

FOLLOW THE WHALES: THE HYDRONAUTS MEET THE OTTER-PEOPLE by Carl L. Biemiller. Doubleday, 1973. 185 p. \$4.50

This is adequate adventure fiction for early teens. The setting is a post holocaust world with (of necessity) a regimented society and rigid psychological control. Humanity is dependent, primarily, on sea products, and the most free members of the culture, the individualists, are members of the Marine Service, which polices and protects sea resources. The culture is supposed to be egalitarian, but there is only one female in the book, and all authority figures are male.

The protagonists of the book are two pairs of Wardens, in their late teens. The main character is Kim, the male half of the heterosexual pair. Their assignment is to follow a school of whales as an excuse for looking for a possible race of artificially amphibious humans.

The main flaw in the book is an excess of expository material on whales and other sea life. These passages are more awkwardly written than the rest of the book, and impede the flow of the narrative. There is, however, a rather amusing scene of whales mating.

There were parts of the book I found interesting and enjoyable, and I wouldn't mind seeing what Mr. Biemiller does with the sequel. (This is the second in a series, with at least one more book due. I haven't read the first.)

—Leslie Bloom

MOE Q. MCGLUTCH, HE SMOKED TOO MUCH by Ellen Raskin. Parents Magazine Press, 1973. \$4.50. Age level: 4-8

The moral of this story is that smoking is bad and honesty is good. It is done so well, however, that it is all right that it has a moral (which is not printed in the book). Moe Q. McGlutch keeps smoking and the child of his fourth cousin-twice-removed keeps telling him he smokes too much, and the parents keep telling the child to stop it because Moe is very rich. The various mishaps caused by the smoking are illustrated in bright colorful pictures that combine just the right amount of fantasy with not-quite-realism.

—Joni Rapkin

PETRONELLA by Jay Williams. Pictures by Frisco Henstra. Parents Magazine Press, 1973. \$4.50. Age level: 4-8

Shades of Women's Lib—this is a story about a princess who goes to rescue a prince from an enchanter. It is told in true fairy tale style but it is certainly not old fashioned, and the pictures are in the same spirit as the story. I enjoyed it and I am sure that children will like it too.

—Joni Rapkin

HERE ABIDE MONSTERS by Andre Norton. Atheneum, 1973. 215 p. \$5.95. Age level: 12 up

This is science fantasy, and seems to be aimed at somewhat younger readers than most Nortons. The book jacket doesn't give a suggested age range, but I'd guess at early teens.

The setting is an alternate world where lie the origins of Celtic myth. Two American teenagers, Nick and Linda, are drawn into this world which is, incidentally, menaced by flying saucers and indigenous evil forces. Nick and Linda join with a group of British survivors of a WWII bombing raid. One of the Britons, Rita, had been rejected by the group after going native, which changed her into something other than human. Nick is continually warned against her and her fate, but must find out for himself the real meaning behind it.

The book seems rather loosely written. Paragraphs are short, and Nick is a somewhat pallid, undeveloped character. Linda is even more so. I would like to see this material developed the way Miss Norton has developed the Witchworld. One of Miss Norton's greatest strengths has always been the development of alien cultures, and I don't think she does herself justice here.

The book isn't bad, and it might be quite entertaining to the age group at which it seems aimed. It's just one of those things that doesn't quite come off.

—Leslie Bloom

GARAN THE ETERNAL by Andre Norton. DAW UQ1045. 1973. 156 p. 95¢

Garan the Eternal, if it should be necessary to warn the unwary, is more a catch-all collection than a novel. The book consists of two rather artificially connected novelettes and two unrelated short stories.

"Garin of Tav," copyrighted in 1947, is a straightforward lost race yarn. Adventurer Garin Featherstone penetrates a curtain of Antarctic haze to find a hidden land where he fights and triumphs for the beautiful princess Thrala and her lizard folk against the evil Black Ones. In part two Garin, now Garan of the Flame, is told of his former incarnation as "Garan of Yu-Lac." In that past life on a far planet he was involved in the exodus that established Earth's Antarctic civilization. Here again is his (this time doomed) love for Thrala, and his eternal confrontation with evil in the form of Kepta the Ambitious. The short stories are somewhat more imaginative: a light-hearted tale about the "One Spell Wizard" of High Hallack and the more somber story of vengeance accomplished with the "Legacy from Sorn Fen."

Garan the Eternal will win no awards and few plaudits for Miss Norton in comparison with her other work. Nevertheless, the formula plotting is adequate, the writing competent for its ilk, and the readability only slightly tarnished by some of the silliness.

—B. A. Fredstrom

INTO THE OCCULT by Peter Underwood. Drake, 1973. 154 p. \$5.95

Another import, this book by a long-time observer of psychic phenomena presents a reasonably balanced view of the genre, neither falling into the hysterical "true believer" or the cynical debunker attitude. Mr. Underwood draws his material from a variety of sources: the Psychical Research Society, the Spiritualist Society, the College of Psychic Studies, and the *Psychic Press*, as well as his own group, the Ghost Club, one of the oldest groups interested in the subject.

Each category of phenomena or theory is presented with a general explanation of how it is supposed to function, along with Mr. Underwood's remarks based on his own experience. The material is well presented, and deserves closer examination.

—Michael L. McQuown

CITIES & SCENES FROM THE ANCIENT WORLD by Roy G. Krenkel. Owlswick Press (Box 8243, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101) 1974. 82 p. \$16.00

Let's see now, if we divide 180 illustrations into \$16.00 we come out to less than 10¢ per illustration. Most are worth more than that. It's a big book, measuring—Hell, can't find a ruler—but it is good-sized. The color frontispiece is also used on the jacket. Rather than being printed in black-&-white, a brown ink is used, easier on the eye, for the book itself. The preface by Sanford Zane Meschkow is basically biographical. Krenkel's own introduction is a short essay on doodles and "other irreverent observations."

The bulk of the pieces have to be called sketches, Krenkel uses the technique of suggesting shapes and shadows with well placed lines. Krenkel often does have elaborate architectural pieces. The two techniques can best be compared on pp.66/67 where the same ancient place, Pataliputra, is depicted, once in a sketch and once in a drawing with elaborate detail. There are also several half-tones among the illustrations. They all have as subject matter some scene (or city) from the ancient world (which, by stretching things, includes some fantastic and mythical realms). While most scenes are urban, a few bucolic views break the monotony.

A few unkind things should be said about this production (which, for the record, is a 3,000 print run). Krenkel can't draw birds in flight for the proverbial beans, his flamingoid things don't look real. The pseudo-LC card on the verso of the title page has an error in spacing. The printer miscalculated and some of the text of the jacket blurb runs into the fold. Such complaints are so minor when compared to the virtues of this work that they may be safely ignored. I won't urge anyone to buy it sight unseen but I think everyone should try to get a look at a copy and if Krenkel's thing is yours, by all means buy. At less than 10¢ an illustration one really can't go wrong.

—J. B. Post