

Fiction

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only say something, but also have that quality of dealing in human emotions that science fiction is often accused of lacking. The next time you meet anyone who says science fiction is bunk throw this one at his head; if he opens it he'll be convinced.

Notes

FOR ANIMAL ADDICTS: Every addict of animal stories will be attracted to Phyllis Bottome's *"Man and Beast"*—"five stories about remarkable relations between human beings and animals" (Harcourt, Brace, \$3). Essentially they are psychological tales equally penetrating with both the human and animal characters. The two most suspenseful, "Caesar's Wife's Ear" and "Henry," are duels of will between trainers and a lion, in the first instance, and a tiger in the second. "Dark Blue" is a chilling story about a rage-consumed bull and a little girl unaccustomed to having her parents say No. The warmest and happiest of the tales is "A Pair," built upon the sensitive bond between a noble Lippizaner and his exhibition rider. Each of them introduces a fresh twist of narrative to some classic theme. W. T. Mars's drawings are an asset. —EDMUND FULLER.

SOUTHERN ASHES: Alma Stone in *"The Harvard Tree"* (Houghton Mifflin, \$3.50) conjures up a Southern town which surely could never have existed, populated as it is with such gentle loonies as the old Negro witch-woman who kept the ashes of her once-wayward husband in a peanut-butter jar on the mantel, where she could keep an eye on him; or the lady who so captivated the heart of a visitor from Jamaica that he thereafter sent her a barrel of rum, anonymously, each year, causing her husband to shout in bafflement, "Where's all this God-damned rum coming from?"; or pathetic Miss Flossie, bitterly unwed in middle-life, who sought excuse to visit distant (perhaps imagined) relatives in any town reputed to be suffering from an overabundance of single males; or Brother Bascom, the itinerant evangelist who often felt that God, whom he called his "Old Pardner," was robbing the spiritual till, and who wasn't above dipping a hand in himself.

All these fanciful creatures move leisurely and haphazardly about in a loosely organized, hazy story shot through with a golden, dozing nostalgia which conveys with warm, af-

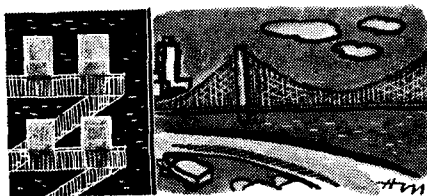
fectionate sensitivity the atmosphere of small-town life. Despite a tendency to be a little too "quaint," there seems to be a genuine sweetness of temper at work here, and an inventive humorousness, both of which are rare literary commodities these days. Add to this the fact that Miss Stone often discloses the seed of universality hidden within the particular, local event and one is tempted to concede "The Harvard Tree" a generic resemblance to similar works by Thornton Wilder, Eudora Welty, and, most recently, by the late, great Dylan Thomas in his "Under Milk Wood."

—JEROME STONE.

HOODLUM CROP: "North of Welfare," by William Krasner (Harper, \$3.50), has a certain timeliness, for it deals with a New York slum area, breeding-ground for the current crop of young hoodlums who have invested the term "teen-ager" with an automatically opprobrious connotation.

It is an inert sort of story, its gears clogged with the fine sand of pain-taking, but often merely external, naturalistic detail, about a young man named Mike who is dimly aware of values nobler than those inculcated by the corner pool-room. One of his acquaintances is a chesty girl (her retarded development doesn't apply to her physique) with a doglike devotion to a hoodlum lover. Another is a pallid chap who lives with a girl pathetically dying of cancer. His attempts to succor the various distresses of these people invariably land Mike in trouble, and he spends a lot of time undergoing unpleasant treatment at the hands of policemen who are forever delivering themselves of self-justifying sermons on the bleak thanklessness of their task. At the story's end Mike is marrying a "nice" girl with social ambitions, but one feels the happy ending is but a momentary lull in the storm of adversity which seems to be his natural climate. In any case, the book ends at this point.

The style is one of pseudo-documentary realism reminiscent of that successfully exploited by the TV program "Dragnet." But in striving for an organic interaction between character and environment Mr. Krasner fails; the two often seem only accidentally contiguous. And except for a few vivid individual scenes the book is not noteworthy. —J. S.



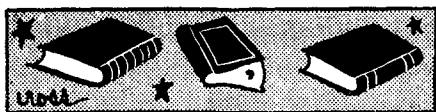
Pageantry of Past

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not participate in the first reform efforts (as stated in her story) which were put through later by Carrera, for he had withdrawn from Congress and was sick in bed. Nor does she reveal that he returned to form part of Carrera's dictatorial triumvirate. The Carreristas played a significant role in Chilean politics long after Bernardo was driven into exile. This is not mentioned, nor the execution of the three Carrera brothers in Mendoza, nor O'Higgins's later ferocious persecution of the entire family, even the father, wife, and female relatives. Nor does Miss Nelson tell about Carrera's secretary, Manuel Rodríguez, that turbulent spirit who bravely kept the Resistance movement alive during the Spanish Reconquest, but was murdered by Ley Fuga under O'Higgins's government. Chile's greatest historical novel, *"Durante la Reconquista,"* revolves around Rodríguez's exploits.

O'HIGGINS never resigned with the words Miss Nelson gives in the manner she describes, "to save bloodshed." Nor was he allowed to leave the country quietly, but was arrested and was kept in Valparaiso for six months pending debate on whether he should be put on trial. Here, she misses a golden chance to ring down the curtain of her story dramatically (since she does not take up his campaign with Bolívar's forces and his twenty years of exile). At the end he was faced not merely with a clamor for free government, but with armies from north and south, mobs rioting in the plaza, and was being defied by an "open Cabildo" of self-appointed citizens, demanding he get out. The top officers of the three army units in the capital had turned against him. Braving roof-top soldiers with orders to shoot him on sight, he tore off disloyal epaulettes and single-handed rallied forces about the Palace.

His accomplishments (despite blemishes not mentioned) were momentous. Though he denied his country many of the liberties for which he had fought, as Supreme Director he brought a land ruined by a decade of civil war back to order and productivity. With tremendous sacrifices, he organized an army to liberate Peru and built up the largest navy in the New World, that swept the Spaniards from the Pacific forever. But he is not the oversweetened character moving through Miss Nelson's world of "gilly flowers" and "linnets" and, since hers is not the O'Higgins of the documents, all other personages and the social forces are thrown out of focus.



Just Published

MANY of the books described below, which cannot be reviewed in this issue because of limitations of space, will be given more extended treatment in forthcoming numbers.

A CHARACTER INVENTED. By LeRoy Smith. The Macmillan Co. \$3. A collection of poems by a young American poet.

THE COMMUNIST MENACE IN MALAYA. By Harry Miller. Frederick A. Praeger. \$3.50. A report, by a British newspaperman, of the present military and political situation in Malaya.

THE DEATH OF HITLER'S GERMANY. By Georges Blond. The Macmillan Co. \$4.50. A fictionalized account of the final year of Hitler's life by a French journalist.

FIFTY YEARS IN ALASKA. By Carl J. Lomen. David McKay Co. \$4. An account of how the author built an empire in Alaska out of reindeer. Starting in 1900, when Mr. Lomen went to Nome with his father as a lad of nineteen for a vacation, and passing through the years when herds of millions of reindeer were built up from an initial 1,280 head, the story ends with the company being handed over to the Department of the Interior.

FISHER OF MEN. By Kurt Frieberger. Appleton-Century-Crofts. \$3.95. A novel about Simon Peter, the fisherman, and follower of Christ, who, after his Teacher had died, took Christianity directly into the maw of Rome.

HAWTHORNE'S "DR. GRIMSHAW'S SECRET." Edited by Edward H. Davidson. Harvard University Press. \$5. A scholarly piecing together from sections of manuscript that have been scattered up and down the country for years of Hawthorne's last "romantic" novel, written in the closing years when the dark and the weight of the world were much upon him.

HELPING YOUR CHILD'S EMOTIONAL GROWTH. By Anna W. M. Wolf and Suzanne Szasz. Doubleday & Co. \$5. A primer on how to raise children that is accomplished through a brief text by Anna Wolf, and 365 photographs by Suzanne Szasz, the well-known child photographer.

HIS VERY SELF AND VOICE. Edited by Ernest J. Lovell, Jr. The Macmillan Co. \$7.50. A portrait of Byron, done through selections from the letters, writings, and diaries of those that knew him and his work at mirror distance. To wit: Lady Blessington, John Galt, Thomas Moore, Trelawny, and others.

HUGH ROY CULLEN: A Story of American Opportunity. By Ed Kilman and Theon Wright. Prentice-Hall. \$4. A sweet-throated biography of Roy Cullen, who started out at twelve with silver-dollar dreams and is now, down in the Republic of Texas, one of its greatest possessors of cabbage, by virtue of oil.

IN-LAWS: PRO AND CON. By Evelyn Millis Duvall. Association Press. \$3.95. A study of some of the most typical members of that peculiar Western tribe, the in-laws, who can be as sweet and soft as winds from Heaven, and as mean and swift as a dagger, too. Among other things, Dr. Duvall advises us what it feels like to be an in-law, and how, when once you have become one, you can be a civilized one.

K-2, THE SAVAGE MOUNTAIN. By C. S. Houston and R. H. Bates. McGraw-Hill Book Co. \$4.75. An account of the recent disastrous attempt to climb K-2, now the world's highest unclimbed peak, by two of the men who were along.

KING OF COMEDY. By Mack Sennett and Cameron Shipp. Doubleday & Co. \$4.50. The memoirs of the Canadian-born gentleman who was a boilermaker before he went West, where, as most baldpates and corporation carriers will remember, he became one of the first Hollywood comedians, created the Keystone cops, earned enough money to buy himself a bathtub that cost thousands of dollars, and made the country laugh until its belly shook.

LAST CHUKKER. J. K. Stanford. Devin-Adair Co. \$2. A bedside night bubble, this long story concerns a British ex-police-man, who as an unofficial drug spotter, gets himself involved in a polo game,

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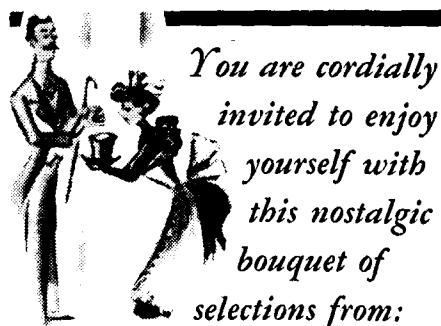
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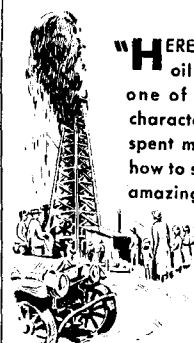
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