1890. It follows that we will never know the potential of the sea so long as the local fisheries are able to supply our population with all it wants (and is willing to buy) at a third the price of competing foods. On a global scale substantially increased fish production—desperately needed in many parts of the world—can occur only through international subsidy. The fact is that some of the greatest potential areas of supply are farthest from the populations that most need protein.

THE book is noteworthy for its breadth of view. No reader can fail to learn from such an assessment. I do not happen to agree with the authors' frequent implication that "committee-of-the-whole" research, mostly technological, is the exclusive answer to the fuller utilization of our marine resources. Nor do I admire such sweeping generalizations as: "It is encouraging to note that the modern scientist no longer dares to regard himself as a monastic in pursuit of pure knowledge with no obligation to the society he lives in." Remember Gregor Mendel? Pure science, as well as the opportunity for the inquiring mind to go where it wants—both need protection these days. But that's another argument, and these authors are worth reading because of their broad perspective.



—From "The Book of the Sea."

Queen Elizabeth caught on a sandbar at Southampton—"rife with wonders is the deep."