

MAGAZINE

BOOK REVIEW

COAST TO COAST

Coast To Coast is published annually as a selection of the best short stories written by Australian authors during the year. The selector is usually a well-known Australian writer, and the latest collection has been chosen by "M. Bernard Eldershaw," authors of the novel on early Sydney life, *A House Is Built*.

The 24 stories in this year's volume were chosen from 500 entries, and three of the authors are members of the Melbourne Realist Writers' Group.

Among the newcomers to Coast to Coast are John Morrison, Ross Franklyn, Judah Waten, and Mons Brand. Their stories get close to the heart of the people. They are written with an understanding of the struggles and hopes, the unconscious heroism of the common people.

JOHN MORRISON'S "All Through the Night" stands out. Morrison, a wharf labourer on the Melbourne waterfront, tells of the discharging of a cargo ship during the war. He limits his words to the barest necessity and brilliantly builds up atmosphere and action.

The forthcoming collection of his short stories is something to look forward to.

TWO stories on the last depression period make an interesting comparison. "The Load of Wood," by Ross Franklyn, is the more vivid and realistic. You sympathise with the plodding of the wood by Dairy for his destitute cobbler as an act of defiance against capitalist society, and his leadership overpowers defeatism. Art Hauser, in "Always There Is One," creates the same defiance, but ends with a feeling that the struggle for better conditions is a hopeless task.

Mons Brand's "Absence" has already won wide recognition. It is a good psychological study. All returned soldiers will delight in Gavin Casey's "End of a War."

Judah Waten's story of a Jewish family's struggles, seen through the eyes of a small boy, is a moving story and is told finely.

THESE are stories by writers who already rank high in the Australian literary world, such as Vance Palmer, Frank Dalby Davison, and Alan Marshall.

"Coast to Coast" has become a valuable medium for Australian authors, both rising and risen, to have their best efforts brought more widely before the public. The selectors of the 1946 edition, in the main, have shown good judgment.

The contemporary Australian short story has reached a high level, and can rank with the world's best. The fact that it can do so in the face of

the cheap syndicated offer that the monopoly press imports from overseas can be taken as a sign that Australian literature is becoming increasingly militant, and will one day assume the rightful role of any art form—that of portraying, directing, and helping in the life of the masses.

Communist Review On Jap Menace

Since VJ day, 36 per cent. of Japanese exports have gone to USA, which has also absorbed 36 per cent. of Japanese imports.

BEFORE the war, India and Egypt used to supply much of Japan's raw cotton, but MacArthur has grabbed the whole market for the USA.

He has also insisted that Japanese goods sent to Australia, Britain and some other countries must carry prices not lower than what America is charging for the same goods.

So Australia has been paying the Japs about three times more than she needs for silk, rayon and cotton imports.

These are among the facts mentioned in R. Dixon's Communist Review article, which explain why Evatt's crawling to the dollar-lords has cost Australia so much and may cost her more very soon.

In the same Review, Yugoslav Foreign Minister Edward Kardelj continues his penetrating account of recent international developments.

J. R. Hughes reviews the annual conference of the ALP in NSW.

The Secretary of the Polish Workers' Party, Mr. Wladyslaw Gomułka, explains the present Polish set-up in its relation to Marxist theory. Poland, he says, is neither "typically capitalist" nor Socialist, but something new.

"Our type of democracy and our social system we have designated 'People's democracy,'" says Mr. Gomułka in an article many have eagerly awaited.

How Dr. Evatt has imperilled Australian civil liberties with a law equalling the Bruce Page Crimes Act in viciousness is explained by Tom Wright.