

way to brush up on events past and present. Through book excerpts and journalism (much of it written on the spot) by Owen Lattimore, Anna Louise Strong, Edgar Snow, Felix Greene, John Paton Davies, Jan Myrdal, Theodore H. White and others, along with works by Chiang Kai-shek and Mao Tse-tung, readers are given an introduction to life in Imperial and Communist China: social structure, politics, economy, culture and much more. Even a casual dip-in is likely to keep the reader involved for hours.

[September]

BETTER TIMES:

The Indispensable Guide to Beating Hard Times. Edited by J. C. Soares, Fran Cerra, Eric Seidman. Doubleday/Dolphin, \$4.95

Things are looking up already. A group of knowing people who can also write—editors, consumer reporters, etc., from such as the *New York Times*, *Newsday*, *Womens Wear Daily*—have put together, with an assist from Nicholas von Hoffman, Studs Terkel, Jules Feiffer and other cartoonists, a razzledazzle guide that should help ease the pain of trimming the fat out of anybody's budget. From how to shop a mortgage to how to put your hands on a fast \$100; legal, medical, dental, consumer problems; how to dress on the cheap without looking it; collecting unemployment insurance, food stamps, welfare; how to have fun without shelling out an arm and a leg. With meat charts; nutrition, storage, cooking tables; source addresses.

[September]

THE OLD-TIMER TALKS BACK:

More Gems of Yankee Story-Telling. Allen R. Foley. Stephen Greene Press, \$2.45

It's not everybody's humor, but collectors of Yankee lore will find this a delight. Foley, a retired Dartmouth professor (who truth to tell was actually born in Massachusetts), follows up his successful "What the Old-Timer Said" with more tall tales about back-country, quick-on-the-uptake Vermonters, their habits of thrift, their cracks about rich, gentlemen-farmer city slickers, winter skiers, floods, mud slides, town meetings. All of it blessedly sane.

[September]

FANNE FOXE:

The Real Story Behind the Headlines. Annabel "Fanne Foxe" Battistella with Yvonne Dunleavy. Pinnacle, \$1.75

Like she's still strutting her stuff for the boys in the balcony, the "Argentine Firecracker" bumps and grinds mountains of silicone at you (at that, she has lots to say about her implants which were many before things finally got evened out, but then there's still a displaced navel from another makeshift cosmetic fix-up). Fanne's peek-a-boo memoirs are the jokiest of the season, except funny the book's not. Only dumb, sad, even more tasteless than you'd expect, assaultive,

embarrassing and grossly exploitative. No wonder Wilbur hasn't been heard from of late. Illustrated. *Author tour.*

[September]

THE MYSTERIES OF

STONEHENGE. Fernand Niel. Avon, \$1.75

Niel is an advocate of the sun temple-one architect theory of Stonehenge, but he doesn't short shrift other explanations such as Druidism that have grown up in folklore, the archeological studies or the rest of the vast literature already available on the British monument. To orient the reader, he gives minute data on the stones, measurements, locations, tooling and the like—so much so in fact that his narrative has about as much excitement as a road map. Chalk up another Stonehenge mystery: how such an intriguing puzzle could produce such a deadly dull book. Illustrations not seen by PW.

[September]

FICTION ORIGINALS**BY GRAND CENTRAL STATION**

I SAT DOWN AND WEPT. Elizabeth Smart. Foreword by Brigid Brophy. Popular Library, \$1.50

It's something of a scandal that this Canadian's stunning novel which was published in England back in 1945 should be this long finding an American publisher. Still, good writing always eventually reaches an audience and, according to Brophy's foreword, Smart has made a solid reputation in the literary underground. It's a simple story the author tells, about a woman's love affair with a married man and the couple's odyssey from California to New York. But what lifts it out of the prosaic and gives the novel authenticity is Smart's prose, which is full of mythological allusion and metaphor. Brophy compares her with Genet, yet the affecting quality here is at once gentler, more personal, and in a curious way more passionate.

[September]

THE SECRET COUCH.

Froma Sand. Warner, \$1.25

A successful woman psychiatrist drops one sad affair and enters into a disastrous marriage while keeping her patients afloat. Characters with whom she's involved either personally or professionally include a meek housewife, a vengeful daughter, a closet homosexual, two lesbians and an egomaniacal tycoon. The psychiatrist helping others while making a mess of her own life is a thin and tired theme, and the stories, though many and varied, lack verve.

[September]

THE KILLING OF R.F.K.

Donald Freed. Dell, \$1.50

In this book version of the recent film, a theory is offered which may have something, everything, or nothing to do with Senator Robert Kennedy's death. A weak man is manipulated into the assassina-

tion plot, then set up next to his intended victim to carry out his mission. But another man does the shooting, leaving the trained would-be assassin to take the blame. It makes fascinating reading, but the problem is that allegation is mixed with speculation and fantasy, such as descriptions of a person's thoughts while making love or driving. The two, theory and fiction, don't mix. The presence of the latter undermines the theory and leaves the reader wondering whether he's supposed to take any of this seriously.

[September]

SCIENCE FICTION**THE BEST OF**

CORDWAINER SMITH. Edited by J. J. Pierce. Ballantine, \$1.95

Of the many different responses SF draws from its readers, delight is perhaps the rarest—but Smith, as good a writer as has ever worked in the field, provides it aplenty in these 12 stories which display flashes of true poetry, deep insight and a created universe which is almost as strange, terrible and marvelous as the real one. "The Dead Lady of Clown Town," "The Game of Rat and Dragon," "The Ballad of Lost C'Mell"—the titles are as haunting as the stories, conveying Smith's unique power to give the force of myth and legend to his fiction. Pierce's introduction and story prefaces provide useful but unobtrusive perspective; the stories are arranged according to the chronology of Smith's future.

[September]

MARUNE: ALASTOR 933.

Jack Vance. Ballantine, \$1.50

With no memory of his past, the hero enlists the aid of the staff of the ruler of the Alastor Cluster to find out what planet he comes from. Deduction indicates remote Marune; and once there, he finds he's the missing ruler of a gloomy fiefdom. Family and political intrigue fill out the rest of the story intricately and satisfyingly. The fascination of the Alastor series is mainly in the rich imagination displayed in the creation of the planetary settings and their cultures, and Marune's is really weird.

[September]

NONFICTION REPRINTS**THE GLORY AND THE DREAM:**

A Narrative History of America—1932-1972. William Manchester. Bantam, \$6.95

An impressive production feat (also true, incidentally, of the recent Vintage reprint of Robert Caro's gigantic "The Power Broker"), this is a book readers will find easier to handle and far more flexible than the physical hardcover. As to content, PW found the book "superb," adding that Manchester "spins his narrative like a true artist, deftly switching from what the 'leaders' were doing nationally to the trivia and social problems that