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Criminal Record

Fiction

The Case of the Prodigal Daughter. By Christopher Bush. Macmillan. \$4.50.

Ludovic Travers, learned peeper, suffers bodily harm while trying to determine who is an heiress and who is not.

The Toff Down Under. By John Creasey. Walker. \$4.50. Rightful heir takes over at the end of this family affair, in which, as advertised, some of the action is in Australia.

The Case of the Fabulous Fluke. By Erle Stanley Gardner. Morrow. \$4.95. Perry Mason trails gal who wanted to get lost and obtained her wish, in part; terminal trial is one of shortest on record.

The Link: A Victorian Mystery. By Robin Maugham. McGraw-Hill. \$6.95. The narrator of this robust tale is an English boy-youth-man who could recall Her Majesty's accession, and saw a lot of what used to be the British Empire.

The Spy Who Spoke Porpoise. By Philip Wylie. Doubleday. \$5.95. You can't beat Hawaii for a setting; Mr. Wylie knows a lot about marine life, too, and that helps.

Fact

The Spy from Israel. By Ben Dan. Photographs. Hartmore House. \$4.95. This richly detailed recital of the life and death of Elie Cohen, who was hanged in Martyrs' Square in Damascus on May 19, 1965, demonstrates that Cohen's superb gift for his perilous calling was of paramount importance to the Israelis' victory in the 1967 six-day war.

Syndicate Abroad. By Hank Messick. Macmillan. \$5.95. Mr. Messick's "abroad" is the Bahamas, rather unpleasantly close to home. He is, of course, a ranking authority on the Syndicate set-up and movements. His new book is lucid, comprehensive, and as name-dropping as one could ask.

King of the Courtroom: Percy Foreman for the Defense. By Michael Dorman. Delacorte. \$5.95. Despite its rather grandiloquent title, certainly not of Mr. Foreman's composition, this is a fascinating, A-1 job. Of the thousand-odd accused killers whom he has defended, this advocate lost only one to the executioner.

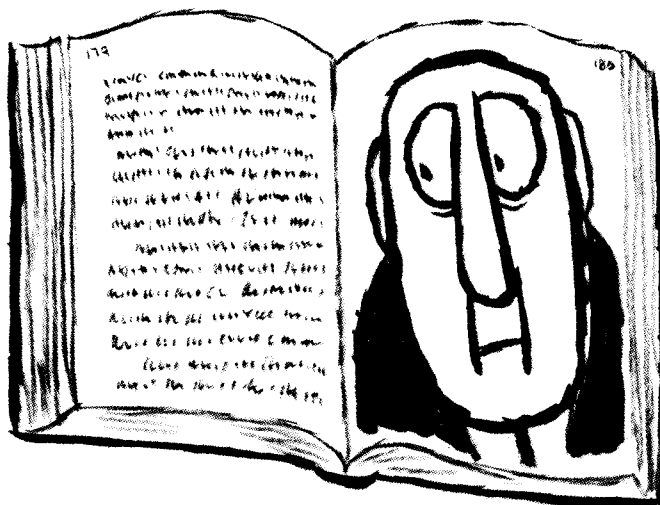
Heroes of Scotland Yard. By Sam Jackett. Photographs. Roy. \$5.50. Gunplay is not exactly common in London streets, but bullets do ricochet there occasionally, and a bobby will fall now and again in line of duty. The instances Mr. Jackett has assembled are largely of recent occurrence.

Fake! The Story of Elyr de Hory, the Greatest Art Forger of Our Time. By Clifford Irving. Illustrated. McGraw-Hill. \$7.95. Mr. Irving's candidate for immortality is a Hungarian refugee who spends his spare time making excellent copies of masterpieces by Picasso, Matisse, and others. The illustrations are stunning no matter who produced them.

Fact and Fiction

Hanging by a Thread. Edited by Joan Kahn. Harper & Row. \$7.95. A few years ago Joan Kahn, who processes mystery material for Harper & Row, had the brilliant notion of a two-way anthology of mystery stories: some imaginary, some historical. It worked fine. Now she has brought out a companion piece, and it's a winner.

Sergeant Cuff



SR Goes to the Movies

Hollis Alpert

Hog-Wild

THE ESSENTIAL, embarrassing silliness of *Futz* becomes apparent when seen as a movie. Strive as director Tom O'Horgan does to make something cinematic out of the Rochelle Owens play about a nice, innocent young man's carnal affection for a pig, he is unable to make any of it work. He throws in ritual celebrations and glimpses of nakedness, plays around with color, lighting and the editing machine, and nothing happens but engulfing, yawning boredom. The new theater has come to the movies, and has been found wanting. More than that: empty.

Through the murky smoke screen thrown up by Mr. O'Horgan, we are able to discern dimly a kind of mock story about Cyril Futz, who, we are told by a keening chorus, loved Amanda, a sow, and was sorely persecuted by the neighboring Appalachian villagers for his "crime" of passion. What I assume we are supposed to take from this highly charged situation imagined by the inspired Miss Owens is a sadly ironic message, an allegory, if you will, about a society that approves of killing but punishes an "act of love." The wonder is, however, that Miss Owens did not wonder if an allegory on such a theme was necessary.

When *Futz* came along in its off-Off and then Off-Broadway manifestations, we were treated to an amazing happening. Several critics actually took this dramatic garbage *seriously*. Audiences, of course, went away from the theater wondering if it was they who were out of their minds. Furthermore, *Futz* is now being presented as a film complete with an endorsement from Jacob Brackman, a film critic for *Esquire*. He claims the film to be important "because it challenges and expands our understanding of what is possible in cinema." A great deal is possible in cinema, and most of it, by virtual definition, is bad. What Mr. Brackman is perhaps saying is that *he* prefers this kind of badness. It's a different kind of bad. Agreed.

For the fact of the matter is that the play written by Miss Owens is an amateurish thing that happened to come along at a time when rebellion and revolt were rife in the theater (the supposedly non-commercial theater), on campuses, and everywhere that disaffected, draft-prone youth are wont to congregate. The more unspeakable the subject matter, the more it was ac-

ceptable to the experiment-minded. After all, it was their function to be experimental. But then the siren song of the commercial cinema reached them, and they went hog-wild. The rumor is that they spent a million dollars on what was supposed to be an experimental, low-budget film.

At this price, even pig love becomes something of a risk. So they've raised the prices for theater showings. It takes \$4 and \$5 to see *Futz*. Let the buyer beware, as they say.

With *Futz* being advertised as "a ritual celebration of the death of personal liberty," the appeal is obviously being made to what even I am growing tired of calling "the youth market." Let's simply call it the YM. To tap the YM, hordes of promoters are examining all conceivable sources of material. They yelp at each other, *Woodstock!*, and continue baying on the trail. Now and then they do come up with something rather nice, notably *Popcorn*, a film made by a young Australian, Peter Clifton, and labeled "an audio-visual rock thing in color." Taking several of

the more popular groups, among them The Rolling Stones, Vanilla Fudge, The Bee Gees, and such individuals as Jimi Hendrix and Otis Redding, Mr. Clifton has put together a potpourri of sound and images that lasts for eighty-five minutes. A bit long for all but the dedicated.

Clifton does best with Mick Jagger and The Rolling Stones. Mr. Jagger [for more of whom, see this week's cover story, page 67] is a fascinating fellow on film, whether he's merely being interviewed or when performing. He's wild, and a little weird, with a sexuality that is neither all male nor all female. Clifton leaves him and his group alone to do their thing, and it's effective. With others he provides a background of images that aren't very imaginative: lots of surfing (staple YM stuff); a girl and a boy wandering happily hand in hand through a park, she—naturally—hanging on to a bunch of balloons; obligatory footage of the Vietnam war; some dated views of Twiggy. There are some shots, too, of Rosko, a disc jockey, blowing his mind and bragging the usual guff about how he understands the youth thing.

The film is rated "G," and in this case I'm beginning to think it means it would be best appreciated while smoking pot. Safe for teen-agers, in other words, but not for parents.

