

Herald and News Book Reviews

Literary Highlights

BUCKSKIN AND BLANKET DAYS. By Thomas Henry Tibbles. Doubleday.

Written half a century ago, this tells of Tibbles' life of adventure which began a century ago in Bleeding, Kansas, and continued on the plains where he came to know, love and battle for the Indians. The author, variously a lecturer, preacher, novelist and, mainly in Omaha, a newsman, died in 1928. This book, "Memoirs of a Friend of the Indians," was found among his papers and edited by Theodora Bates Cogswell, a relative.

Poverty drove Tibbles, still in his teens, out upon the frontier world. After a variety of extraordinary experiences, he served as a guide for hunters and then for most of a year lived with the Omaha tribe. He was with them as they tracked down the buffalo, rode the warpath against their enemies, wore their beaver cap, antelope shirt and leggings, and his hair, like that of the other braves, grew down to his waist.

Out of this intimacy came his fight in law courts, at Indian agencies, on Army posts, on the lecture platform and in Congress for the justice denied the Redman by some conquering whites.

RICHARD RODGERS. By David Ewen. Holt.

Composer Richard Rodgers has written more than 1,000 songs for Broadway musicals on which he collaborated with lyricists Larry Hart and Oscar Hammerstein 2d. At least 200 have become classical and/or profitable hits, which gives him a much higher batting average in Tin Pan Alley than most current song writers.

Rodgers is not only the composer of such hit songs as "Some Enchanted Evening," "My Heart Stood Still," "Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered" and "Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'," but he is now, with Hammerstein, an international producing corporation on stage, films, television and other media of entertainment.

His songs delightfully roam from his musical "Poor Little Ritz Girl" in 1920, the then refreshing "The Garrick Gaieties" of 1925, and "A Connecticut Yankee" of 1927 for which he wrote "My Heart Stood Still."

Then, with Hammerstein as understanding collaborator for the musical interludes which Rodgers weaves at a piano, came "Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'" and other such hits for their immortal "Oklahoma!" There followed "Carousel," "South Pacific," "The King and I."

Ewen has done a careful and well documented job.



NOBEL WINNER. Announcement from Stockholm, Sweden names French author Albert Camus, above, the winner of the 1957 Nobel Prize for Literature. The 43-year-old author is the second youngest writer in history to win the high honor. Britain's Rudyard Kipling was younger when he won it.

New Book's Success Baffles Nevil Shute

By WARD CANNEL

NEW YORK — (NEA) — Nevil Shute is still a little baffled: His latest novel, "On The Beach," has turned out to be a best-seller — despite the fact that it is a too-possible picture of how life on earth will be snuffed out by radiation pollution in the wake of atomic war.

"I thought it very likely that my publishers would ask to be excused from publishing it," he said in an airmail interview with NEA Service from his home in Australia. And if published, he thought, the book would have few readers.

At his publisher's office in New York, one editor said: "Of course we'd publish almost anything that Nevil Shute wrote. But we had to think twice about readership on this one."

"On The Beach," however, is pushing the 100,000-sales mark, and will probably go higher.

Essentially, it is a story of the earth's southern hemisphere, given an extra year of life as wind currents slowly bear the deadly atomic dust south, forcing the last survivors of life — all life — into extinction.

"It became an attractive speculation," author Shute said. "What would ordinary people in my part of the world do with that year?"

As an author of 19 books, Shute left a successful career as an aviation engineer in England to write. Since 1951 he has lived in Australia with his wife and their two children where he runs a successful dairy farm.

"On The Beach," he explained, had been conceived and written in his usual way: First he gets interested in a subject and what kinds of people would be involved with it. With his list of characters and the "mess" they'd get into, it takes him seven months of daily writing from 9:30 until noon to finish his story, and another two months to revise.

With "On The Beach" he had been afraid the story and its implications were too big for him. But the book became so compelling, he explained, that he decided he should write it.

Q. Does the great question the book poses still obsess him?

A. "The question no longer troubles me. I've done all I can about it. I doubt if I shall write about it again."

Q. Does he really believe mankind is headed for this kind of end?

A. "As I grow older (he is 58), I am more and more impressed with the ineptitude and the stupidity of statesmen. Eden, Macmillan, Eisenhower, Dulles, Nasser and all the Russians seem to me to be quite incompetent to handle the enormous power that modern technology has placed in their hands. . . . It may be that modern problems make impossible demands on any human statesman, or it may be that modern democratic systems do not give us the right type of leader.

"However that may be, I do not think we can depend on their wisdom to avert a full scale nuclear

LUCKY STAR

NEW YORK — (Film Star Pat O'Brien found the luck of the Irish pays off when trying to get a ticket to Broadway's sellout hit "My Fair Lady." On a recent matinee afternoon, O'Brien (who had already seen the musical twice) got in the ticket line. Just as he reached the window, the boxoffice telephone rang. Pat waited patiently, then asked if he could buy a ticket for that performance. "For \$4.60 you are sitting in the third row," came the reply. "That was a cancellation that just came in on the phone."

war and so I think that the end which I have postulated in "On The Beach" may quite well happen."

Q. As the author of a book of finale, does he find himself like a



NEVIL SHUTE: His widely acclaimed book has been given added significance by today's headlines about intercontinental missiles and man-made moons.

condemned man where each phenomenon, event, feeling may be the last.

A. "No. If it happens, too bad—but no worse than any other form of death, which may come at any time. I may be killed upon the road tomorrow."

Q. Nowhere in the book did he explore church or religion? Why?

A. (He explained that he had stated his chief character went to church regularly, and that church attendance was high.) "Self-destruction is forbidden to Roman Catholics, and for this reason alone religion had to be played down — or much of the book would have had to be devoted to religious discussion.

"Australia is not a very religious country, however, and in that locality I do not think that religion would have played a very great part in the story."

Q. Could he comment on the creed of some literary men today: "Man will not only survive; he will prevail?"

A. "This seems to me to be very woolly thinking in a context of reality. If Colonel Nasser had had nuclear bombs at the time of Suez he would certainly have dropped them upon Israel. Would man have survived and prevailed in Israel then?"

Q. A visitor to the great museums of Europe said: "I'm glad I made this tour. Now I cannot believe that man will do away with himself." Is this wishful thinking only?

A. "No more than wishful thinking. I recommend your friend to make a further tour of the aerodromes of Strategic Air Command surrounding and threatening Russia, and ask if she may inspect their aircraft, weapons and operational plans."

Q. What has the reaction been to "On The Beach"?

A. "The reaction has been far more favorable than I expected. This is the one hopeful factor in the situation, that the common man may assert himself against the follies of his statesmen."

Famous Coney Island Studied In Highly Entertaining Book

GOOD OLD CONEY ISLAND. By Edo McCullough. Scribner. \$5.95.

Coney means carnival, and carnival means Coney, to the two billion people said to have visited this fabulous shore-side resort over the years, and to the 50 million it now attracts annually to its boardwalks, amusements and five miles of beaches.

The unsavory fellow who helped importantly to start it, according to this vastly entertaining book about the outdoor entertainment capital, once declared:

"Houses of prostitution are a necessity on Coney Island."

He was John Y. McKane, a gent who could have been a stand-in for Napoleon III. And he, too, had dreams of grandeur. Once a constable, then a town commissioner, he was among the first to spot the glint of gold in the sand of the Long Island beaches, but in the end he went to Sing Sing.

All that has changed. The resort is safer, cleaner, healthier and more proper than a lot of folks in the hinterland, and some wise-acre New Yorkers, too, like to believe.

Today it has unbeatable mechanical equipment to deafen you, blind you, shiver your timbers, slide you along on your fanny, blow your skirts waist high and in general give you the theoretically funniest time of your life.

Years ago on this plain beach Walt Whitman communed with the sea. By Civil War time it was taking on the look it would always have. You went by horsecar, steamer, railroad, then by a nickel subway. You spent a nickel on Coney Island's own invention, the hot dog—which dates back to 1867.

Among its attractions have been or are Little Egypt, Grand Canal, Trip to the Moon, Luna Park, the Tilyou Steeplechases, Dreamland—"Meet Me Tonight in Dreamland"—ferris wheel, Flip-Flap and loop-the-loop, faro and roulette, races, fights, gypsies, midgets, fortune tellers, Zip and Cliko, princess La La, Jolly Irene, the Human Ostrich, the Bearded Lady, the Fat Lady, the barker that really barked, the Wild Man from Borneo, meaning Vermont.

But there were other names. Jimmy Durante played piano

there, Eddie Cantor was a singing waiter. Twelve-year-old Webber and Fields did entertainments. Mae West's father was a Coney cop. One-Eyed Connolly crashed the gate at the Jeffries-Sharkey fight. At a lonely wireless station there was a young operator named David Sarnoff, of later NBC renown.

McCullough tells a spicy tale, and embellishes it with a lot of fascinating period pictures. This is grand Americana, this is grand fun, too. Step right up ladies and gentlemen get your copy of the one and only Bearded Lady—Princess La La of a book.

Author Of The Week



EDO McCULLOUGH, author of "Good Old Coney Island," writes about a business in which he himself works and about a particular resort with which, as a showman and impresario, his grandfather, father, uncle and brothers have been vitally associated. He dedicates his lively book to the memory of his mother.

Current Best Sellers

FICTION
BY LOVE POSSESSED, James Gould Cozzens.

ON THE BEACH, Nevil Shute.
RALLY ROUND THE FLAG, BOYS! Max Shulman.

PEYTON PLACE, Grace Metalious.

THE WORLD OF SUZIE WONG, Richard Mason.

NONFICTION
BARUCH: MY OWN STORY, Bernard Baruch.

THE NEW CLASS, Milovan Djilas.

THE HIDDEN PERSUADERS, Vance Packard.

WHERE DID YOU GO? OUT, Robert Paul Smith.

STAY ALIVE ALL YOUR LIFE, Norman Vincent Peale.

Will Durant Eyes Religion

THE REFORMATION. By Will Durant. Simon & Schuster.

Dr. Durant's long surveying expedition down the course of civilization, from its headwaters in pre-history, has reached the Reformation. But like four of the preceding five volumes in his sweeping "Story of Civilization," the title of the present work, as he readily acknowledges, does not do justice to his far-ranging inquiry. He covers in surprising detail the political, cultural, social, and even economic history of most of Western Europe and related areas of the East over three centuries.

Approaching the Reformation, Durant goes back beyond his previous history of the Italian Renaissance to the conclusion of "The Age of Faith." He describes the "rehearsal" for the Protestant revolt. Then, after filling in the major facts about the progress and the calamities in the main countries, he advances to the discovery of the New World and the true Reformation: Luther, Calvin, Zwingle, Knox, and that unlikely reformer, King Henry VIII of England.

Naturally he leans heavily on secondary sources. Durant is not striving for startling and hence debatable conclusions. Instead, he tells the story of history, setting down the judgments of the leading authorities in various fields. As always, he makes his characters, even the minor ones, come alive.