

## Book Review.

### FISH AND FISHERIES.

HUGH ANDERSON. LOTHIAN PUBLISHING COMPANY PTY. LTD., MELBOURNE—SYDNEY.

This is a small, handy volume, useful as a brief guide to Australian fisheries; one of a series on Australian Primary Industries from Lothian.

There is a brief history of fisheries and an outline of Australia's place in world fishing, including gross production, and a review of the important species, processes and methods used. The most important individual fisheries are reviewed along the same lines—historically first, followed by notes on current trends and production. Unfortunately the headings do not quite keep pace with the text, and some important sections are not indicated by headings.

Some of the statistics are not quite accurate—for example, it is stated that there are less than 20,000 square miles of trawling grounds off the Australian Coast, but this includes only Territorial waters, and excludes very large areas off the northern and western coasts. These are available to Australian fishermen as much as the North Sea is available to British boats. However, any brief exposition in simple style is likely

to lose a little in accuracy. Most of the catch statistics are reliable although in one place Australia is supposed to catch 'nearly 100,000,000 ton' per year; in another, the record catch (1963-1964) is '89½ million pounds'. The latter is correct.

Biology is clearly not the author's strong point—for example sharks are by no means the only fishes without swimbladders (the flatheads, to which a section is devoted, also lack this organ, to name one group). However, this booklet is not intended as a biology treatise.

These minor criticisms aside, the book is a satisfactory introduction to its subject, packed with information and covering all the important aspects of a very large field. Max Coward's illustrations are rather fuzzy, especially the fish—but fish are among the most demanding of subjects for any artist. Retail price in Australia \$1.15.

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(Received June, 1967.)

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Port Moresby: G. W. Reid, Acting Government Printer.—A3238/1.68.