

(continued from previous page)

whom the family acknowledge as their head, we are introduced to all the various branches down to the "Bach Family Association for Thuringia," which still met for the old family reunions up until the Second World War. But the descendants of old Veit Bach are no longer professional musicians. That tradition died out in the 19th Century.

The Bach Family is a significant contribution to the extensive literature on the subject. But Karl Geiringer makes it more than a dry document of musical history. It becomes a vigorously vital human story.

WESTERN SOUTHLAND

WEST TO THE FIORDS—THE HISTORY OF WESTERN SOUTHLAND, by F. W. G. Miller: published by the Western Southland Historical Committee.

THE writing of this history was a big task, and Mr. Miller must often have had difficulty in deciding what to include and what to omit, and in settling such questions as whether the tale of the rabbit is more important than the story of wheat-growing, whether the notornis is more significant than Cheving's rescue. The Historical Committee and the author can be congratulated on a job well done; they have earned the thanks of their community. This is not to say that the book will prove of wide interest outside Southland; it so happens that I have a personal interest in Western Southland—my memory does not go back to the days when Riverton was the seat of the County Council, but certainly to Johnny Horr, who one time drove the coach through the quicksands at the mouth of the Waimatuku River on the old coach road to Invercargill (p. 21), to Drummmond's ferry over the Waiau River (p. 155) when Tuatapere was standing bush, and to days late last century when the annual dinghy race between Boniface and Leader (no amateurs these two) was a classic event at the Riverton Regatta on Boxing Day (p. 31).

Of special value are the histories of the early runs and their later subdivision, the detailed accounts of such settlements as those at Bayswater, Otatau, Drummmond, etc., and the personal histories of such pioneers as Howell, Stevens, Mackintosh and others. Illustrations are few, but well selected. My chief criticisms are that the sources of information are not usually acknowledged, though there is a short bibliography, that the index is quite inadequate and cross references are lacking (as, e.g., to rabbits, mentioned in different contexts at pp. 142, 163 and 202), and that the absence of maps, other than a solitary line map, and that without a scale, is most aggravating. I could wish also for much greater exactness in matters relating to farming, though this is too much to expect in a history. I thank Mr. Miller for refreshing my memory of many interesting places and people.

—L.J.W.

"I just couldn't put it down"



(C) Punch

IN THE JUNGLE

RETURN TO LAUGHTER, by Elenore Smith Bowen: Victor Gollancz, English price 16/-.

I FOUND this book rewarding and absorbing. Miss Bowen is an anthropologist whose work takes her to a native homestead in an African jungle. With no word of the language, and the nearest European hundreds of miles away, she learns as she goes. So do we, because this is not just an official ethnological treatise. It is a fascinating and at times intensely moving record of human experience. The first chapters are light-hearted enough, but the story deepens and broadens as the author's own problem resolves itself.

The trained mind of the field worker, objectively noting and dispassionately classifying the customs and belief of a savage tribe, struggles to dissociate itself from the complexities of the cultured and compassionate human being—struggles and fails. Perceptions become dulled, judgments biased by the impact of affection, loneliness and fear, so that the commentator, in spite of herself, becomes involved in the action. She weeps with a sense of personal loss as she holds the hand of the gentle Amara dying in childbirth. Amid the horror of a smallpox epidemic she is helpless, in the face of superstition and the threat of death, to carry out the edicts of her own code. She tells with a certain blazing honesty of her torment of heart and mind when she leaves a sick man to die on his own.

I have nothing but praise for this book—praise and a kind of wide-eyed wonder from the stay-at-home who admires, without any hope of emulating, the courage and singlemindedness of purpose which made the journey and the book possible.

—Isobel Andrews

HUNTING TIGERS

THE TIGERS OF TRENGGANU, by Lieutenant-Colonel A. Locke: Museum Press, English price 16/-.

IN spite of the author's reassurance that not one tiger in a hundred is a man-eater, I for one, having read this absorbing story, shall treat tigers with more respect than ever in future. As a Government Administrative Officer in Malaya, the author hunted them at night, shooting from a camouflaged platform perched precariously in a tree about ten feet above the ground, lighting his target with a torch strapped to the barrel of his rifle. He shot only those that attacked the villagers in his district or killed their domestic animals, frightened their children on the way to school or made themselves a nuisance in other ways. And to add to the risks, sometimes he shot them in country ranged by Communist guerrillas.

The book contains a great deal of interesting information about the habits of tigers. From a tiger's pugs he learnt to tell its sex, age and weight, and even to identify individual tigers. He tells the story of his

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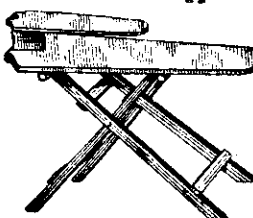


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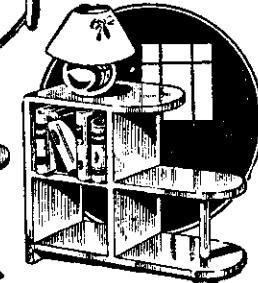


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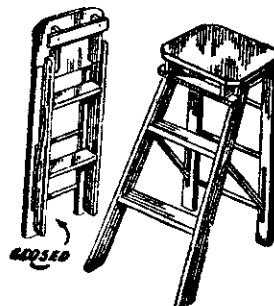
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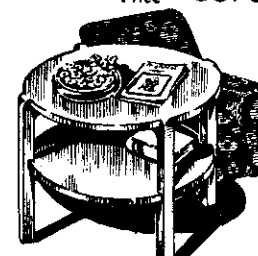
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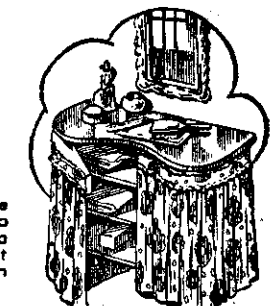
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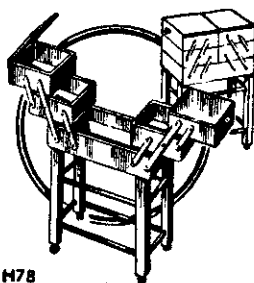
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