

# The Critics Take to Their Hammocks

**F**OR the first time since *The Saturday Review* began polling the nation's literary editors as to their preferences among current books half a dozen years ago, a title that won a place among the leaders in one season has reappeared among the toppers in the following season and, indeed, actually improved its position with the passing of time. The book is "The Dollmaker," Harriette Arnow's novel about Kentucky hillbillies lost in the jungles of a large industrial city, which came in sixth in *SR*'s spring poll and now wins first place in the summer poll. The phenomenon is further testimony that Mrs. Arnow has written an extraordinarily fine novel, one that merits serious consideration by the Pulitzer Prize judges.

The reappearance of this and many other titles published last spring on the new season's list underscores another fact that people in the book trade are talking about somewhat anxiously these days: one of the quietest spring book seasons within anyone's memory is about to be followed by an even quieter summer. Lest we sound too dismal, we hasten to point out that an abundance of fine reading on a wide variety of subjects is represented in the 128 books named by 26 book editors on the staffs of leading newspapers in all sections of the country who responded to *SR*'s seasonal invitation to suggest ten currently published books that they deem worthy of the attention of discriminating readers.

The eight works nominated most frequently are:

"The Dollmaker," by Harriette Arnow, ten votes.

"The Reason Why," by Cecil Woodham-Smith, nine votes.

"Sweet Thursday," by John Steinbeck, nine votes.

"Dialogues of Alfred North Whitehead," recorded by Lucien Price, seven votes.

"The Fables of Fontaine," translated by Marianne Moore, six votes.

"The Fall of a Titan," by Igor Gouzenko, six votes.

"General Dean's Story," by Major General William F. Dean, as told to William L. Worden, six votes.

"A Time to Love and a Time to Die," by Erich Maria Remarque, six votes.

In the hope that you will find the critics' recommendations useful as a guide to your summer reading, we publish the complete list below. The descriptions after the titles are the

work of Whitney Balliett, who compiles *SR*'s JUST PUBLISHED list each week. The names in brackets are those of the critics making the nominations.

—RAYMOND WALTERS, JR.

## General

### NINE VOTES

**THE REASON WHY.** By Cecil Woodham-Smith. McGraw-Hill Book Co. \$4.

A history, done as a double biography of the two responsables, the Earl of Cardigan and the Earl of Lucan, of the disastrous charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava where seven hundred, not six hundred, plunged down at the Russian guns, and 195 returned. Miss Woodham-Smith was also the author of the recent biography of Florence Nightingale. (Bond, Cady, Dolbier, Flowers, Hormel, O'Neill, Shockley, Snajdr, Wyllie.)

### SEVEN VOTES

**DIALOGUES OF ALFRED NORTH WHITEHEAD.** Recorded by Lucien Price. Little, Brown. \$5.

A volume of conversations overheard at the home of the distinguished Harvard mathematician-philosopher during the last and most fruitful years of his life. (Barkham, Cross, Dolbier, North, Shockley, Wyllie, Yeiser.)

### SIX VOTES

**THE FABLES OF FONTAINE.** Translated by Marianne Moore. Viking Press. \$5.

It has taken Miss Moore, present heavyweight champion of American poets, some eight years to complete this translation, which includes an introduction by her, and all 241 of the poems. (Bond, Dolbier, Herzberg, Smith, Tinkle, Wyllie.)

**GENERAL DEAN'S STORY.** By Major General William F. Dean, as told to William L. Worden. Viking Press. \$5.

The incredible story of the capture and two years' imprisonment spent in North Korea by the Marine general. (Bond, Morrissey, O'Neill, Shockley, T. B. Sherman, Smith.)

### FIVE VOTES

**MY MISSION TO SPAIN.** By Claude G. Bowers. Simon & Schuster. \$6.

An account of the six rubbery years the author spent in Spain as our ambassador watching that country succumbing to the sleeping sickness of totalitarianism. His book, which is based on his diaries, recorded conversations, and dispatches, ends at the outbreak of World War II. (Bond, Flowers, Herzberg, Hormel, Morrissey.)

**OF WHALES AND MEN.** By R. B. Robertson. Alfred A. Knopf. \$4.50.

A buoyant, smelly, witty, new-eyed view of the modern whaling industry as it operates in the southern oceans, by a practising English doctor who went along for a vacation and because he was curious. The time is eight months out of 1950. (Babcock, Hormel, O'Neill, Smith, Snajdr.)

### FOUR VOTES

**A CHILD OF THE CENTURY.** By Ben Hecht. Simon & Schuster. \$5.

The flippping autobiography of an all-around laureate, who, in his fifty-five years, has made money writing plays, novels, short stories, television dramas, and movies, and whose travels have taken him from Racine to Germany to Florida to Hollywood to Chicago. (Barkham, Cross, Flowers, Kogan.)

**END OF INNOCENCE.** By Jonathan Daniels. J. B. Lippincott Co. \$2.50.

A mural-sized memoir about the author's childhood days in Washington, D.C., where his father, Josephus, was Secretary of the Navy, FDR was Assistant Secretary, and Woodrow Wilson was at the helm. (Bradley, Flowers, Kogan, Morrissey.)

**U. S. GRANT AND THE AMERICAN MILITARY TRADITION.** By Bruce Catton. Little, Brown & Co. \$3.

Mr. Catton, fresh from the National Book Award ceremonies, has here put together a biography of General Grant, a man whose life has been well befogged by misinformation down the years. Special attention is paid Grant's place in our military traditions. (Barkham, Cady, Hormel, John Sherman.)

**WHERE WE CAME OUT.** By Granville Hicks. Viking Press. \$3.50.

An examination, by one who was there and was involved, of the climate and conditions of the late Twenties and early Thirties in this country which caused many young intellectuals to turn toward Communism. Mr. Hicks, who is an able critic and novelist, also outlines what he believes to be the course we should now follow in ridding ourselves of the Red menace and its accompanying fears. (Herzberg, Rothermel, John Sherman, T. B. Sherman.)

### THREE VOTES

**THE ADVENTURES OF MARK TWAIN.** By Jerry Allen. Little, Brown & Co. \$4.50.

A new critical biography of America's first great public laugher, which covers everything from the earliest days in Hannibal, Missouri, or Porkopolis, as it was called in those days, to the final years of fame and dark shadows. (Cady, North, John Sherman.)

**JOURNEY TO THE FAR AMAZON.** By Alain Gheerbrant. Translated by Edward Fitzgerald. Simon & Schuster. \$5.

An account of a scientific expedition taken by three Frenchmen and a Colombian into the misty jungles of Venezuela, Colombia, and Brazil. The author is an ethnographer. (Bradley, John Sherman, Yeiser.)

**MADAME DE POMPADOUR.** By Nancy Mitford. Random House. \$4.75.

Miss Mitford, who writes English novels full of prickles and ice cubes, has here put together an affectionate picture of the French lady who kept Louis XV practising his *entrechats*. (Morrissey, Tinkle, Yeiser.)

**THE ROOSEVELT FAMILY OF SAGAMORE HILL.** By Hermann Hagedorn. The Macmillan Co. \$5.

A review of the strenuous life and times of Teddy Roosevelt, with special attention given to his life with Mrs. Roosevelt and their six children at the pleasant retreat in Oyster Bay, Long Island, which was recently made a national shrine. To be published August 16. (Babcock, Hormel, North.)

**THE SECOND TREE FROM THE CORNER.** By E. B. White. Harper & Bros. \$3.

A big armful of the neat, beautiful sentences E. B. White has been putting together for the past twenty years or so. Included is his choice, in verse and prose, of the best things he has written during that time for such magazines as *The New Yorker*, *Atlantic*, and *Harper's*. (Barkham, McManis, Wyllie.)

**SEDUCTION OF THE INNOCENT.** By Frederic Wertham. Rinehart & Co. \$4.

The newest report, by a practising psychiatrist, of his findings on the reading habits (ninety million comic books a month) of our bubble-gum chewing population. (Cady, O'Neill, North.)

**UNDER MILK WOOD.** By Dylan Thomas. New Directions. \$3.

A play, originally written for radio, and here given in the author's final revision, about a ghostly, windy, brawling spring day in a small Welsh coastal town. (John Sherman, Smith, Wyllie.)

### TWO VOTES

**BACK OF HISTORY.** By Williams Howells. Doubleday & Co. \$5.

A warm, leisurely history that runs from his raw-meat beginnings to his present at Pavillon of the oddest creature in the world—Man. (Babcock, Bond.)

**BLEEDING KANSAS.** By Alice Nichols. Oxford University Press. \$4.50.

A history of the seven bloody, tumultuous years that passed between the time Kansas be-

came a territory and a state, and of the plots and counter-plots perpetrated there in an effort to make the area abolitionist or pro-slavery (Smith, Hass.)

**THE CHALLENGE OF MAN'S FUTURE.** By Harrison Brown. Viking Press. \$3.75.

An earnest and good-sized tremble for man's future on this wrinkled earth, by a geochemist, who believes that we can survive if we don't first blow each other asunder, and if we learn to use our natural resources properly, as well as such other resources as plankton, the sun, the tides, and the rocks. (North, T. B. Sherman.)

**CHINESE GORDON.** By Lawrence and Elisabeth Hanson. Funk & Wagnalls. \$4.

A biography of one of the strangest pillars of Queen Victoria's Empire, Charles George Gordon. (Bond, Cady.)

**AN ENGLISH YEAR.** By Nan Fairbrother. Alfred A. Knopf. \$3.75.

An account of a year spent by the author during the war with her two young sons in a sixteenth-century farmhouse in Buckinghamshire replete with Elizabethan nooks, hidden passageways, and sudden closets. (Hass, Hormel.)

**THE GOLDEN ECHO.** By David Garnett. Harcourt, Brace & Co. \$4.

The first volume of Mr. Garnett's autobiography, in which he tells of a childhood surrounded by such as Conrad, Ford Madox Ford, Galsworthy, Wells, Henry James, and W. H. Hudson, and of his own emergence in the Bloomsbury set of J. M. Keynes. Lytton Strachey, and Virginia Woolf. The years covered are 1892-1914. (Dolbier, Yeiser.)

**THE JOURNEY.** By Lillian Smith. World Publishing Co. \$3.50.

A spiritual autobiography by the author of "Strange Fruit." (Cross, Rothermel.)

## The Critics

**THIS** is the sixth summer *The Saturday Review* has asked the book editors of the nation's leading newspapers to name the new books they believe merit the attention of discriminating readers. The twenty-six editors participating are:

FREDERIC BABCOCK, *Chicago Tribune*  
JOHN BARKHAM, *Saturday Review*  
Syndicate

ALICE DIXON BOND, *Boston Herald*  
VAN ALLEN BRADLEY, *Chicago Daily News*

ERNEST CADY, *Columbus Dispatch*  
LESLIE CROSS, *Milwaukee Journal*  
MAURICE DOLBIER, *Providence Journal*  
PAUL FLOWERS, *Memphis Commercial Appeal*

VICTOR P. HASS, *Omaha World Herald*  
MAX J. HERZBERG, *Newark, [N.J.] Evening & Sunday News*

OLIVE DEAN HORMEL, *Christian Science Monitor*

HERMAN KOGAN, *Chicago Sun-Times*

CARL VICTOR LITTLE, *Houston Press*

JOHN McMANIS, *Detroit News*

RALPH MORRISSEY, *Nashville Banner*

STERLING NORTH, *North Weekly Book Review Service*

FRANK O'NEILL, *Cleveland News*

J. F. ROTHERMEL, *Birmingham News*

JOHN K. SHERMAN, *Minneapolis Star Tribune*

THOMAS B. SHERMAN, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*

RAY SHOCKLEY, *Atlanta Journal*

PAUL JORDON SMITH, *Los Angeles Times*

ROBERT I. SNAJDR, *Cleveland Plain Dealer*

LON TINKLE, *Dallas News*

JOHN COOK WYLLIE, *Richmond News Leader*

FREDERICK YEISER, *Cincinnati Enquirer*

**THE MEASURE OF MAN.** By Joseph Wood Krutch. Bobbs-Merrill Co. \$3.50.

Mr. Krutch's second survey of the state of our culture, "The Modern Temper," published some twenty-five years ago, was the first (North, John Sherman.)

**MINE THE HARVEST.** By Edna St. Vincent Millay. Harper & Bros. \$3.

A collection of some of the poems Miss Millay was working on at the time of her death, plus a few earlier and unpublished ones. There are sixty-seven in all. (Little, North.)

**THE NEGRO AND THE SCHOOLS.** By Harry S. Ashmore. University of North Carolina Press. \$2.75.

A study of segregation in American schools that has been put together by some forty researchers under the direction of Mr. Ashmore, and financed by the Ford Foundation. (Herzberg, Rothermel.)

**THE OLD COUNTRY STORE.** By Gerald Carson. Oxford University Press. \$5.

A relaxed, by-the-fire inquiry into that old and lost culture the American general store, which is, at the same time, a loose history of retail merchandising from 1790 to 1921. The author is a retired advertising man. (Shockley, Snajdr.)

**THE SEVEN MEN OF SPANDAU.** By Jack Fishman. Rinehart & Co. \$3.50.

A report of the lives now being led by the seven German war criminals who survived the Nuremberg trials. They are, in case you've forgotten, Hess, von Schirach, Walter Funk, Doenitz, Raeder, Speer, and Baron von Neurath. (Babcock, Tinkle.)

**THE SPANISH TEMPER.** By V. S. Pritchett. Alfred A. Knopf. \$3.75.

An English literary critic's description and analysis of the land of Don Quixote. (T. B. Sherman, Wyllie.)

**STRATEGY FOR THE WEST.** By Sir John Slessor. William Morrow. \$3.

A head-to-foot assessment of the free world's present position in relation to the big bears on the other side of the Iron Curtain. The author, who also develops here his theories about practical air defense, is an air tactics expert. (Flowers, Herzberg.)

**THE TAFT STORY.** By William S. White. Harper & Bros. \$3.50.

A biography of the late Senator by one of the best political reporters of *The New York Times*. (T. B. Sherman, Shockley.)

**THE WAY OF THE FOUR WINDS.** Yrjo Kokko. G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$5.

A chronicle of the three years the author spent living in Lapland in northern Scandinavia—a place where the four winds of the world nod together, the sun shines forever, and reindeer are as common as Chevrolets are here. (Dolbier, Hass.)

**WE CHOSE TO STAY.** By Lali Horstmann. Houghton Mifflin Co. \$3.

An account of three terrible years Mme. Horstmann spent on her family's country estate a few miles east of Berlin after the Russians arrived in 1945. (Cross, Hass.)

### ONE VOTE

**AMERICAN THOUGHT: A Critical Sketch.** By Morris R. Cohen. The Free Press. \$5.

A critical study of the American mind and how it has worked on such things as scientific thought, political thought, religious thought, and so forth. (Herzberg.)

**THE APPRENTICESHIP OF ERNEST HEMINGWAY.** By Charles A. Fenton. Farrar, Straus & Young. \$5.

A critical work developed from a Ph.D.

thesis, which concentrates on the earlier environments and influential forces (G. Stein, Pound, Joyce) that shaped Papa into what he is today. (Babcock.)

**ART UNDER A DICTATORSHIP.** By Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt. Oxford University Press. \$5.50.

A study of how the Nazis converted the arts into mediums for their propaganda. (Morrissey.)

**THE ARTS AT MID-CENTURY.** Edited by Robert Richman. Horizon Press. \$5.

A collection of twenty-five essays, celebrating and assessing the present condition of all the arts throughout the world. Most of the book first appeared in *The New Republic*, and some of the contributors are Eric Bentley, Malcolm Cowley, Elizabeth Bowen, Archibald Macleish, Kathleen Raine, Mark Schorer, and Allen Tate. (Yeiser.)

**AS IT HAPPENED: The Autobiography of Clement Attlee.** Viking Press. \$5.

Memoirs from the mouse-colored man, who has been nominal head of the British Labour Party these twenty years, which tell of his middle class youth, Oxford, early days as a social worker in London's Limehouse district, his being deputy prime minister under Winnie, and the final rise by himself to P.M. (Shockley.)

**BOOKS AND PEOPLE.** By Marion King. The Macmillan Co. \$5.

A tenderized recall of the last fifty years or so in the life of New York City's oldest library, the Society Library, by that institution's present head. (Hass.)

**BREAK DOWN THE WALLS.** By John Bartlow Martin. Ballantine Books. Clothbound, \$3.50. Paperbound, 50c.

A description of recent prison uprisings and an analysis of the penological and sociological conditions that caused them. (Snajdr.)

**THE BUFFALO HUNTERS.** By Mari Sandoz. Hastings House. \$4.50.

A panorama, by the author of "Cheyenne Autumn," of the thundering days of hunting and hiding between 1867 and 1883 when the great buffalo herds in the West dwindled from a veritable ocean to a few hundreds. (Bradley.)

**THE BURR CONSPIRACY.** By Thomas Perkins Abernethy. Oxford University Press. \$6.

A retelling of the mysterious conspiracy instigated by Aaron Burr in 1806, which might have separated the western part of the country from the East, thus setting up a new nation with Burr as its head. (Morrissey.)

**BUT WE WERE BORN FREE.** By Elmer Davis. Bobbs-Merrill Co. \$2.75.

Some of the dry, spacious dynamite Mr. Davis has been planting these many years in the minds of the narrow, the reactionary, the isolated. Based on a series of articles and speeches published and delivered in the past year or two. (Barkham.)

**CAVE DRAWINGS FOR THE FUTURE.** By Abner Dean. The Dial Press. \$3.50.

A new collection of cartoons of those bare-bottomed people Mr. Dean likes to draw. (Wyllie.)

**THE CHISOLM TRAIL.** By Wayne Gard. University of Oklahoma Press. \$4.50.

A history of the great swath the cattlemen of Texas cut from the southern tip of that state to Abilene, Kansas, and over which they drove millions of cattle for sale and slaughter. The years: 1867 to about 1880. (Bradley.)

**CONFEDERATE AGENT: A Secret History.** By James D. Horan. Crown Publishers. \$5.

An account, based primarily on original sources of a little-known attempted conspiracy within the North, which a Confederate captain. (Continued on page 44)



—From "Country Matt"



# THE LITERARY SAMPLER

## EXCERPTS AND JOTTINGS FROM NEW AND FORTHCOMING BOOKS

### The Literates View Art

**T**HE FIRST post-impressionist exhibition [in Britain] was held in 1910, and all our friends in Hampstead were eagerly talking about it. . . . Most of us regarded them as monstrosities or freaks painted by men without talent in order to get themselves talked about.

I went and, being completely uneducated in visual art, only liked those which resembled pictures I had seen before. For some reason the exhibition included Manet's impressionist picture of the bar with the barmaid reflected in the glass. I liked that. Then there were pictures that were easy to appreciate, Seurats and Signacs, and I genuinely liked several Gauguins in a shamefaced sort of way. But I remember fiercely denouncing the Matisses. Nellie, being a painter, simply declared that she was fascinated, that she could understand some, but had not completely understood others. But she was practically alone, among the people I met, in not taking a moral line.

For ninety-nine out of a hundred people the paintings were either shocking or not shocking. And it is interesting to know why. It was because for the mass of us the visual arts were taken for granted to be

either interpretations of literature, or else comments upon the real world, which did not greatly differ in kind from the comments made by poets and writers.

When we first looked at Cezanne. Van Gogh, Gauguin, and Matisse we were baffled because we were unacquainted with any literary equivalents. The more literary the paintings, the readier we were to accept them. It was just possible for me to appreciate Gauguin's Tahitians because I had read "Typee" and "Omoo."

—From "The Golden Echo" by David Garnett (Harcourt, Brace).

### Apostle of Think

**E**NDICOTT, N.Y., the "town of the office machine," stands in the shadow of a single man: Thomas J. Watson. His portrait, the head of a friendly elderly man with a priestly smile on the thin lips, and a gleaming white collar like a halo that has fallen down, hangs in hundreds of rooms inside and outside the factory of International Business Machines. Even oftener than his portrait one finds in monumental capital letters the master's motto: THINK. THINK gleams over every door, leaps at you from every wall. It is a command without exclamation mark: THINK. The omnipresent imperative is planted in red tulips on green turf, chiseled in stone or marble, cast in bronze, embroidered on material, burned into the night in light-writing: THINK . . . THINK . . . THINK . . . THINK . . . One begins by hating the command for its importunity and ends by not noticing it at all.

The person to be thanked for this . . . Thomas Watson, began his career as salesman of pianos, organs, and sewing machines, worked his way up to being chief salesman of the National Cash Register Co., whose automatic cash registers had begun their triumphal

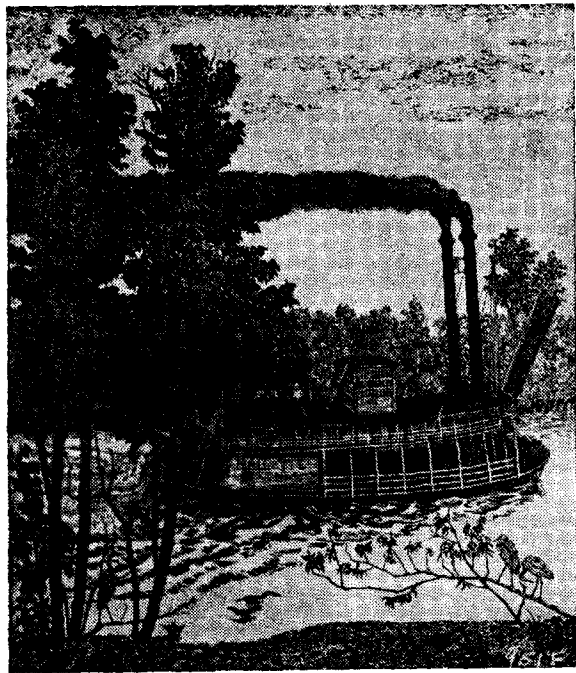
progress, and was appointed in 1914 to direct a small, rather down-at-heel concern dealing mainly in stop watches.

Mr. Watson has increased the gross earnings of the firm, which in 1914 showed a profit of half a million dollars a year, to 28.1 million dollars in 1950. The number of employees grew, under the Leader's wise guidance, from 235 to 30,000 (branches in 79 countries) and his own sales commission on the current turnover to thousands of dollars a day plus an ever-larger share, rising to millions, of the capital stock. But the chief instrument of this "wonderful development" was a little rectangular card with longish holes.

Among the machines of the concern taken over by Mr. Watson was a clumsy affair disparagingly referred to by the other directors as "the statistical piano" because of its outward resemblance to a Pianola. Its Austrian inventor, Dr. Hermann Hollerith, had originally built it in 1886 for the American census authorities. Its principle consisted in stamping simple types of information in the form of perforations on cardboard squares. If these cards ran between a series of small electrically charged metal brushes, wherever the brushes made contact through a hole it closed an electric circuit, which set into motion an adding machine and an automatic typewriter.

With the help of scientists and engineers Mr. Watson enriched and refined the cardboard-hole language to such degree that it is now able not only to express and combine hundreds of different meanings, but to do so with a speed far beyond the capacity of the human brain. One of his machines is able in a single record to do 2,174 additions or subtractions, 79 multiplications and 65 divisions of five-figure numbers. A sorting machine arranges 27,000 perforated card-index sheets an hour in alphabetic, geographic, or any other order.

Should these friendly robots by any chance make a mistake because one of their screws is loose, strange phenomena come to pass, straight out of a machine-age fairy tale. One day, for instance, thousands of copies of the same pictorial magazine stacked themselves before the door of a farmer in a remote part of the United States because a robot, in addressing envelopes,



—From "The Yazoo" (Rinehart).