



BOOKS and REVIEWS

The American Earthquake

By Edmund Wilson. 576 pp. New York, Doubleday & Co., Inc. \$6. Reviewed by Tom Phillips

The great social trends which gathered the great power they burst upon the American scene in the turbulent decades of the 20's and 30's are still with us, influencing last year's, this year's, and possibly next year's events. It was during that period that the people of this country enjoyed and previously unparalleled prosperity and then plunged into the bleakest of depressions. So many of the attitudes and ideas which now shape our society came to flower at that time. These were the times when so many of the nation's most intelligent young men flirted with Communism—when those turbulent caused so much furor in later decades. They were also the times when the labor unions began to

did not live through those years, it is hard to imagine them accurately—for persons who were born too late to have memories of the depression it is difficult to believe that it really occurred, that between 1929 and 1933 the whole structure of American society seemed actually to be going to pieces.

WILSON'S book is divided into three sections: "The Follies, 1929-34"; "The Earthquake, Oct. 1930-Oct. 1931"; and "Dawn of the New Deal, 1932-34." Of the three, the articles making up the second section are the most interesting. These range in subject matter from a Congressional investigation of Communism to the coal fields of West Virginia and the bitter battles fought by miners there to secure a decent living from the late Henry Ford and his great Rouge plant.

Ellery Queen's 12th Awards

Edited by Ellery Queen. 338 pp. New York, Simon & Schuster. \$3.50. Reviewed by Donald A. Yates

Annually, Queen's volume of "Awards" is the most welcome anthology of the detective short story. The wide-open competition held each year by "Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine" attracts the best new stories by the pros and an occasional promising performance by a newcomer. The current volume of prize stories has an excellent balance of crime fiction, both in form and style. New appearances by Charlotte Armstrong, Hugh Pentecost, Stanley Ellin, and Rufus King among others. Queen continues, too, to pick the "off-beat" story for first place money. Critics will perhaps wish to dispute his choice.

How Still My Love

By Doris Siegel. 219 pp. New York, Mill-Morrow. \$2.95. Reviewed by Donald A. Yates

A new mystery writer, Doris Siegel, has written an effective first novel about murder in the backlands of Georgia. The accent is on atmosphere—on the scene and atmosphere of people. The characters in Miss Siegel's story are not especially real or sympathetic, but what they do in the presence of violence is good enough to keep the book moving.

Murder Off The Record

By John Bingham. 211 pp. New York, Dodd, Mead. \$2.95. Reviewed by Donald A. Yates

English writer John Bingham has presented a sympathetic and believable chap, David Shepton, as the protagonist in a nicely-paced English mystery. It concerns Shepton's efforts to keep ahead of Scotland Yard and prove his innocence in a series of murders that seem to develop out of his own unfortunated marital problems. Bingham is the kind of current-day English mystery writer who is merging the dignity of the traditional British detective tale with a stepped-up pace and action that characterizes today's detective literature at its best.

The Trouble With Fidelity

By George Malcolm Smith. 182 pp. New York, Doubleday. \$2.95. Reviewed by Donald A. Yates

This crime novel starts off with great promise as the story of a clever and gifted embezzler. His methods are intriguing and have been entirely successful until he disappears and insurance detective Lenoy Paints sets out on his trail. After this, the story bogs down, and nothing worth recounting seems to happen. Although no credit is given, the methods and character of the embezzler Gillespie Jaegers are precisely those outlined by St. Clair McKelway in his "New Yorker" true-life account of "The Wilby Wilby." When the present author moves from fact to fiction his narrative fails.

Knocked For A Loop

By Craig Rice. 219 pp. New York, Simon & Schuster. \$2.95. Reviewed by Donald A. Yates

This is the last detective novel that the late Craig Rice completed. There will be one more—to be finished by a friend—and then silence from a detective story writer who lived the crime fiction scene for two decades. This novel features Miss Rice's old favorites, John J. Malone and Helene and Jake Justis, in a typically unconventional adventure in crime. Malone is neatly framed for murder, and then is visited by a 9-year-old who has been kidnapped but doesn't want to go home. The complications are as wild as ever, and when things get to the crisis stage, Jake and Helene show up to bring the episode to its usual zany climax. This is typical Craig Rice—for especially cultivated tastes.

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The Mystery of The Blue Nets

By Lois Allen. 191 pp. Coward-McCann, Inc. \$2.75. Reviewed by Lee Adams

This mystery has its moments, but all too few are mysterious, compelling or convincing. The would-be heroines, Julie Witmer and her cousin, Margaret, are spending the summer in the Brittany port of Concarneau. While Julie is searching for her long lost uncle, she stumbles on some suspicious-looking shavings which she mails to her father.

From here the Secret Service in Paris, under Dad's direction, moves in and uncovers an international counterfeiting ring. Neither Julie nor the reader are ever fully informed as to all the details of this classified coup. In the end, the reader, as does Julie, feels disappointed that the heroines are only allowed to enter the plot incidentally and indirectly.

The Mouse Who Liked To Read

By Miriam Clark Potter. Philadelphia, J. B. Lippincott Co. \$1.75. Reviewed by Lee Adams

This story is especially for those people and mice who, like Scuffie, in bed. Now, if you're a mouse, there's nothing wrong with reading in bed at night... so long as you remember to shut your door.

Failing to see the implications of Mother Mouse's warning, he goes right on reading his "little woggy magazines" without bothering to close his door. Various night visitants see his light through the open door and come scratching, dragging, and finally paw-scratching to face with the law of survival. Scuffie is transformed from an absent-minded, professional mouse to a practical opportunist and in the process becomes a very clever mouse indeed. For, it must be confessed, up to this critical point he is singularly unlover.



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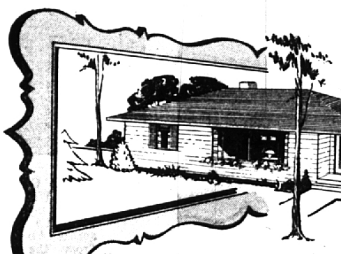
Polio occurs during every month of the year, but the highest incidence occurs during the summer months. The 1958 season will soon be upon us. Now is the time to be immunized in order to be protected. During the past two years, polio vaccine has been largely responsible for an 80-percent drop in paralytic polio. But, the vaccine is worthless unless administered. It does not wipe the disease from the face of the earth. It only protects (up to 90 percent) those who receive it. So don't delay. Be immunized! Protect yourself and family against this dread disease.

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