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Fortis

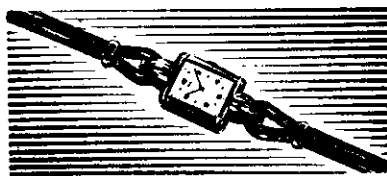
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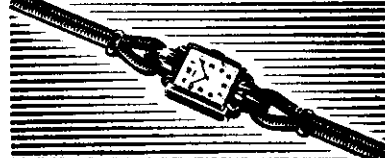
Hostess



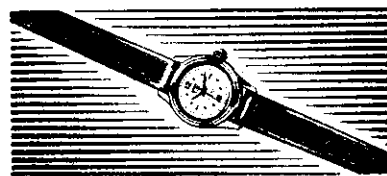
Secretary



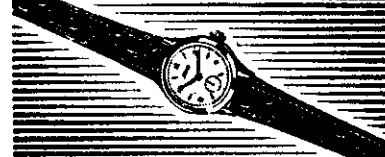
Housewife



Nurse



Teenager



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Books

ON THE MOUNTAINS

NEW ZEALAND HIGH COUNTRY, by David McLeod; Canterbury Agricultural College.
ASPIRING, by W. Scott Gilkison; printed by Whitcombe and Tombs, Ltd., Dunedin; 5/6.

(Reviewed by John Pascoe)

BETWEEN them, these publications answer many questions about alpine pastures whether grazed by sheep or tramped by mountaineers. Both authors are practical authorities in their own right, skilful at writing, and with a deep feeling for their country that binds them gladly to their labours up there in the snow. They may have never met each other, but are men of equal resource and enthusiasm, widely respected in their fields.

David McLeod is an articulate and scholarly run-holder from the Waimakariri mountains. His excellent broadcasts have publicised the little-known aspects of station management. These talks, with other material, were first published in the Canterbury Agricultural College Rural Education Bulletin, 1951, and are here reprinted in a booklet of 46 pages. His introduction is worthy of R. M. Burdon at his best, and the subsequent descriptions of routine mustering, shearing and tailing are varied with discussions of problems such as deer, keas, dog breeding and erosion. His style is lively and his narrative vivid with an effective natural humour. Clearly Mr. McLeod has in him the makings of a very good book and he owes it to his society to write one.

Scott Gilkison is primarily an Otago mountaineer whose work with the New Zealand Alpine Club has included wide climbing and exploration, and sustained literary achievement. He is a tiger for punishment, whether under a heavy swag or in writing up details of routes for young men to follow the new trails he has helped to open. His latest book of 80 pages, has magnificent illustrations and useful sketch maps, all focused on one central theme—Mount Aspiring, 9957 feet. He covers many approaches to his goal: topographical, historical and descriptive. This blend of personal experience, knowledge, and history is satisfying and informs the reader with a concise clarity that is as dominant as the Silver Cone itself. This book will both reward those who have already climbed the peak and attract those to whom it is but an honoured and beautiful name. The production of the book has the simplicity and dignity of the text.

NEW ZEALAND STORIES

SQUID, Short Stories, by Barry Mitcalfe, illustrated by F. S. Full; Glenco, Wellington; 10/6.

THE title of this volume suggests the theme of most of its stories. Mr. Mitcalfe is a versatile writer and seems

to have moved about New Zealand a good deal, but it is the beaked and squashy unpleasantness of life that draws him most steadily. He is often a convincing recorder and at his best he writes with a rather impressive simplicity—"It'll be a month this time," said the constable, as if a month in jail would make Johnny's hand work again."

But in *Squid* these qualities do not amount to much more than promises of what may come later. The best of these stories, such as "Johnny's Hands" and "Living in the Past," can only be recommended with serious reservations. Mr. Mitcalfe has an eye for an interesting situation, but he does not get more of it down on paper than a few details sometimes competently and sometimes incompetently linked together—among the merits of the two stories mentioned is their brevity. He does not succeed in creating the illusion that a situation has been perceived in its entirety and it is upon this that the success of a short story depends. The book is disfigured



by some particularly inept illustrations. It is published by an organisation established by a group of writers around the Wellington Teachers' Training College.

—Hubert Witheford

LONG AND SHORT CRIMES

THE LONG DIVORCE, by Edmund Crispin. English price, 9/6.

THE SECRET SEARCH, by E. R. Punshon. English price, 9/6.

CENTRE COURT MURDER, by Bernard Newman. English price, 10/6.

THE QUEEN'S AWARDS, fourth series, edited by Ellery Queen. English price, 10/6.

THE EVENING STANDARD DETECTIVE BOOK, second series. English price, 6/6. (All published by Victor Gollancz.)

A POLICE inspector making sudden and successful love to the local woman doctor one morning, taking her that afternoon to inspect a murdered corpse, and then being compelled to regard her as chief suspect—this is a situation not only exceptionally piquant, but, in my experience at any rate, novel in crime fiction. The attractiveness of these two is one reason why I place this tale first among the three long stories. Others are the skill with which Gervase Fen, the don-detective from Oxford, unravels the mystery, the distinction of the writing, and the general air of verisimilitude that pervades the picture of English rural society. Edmund Crispin is one of the most gifted and reliable of more recent additions to the "corps de bullet," and this is up to his standard.

In the first half of *The Secret Search*, that practised writer E. R. Punshon creates a mystery which grips with intangible fingers, revealing pointers here and there in a fog of uncertainty and a suggestion of the supernatural. After the build-up the denouement is rather

N.Z. LISTENER, JANUARY 11, 1952.