

BOOKS

EASY TO READ BUT NOT TO REVIEW

SWEET BEULAH LAND: By Roderick Finlayson. The Griffin Press, Auckland.

THIS is an easy book to read, but not an easy book to review. It is not very fair to say that Frank Sargeson is written all over it, or Saroyan, or Sherwood Anderson, but short of page-long extracts that is the quickest way of conveying an impression of its contents and style. Mr. Finlayson is more direct and simple than Sargeson, is just funny where Sargeson is humorous, and just sad where Sargeson is tragic. He neither sees so clearly nor probes so deeply, but he either derives from him or has used the same models; a little less successfully. But that, as we began by saying, is ungenerous criticism. Of the 15 episodes in the collection, at least five stand firmly on their own foundations, and the others, though flimsier, amount to something collectively. They are New Zealand, if not much of it—either in height or in depth—and for whatever is authentic in letters or in art we should always be grateful. But it is a pity when a writer who is feeling his way goes to a printer engaged in the same occupation. The Griffin Press knows how to print, but knowledge is not sufficient without facilities. Nor was it safe to depend on the selling power of the

deliberately scatty cover. A book to buy all the same.

THE RADIO RECEIVER

RADIO RECEIVER DESIGN: By K. R. Sturley, Ph.D., B.Sc., etc. Chapman and Hall, London.

NEW books on radio are singularly scarce in wartime, though more research is being carried out in radio science than ever before. Technicians and scientists will, therefore, welcome the arrival from London of this up-to-date account of receiver design fundamentals. Modern procedure is described in detail for each receiver stage in turn. Part 1, just received, deals with aeriels, amplifications, frequency changing, oscillators and detectors. Part 2 will include power supplies, receiver measurements, television, and frequency modulation. The author makes full use of mathematics, expressing every relationship with more accuracy and conciseness than words alone would give. A useful note on Fourier analysis is appended. To the radiophysicist this is a gem on the slaphash of over-simplified popular radio literature.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

NEW ZEALAND: LAND OF EVERYTHING. Whitcombe and Tombs Ltd.

A PICTORIAL survey not very happily named. The illustrations have been well selected, and they are certainly well reproduced, but it is a small offering for 3/6.

SONG OF YOUTH: An Epic Poem of Five Cantos. By Lindsay M. Constable.

NEITHER an epic nor a poem, but five pages of verbal meanderings round the author's ego. Here are the last five lines:

Go to it Youth,
you know your part!
The Past has set the stage!
Big Ben has struck the hour;
the Future rests with you.

(1) **WARTIME COOKING AND PRESERVING IN NEW ZEALAND.** By M. and W. Carman. (2) **WARTIME POULTRY-KEEPING IN NEW ZEALAND.** A. H. and A. W. Reed, Dunedin and Wellington.

TWO useful booklets written in New Zealand for New Zealanders. Nothing new in them, but they at least cover our own experiences and our own needs.

CHILDREN'S AILMENTS: A MANUAL FOR PARENTS. A. H. and A. W. Reed, Wellington.

NOT for all parents, but a god-send to those who believe and don't know. A compilation, with acknowledgments, from accepted authorities. Indexed and well arranged.

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Tell William

WILLIAM Shakespeare wasn't a bad author
As authors go.
He could turn on an act, or write a play
Which by modern standards seems rather slow.
He was a master of the long and drawn out,
Which children naturally ahhor;
And is rated by honest schoolboys
As an A-1 bore.

POOR Bill, he filled the stage with
such an unholy mix-up
Of sententious people and unlikely situations,
That it wasn't until the Comintern had been dissolved
That anyone bothered to investigate
His Political Affiliations.
But oh, Hell! when they did they got
in some fine kicks
At the old boy's Reactionary Politics;
And after all you can't wonder
For his Kings and Dukes do rather steal the thunder,
And you can't be surprised to find that
Comrades wince
When leading roles are given to a mere Prince.

I'M sure that weak and vacillating
fellow Hamlet
Would seem more real, and be more easy to remember,
(Character and all thrown in) if his friend,
Horatius, could reveal
That he had been a Party Member.
And as for Lear, the old buffer,
His insanity would have been a lot more convincing
If he had been an honest working man
instead of just a King.

BUT above all, wouldn't we have been better
If only all these runcompoos of his
would utter
A language less like Shakespeare than the gutter?
Then if he'd change his palace for a hovel,
He'd be as cheap and nasty
As an Average Novel.

—Anton Vogt



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