

BOOKS FOR SUMMER READING

"The Years with Ross," by James Thurber, is the season's most buzzed-about book, not only because of its multi-prismed picture of a creative eccentric but also for its peak behind the covers of a popular weekly. Twelve book review editors of the nation's liveliest newspapers voted it their favorite of recent and soon-to-be-released titles. This and succeeding pages, however, suggest many others that will either ballast the hammock or wing one into our past, nature, exotica, adventure, and romance.



TWELVE VOTES:

THE YEARS WITH ROSS. By James Thurber. Atlantic-Little, Brown. \$5. Vignettes of the late Harold Ross, editor, prime mover of *The New Yorker* and a man of many faces, any number of which are admired by the man who was his fellow worker and his friend. (Babcock, Barkham, Brady, Cross, Dolbier, Hogan, Hutchens, Molyneux, Nichols, Perkin, Snajdr, Yeiser.)

FIVE VOTES:

THE RAPE OF THE FAIR COUNTRY. By Alexander Cordell. Doubleday. \$3.95. This grim story of Welshmen pitted against the brutality of the iron mines during Victoria's reign is relieved by the eloquence and beauty of the prose. (Babcock, Cross, Flowers, T. Sherman, Snajdr.)

THE STATUS SEEKERS. By Vance Packard. David McKay. \$4.50. In this newest scrutiny of our social scene, the author of "The Hidden Persuaders" defines our class systems, our goals, and how we set about attaining them. (Kelly, Lucchese, O'Neill, J. Sherman, Snajdr.)

FOUR VOTES:

THE CURSE OF THE MISBEGOTTEN: A Tale of the House of O'Neill. By Crowell Bowen with Shane O'Neill. McGraw-Hill. \$5. A thorough and illuminating study of Eugene O'Neill and his family, whose tragic history, darkened by drug addiction, alcoholism, and suicide, was grist for the playwright's mill. (Cross, Hass, Lucchese, J. Sherman.)

OTHER SELECTIONS:

THE ART OF LIVING. By F. L. Lucas. Macmillan. \$5.

BY THE NORTH GATE. By Gwyn Griffin. Holt. \$3.95.

CADENZA. By Ralph Cusack. Houghton Mifflin. \$3.50.

COMPLETE POEMS. By A. E. Housman. Edited by Thomas B. Haber. Holt. \$4.

DEATH IN THAT GARDEN. By José André Lacour. Rinehart. \$3.95.

DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY. By Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. Doubleday. \$5.75.

THE DELECTABLE MOUNTAINS AND OTHER NARRATIVES. By Berton Roueché. Little, Brown. \$3.50.

DON'T GET PERCONEL WITH A CHICKEN. By H. Allen Smith. Little, Brown. \$2.95.

THE ELDER STATESMAN. By T. S. Eliot. Farrar, Straus & Cudahy. \$3.75.

ELEMENTS OF STYLE. By William Strunk and E. B. White. Macmillan. \$2.50.

GOODBYE, COLUMBUS. By Philip Roth. Houghton Mifflin. \$3.75.

FOUR STORIES. By Sigrid Undset. Knopf. \$3.75.

THE FOURTH BRANCH OF GOVERNMENT. By Douglass Cater. Houghton Mifflin. \$3.50.

THE HARMLESS PEOPLE. By Elizabeth Marshall Thomas. Knopf. \$4.75.

HELLENISM. By Arnold J. Toynbee. Oxford. \$4.50.

AN HONEST PREFACE AND OTHER ESSAYS. By Walter Prescott Webb. Houghton Mifflin. \$3.75.

THE HOUSE OF INTELLECT. Jacques Barzun. Harper. \$4.50.

IMPROPER BOHEMIANS. By Allen Churchill. Dutton. \$5.

KENNETH GRAHAME. By Peter Greene. World. \$6.

THE KING'S WAR 1641-1647. By C. V. Wedgwood. Macmillan. \$7.50.

LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER. By D. H. Lawrence. Grove. \$6.

THE LIGHT INFANTRY BALL. By Hamilton Basso. Doubleday. \$3.95.

THE LONG, LONG LOVE. By Walter Sullivan. Holt. \$3.75.

THE MARAUDERS. By Charlton Ogburn, Jr. Harper. \$4.50.

MEMENTO MORI. By Muriel Spark. Lippincott. \$3.95.

THE PANTHER'S FEAST. By Robert Asprey. Putnam. \$5.

THE POISON TREE. By Walter Clemons. Houghton Mifflin. \$3.50.

PROVIDENCE ISLAND. By Jacquetta Hawkes. Random House. \$3.50.

THE SEVENTH DAY. By Hans Hellmut Kirst. Doubleday. \$4.95.

THE SLEEPWALKERS. By Arthur Koestler. Macmillan. \$6.50.

THE TEMPLE OF THE GOLDEN PAVILION. By Yukio Mishima. Knopf. \$4.

THREE SCORE AND TEN. By Walter Allen. Morrow. \$3.50.

TRUMBULL PARK. By Frank London Brown. Regnery. \$3.95.

TURGENEV: THE MAN, HIS ART AND HIS AGE. By Avrahm Yarmolinsky. Orion. \$6.

THE VANISHING EVANGELIST. By Lately Thomas. Viking. \$4.95.

THE WAR MEMOIRS OF CHARLES DE GAULLE: UNITY, 1942-44. Simon & Schuster. \$6.

THE PARTICIPATING CRITICS ARE:

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

RICHMOND C. BEATTY, *The Nashville*
Tennessean

ALICE DIXON BOND, *Boston Herald*

CHARLES A. BRADY, *Buffalo Evening News*

ERNEST CADY, *Columbus Dispatch*

LESLIE CROSS, *Milwaukee Journal*

MAURICE DOLBIER, *New York Herald*
Tribune

A. D. EMMART, *Baltimore Sun*

PAUL FLOWERS, *Memphis Commercial*
Appeal

VICTOR HASS, *Omaha World-Herald*

WILLIAM HOGAN, *San Francisco Chronicle*

JOHN HUTCHENS, *New York Herald*
Tribune

FRANK KELLY, *Long Island (N.Y.) News-*
day

ROBERT R. KIRSCH, *Los Angeles Times*

CARL VICTOR LITTLE, *Houston Press*

SAM F. LUCCHESI, *Atlanta Journal-*
Constitution

ROBERT MOLYNEUX, *Pittsburgh Press*

LUTHER NICHOLS, *San Francisco Examiner*

ROD NORDELL, *Christian Science Monitor*

HOKE NORRIS, *Chicago Sun-Times*

FRANK O'NEILL, *Cleveland News*

ROBERT L. PERKIN, *Denver Rocky*
Mountain News

JOHN K. SHERMAN, *Minneapolis Star &*
Tribune

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

ROBERT I. SNAJDR, *Cleveland Plain Dealer*

LON TINKLE, *Dallas News*

FREDERICK YEISER, *Cincinnati Enquirer*

New Trail Signs on Publishers' Row

By ROBERT WEST HOWARD, who edited "This Is the West," winner of a 1958 Spur Award as the "Best Nonfiction Western of 1957."

AGAIN this summer the High Plains will echo the snarls of bulldozers uprooting chapparel and mesquite, leveling arroyos, terracing new ponds, preparing seedbeds for new forage grasses. The result will be richer grasslands, more cattle, a little more "folding stuff" for the cowhands. A parallel reclamation program for the area's most famous by-product, the Western novel, seems to be shaping up.

But this other brush-kill and reseed operation must take place far to the east. Publishers' Row in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia in the years 1880-1900 was the birthplace of the Western. Here editors and promotion directors welded the saga pattern of the Sureshot Cowboy, the Skulking Redskin, Good's Triumph Over Evil, and the Heroine with Built-in Virtue. Three generations of competent authors have herded up this publishers' trail. Finally, new trail signs are going up along the literary Chisholm.

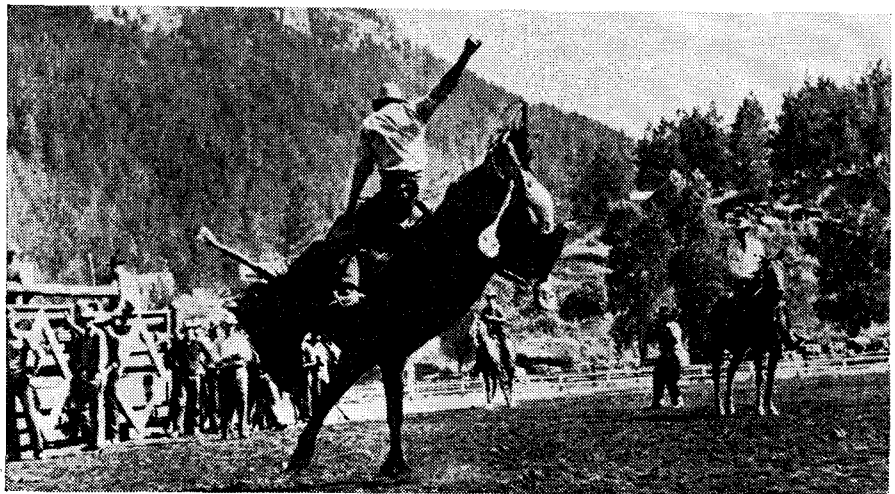
Some of them, as exciting as an emerald sweep of Suwanee Bermuda grass in the Texas Panhandle, are evident in offerings on the summer 1959 lists. The continuing realism and "mood-fix" in Jack Schaefer's "The Kean Land" (Houghton Mifflin, \$3.75) is reason for every student of Western Americana to bow politely toward the East. This is a collection of short stories and novelettes, reprinted from the slicks. But the characters walk and talk as most people still do west of the Missouri, and the word-pictures carry the sharp scents of High Plains and Cowntown.

Even richer characterization and frontier realism beckon in Dale Van Every's "The Scarlet Feather" (Holt, \$3.95). This excellent novel of the Ohio River wilderness in the decade following the Revolutionary War would not, in some quarters, be conceded "a Western." But it is—and one of the year's best. Frederick Jackson Turner fixed the literary boundaries of the American West in 1893 when he said:

Stand at Cumberland Gap and

watch the procession of civilization, marching single file—the buffalo following the trail to the salt springs, the Indian, the fur-trader and hunter, the cattle-raiser, the pioneer farmer—and the frontier has passed by. Stand at South Pass in the Rockies a century later and see the same procession with wider intervals between.

Tracy Carter and her hazel-eyed Caleb, young Eric Jordan and Lina,



—Chicago and Northwestern Railway System.

Rodeo scene in "Days of '76" celebrations at Deadwood, North Dakota.

the lusty Slovers in Van Every's book were building toward the Pike's Peak gold rush, Dodge City, the Pony Express, and Tombstone as surely as the Longhorn cattle roaming Texas bottoms and the wild horses whinnying north from a Mexican *remuda*. Van Every's characters are in the pattern of the Old West. Novels of the caliber of "The Scarlet Feather," true in environmental detail and skilled in characterization, are the best hope for the Western's future.

Frank O'Rourke moves toward the same promising horizon in "The Far Mountain" (Morrow, \$4.95). His locale is the Spanish Southwest, in the vicinity of Taos. His theme, too, is those formative years when the Southerner broke through the Appalachian barriers.

Appraisal of these trends comes from both sides of the editorial desks.

It seems to me that the Western has developed a split-personality [writes S. Omar Barker, president of Western Writers of America].

The traditional action-adventure type, generally classed as entertainment or pastime-reading, continues to hold its own in the soft-back editions and in moderate word-lengths. But numerous competent writers of Westerns are turning out more and more historical novels of the Old West, with considerable researched substance and no little literary quality. WWA recognizes this dual character by separate Spur Awards for each year's "straight" Western and for the best "Western historical" novel.

Marc Jaffe, New American Library's trail-boss for Westerns and a student of Western Americana, goes along with this concept.

On one level [he said] the writer is primarily concerned with pure

story, using familiar plot elements. He is more concerned with pace, action, and excitement than anything else; and he is successful to the extent that he is a skilled storyteller. A second level, represented by Haycox, Short, Frazee, and a few others, rests on a firm foundation of sure-handed plotting, but ranges far and wide in subject and background, and often creates convincing characters against an authentic "set" of Western life in the nineteenth century.

The great challenge for the writer is in this category. The definitive books will come when they will come; they cannot be ordered in advance. The action story, good and bad, will always be written and should always be written. But there is a great need for more and better stories which not only have action and excitement, but also a sound basis in history and atmosphere, character and human relationships.

Cultural re-echo came from Jack
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