

Notes re opinions of general reader.

Opinion 1 It should not be overlooked that my story was not written for the student and scientist alone. The still vaster multitude represented by the average reader might find interest which students and scientists may disregard. Your reader may very well be right as to the way in which facts are presented but I cannot see that the examples he mentioned were happily chosen.

Chapter 5 titled Canned Salmon Selling Agency System.

The title, I agree, is not appropriate. I think however all your reader's objection can be met by a different chapter heading.

P.1, Para 162. These presupposed the average reader of the book will possess a sense of humour. A Dry-as dust production may contain all necessary facts but might not attract readers, even students. One type of intellect alone it was not intended to cater to.

Opinion 2 Anecdotes given by the author about founders of the salmon industry were not just my personal views. They were the general opinions held by their friends and associates. Had I wished to voice only my personal thoughts I could have filled many more pages with highly entertaining anecdotes but what I tried to present was the general estimation of them held by the people of their own communities.

P.12 Para.3 The description given of Wm. Hume was a true portrait of the man as he was known not only to me but to all his other friends. I cannot see why any exception should be taken to picturing him as he actually was.

P.66, Para 3 If your reader supposed this was written through hostile criticism on my part he was in error. I always liked Seaborg even in his final days of adversity and felt his change of character was somewhat in the nature of a disease. I was one of the few friends that stood by him to the very end.

Opinion 3 That my writing was animated by "a personal grudge against government officials in charge of salmon, both Canadian and American" is absolutely untrue and your reader went far beyond his right as a critic in making this assertion. I have already dealt with this charge of his in my previous letter so need not go further with it here.

The late Wm. Allen White, in an eulogy on a fellow newspaper editor, wrote;- "There was no malice in his voice nor in his life. His capacity for hate was directed at causes, not men." I honestly believe I am entitled to like credit for at least what is expressed in the last sentence.

Opinion 4 While I do not insist my descriptions and the use of certain words and expressions must be regarded as final and unalterable I cannot agree the personal preferences of any writer

should be denied precedence over the mass production type of wording and composition so prevalent in the country to-day. To my mind the greatest misfortune literature could suffer from would be the suppression of individual style and insistence on a uniform election of words and phrases.

The late Dr. G. G. Sedgwick, Professor of English at the University of British Columbia had continental recognition as a great scholar and educator. I once heard him express a very sarcastic opinion on certain American books. He condemned their phraseology as "perhaps good 'journalese' but certainly neither educational or possessing literary value."

One hundred years ago and more Lord Macaulay, Washington Irving and many other masters of phraseology produced their works and their books still command an immense following despite their "unnecessary use of formal words." It would be interesting to know whether your general reader could attract the attention of present day literati if he reproduced these written thoughts in the generally accepted composition common to this nation to-day. In fact I really wonder if he could find any publishing house that would consider the work at all.

Since at least 1947 the Publishers Weekly Magazine has annually commented on the decadent state of American literary production and the more and more steady trend amongst American readers ~~readers~~ to prefer English authors to those of their own country. It said that with a population only one-third that of the U. S. Great Britain in 1947 produced 13,046 new books and 2,411 reprints against an American production of 1,939 new books and 7,248 reprints. Each year since then Publishers Weekly has made somewhat similar remarks and has commented on the increasing preference of readers for books of foreign origin. It might be well if our general readers enquired as to why this should be, with special ~~reference~~ regard given to the question if economy of words and suppression of personal style may not be the most responsible factor.