The Peace Policies of Moscow — An EDITORIAL

AUGUST 13, 1935 10c

New Masses

William Gropper's Reply to the Emperor

A CARTOON

Dickstein Gets a Biographer

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A Love Letter for France — Michael Gold

A book you'll never forget

—says ROBERT FORSYTHE

There is little chance that I will ever forget Karl Billinger's FATHERLAND, the remarkable picture of life in Hitler's terror camps and prisons. . . . Only a genius could hope to present, in fiction, characters as real and believable as the men Billinger is writing about. Because he has treated them exactly as he must have seen them, without dramatics, without fake heroics, his book has a quality of magnificence and beauty quite startling in a setting so cruel and hard.

—says LINCOLN STEFFENS

We know pretty well the economic changes that are ahead of us, but we still cannot make a picture of the actual road into Fascism. We cannot see what will happen to us personally. Now comes this book that tells us just what happened to individuals during the forced, "evolutionary" change to Fascism. As I see it, it is a chapter of our still avoidable future.

—says JOSEPH FREEMAN

As sheer narrative, FATHERLAND is one of the most moving stories in the past few years.

—says HORACE GREGORY

Those who read it for its narrative value will place it beside "All Quiet on the Western Front."

FATHERLAND

by KARL BILLINGER

With a Foreword by
LINCOLN STEFFENS

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Read this remarkable book
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Lend it to anyone you know

who doubts that capitalist "evolution" is more violent than revolution

who still doesn't sense the danger of the "lesser evil" policy

who doesn't realize that what the Fascists hate most about the Communists is that they can't be fooled, bought or conquered

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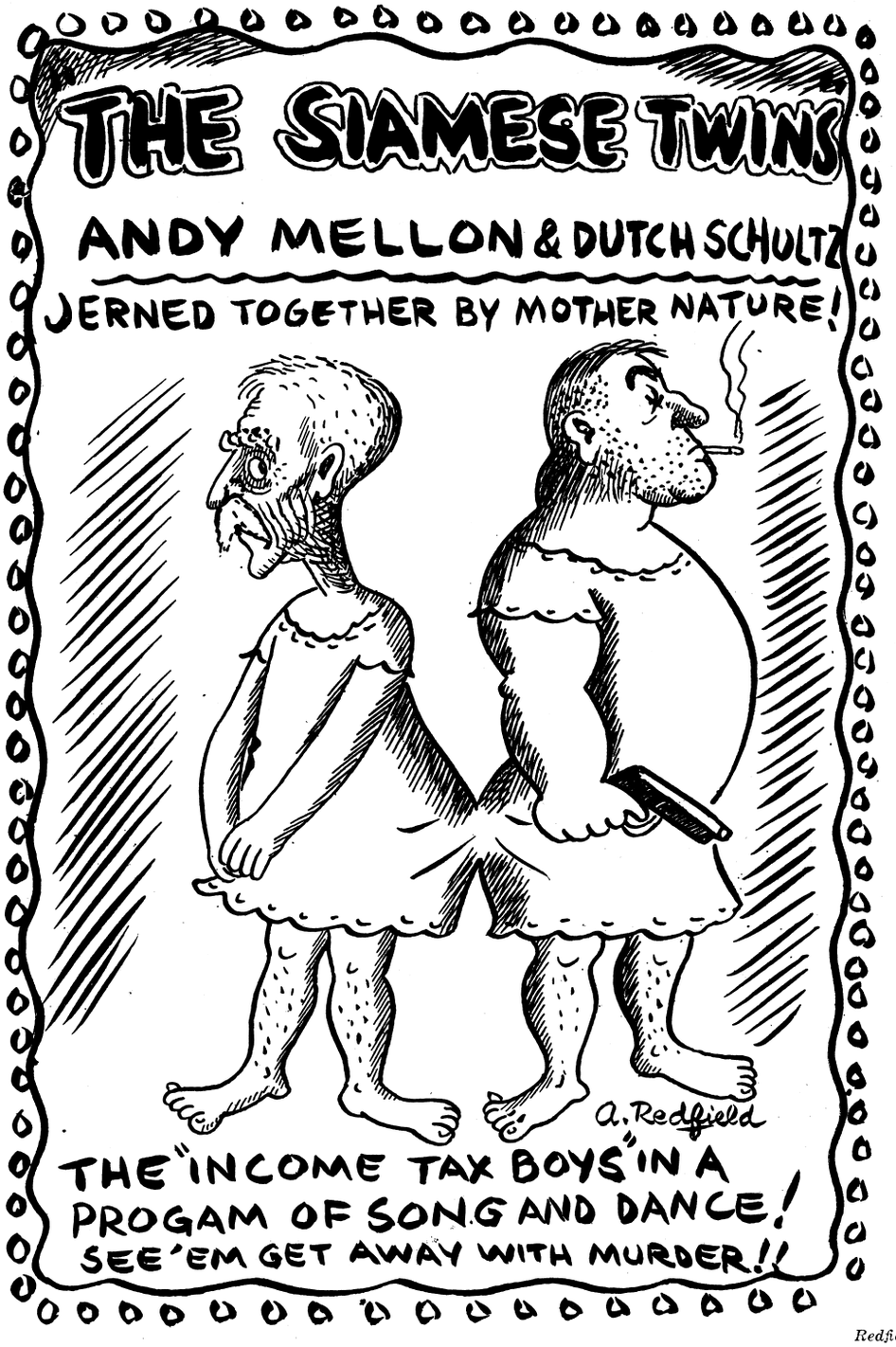
New Masses

AUGUST 13, 1935

Gropper vs. the Mikado

WHEN our artist William Gropper drew a satirical cartoon of the Emperor of Japan hauling a jinrickisha in which reposed the Nobel Peace Prize he did not reckon on becoming an international incident. Protests against the picture as "insulting" to the Heaven-born Mikado, and immediate representations to Washington by the Japanese Ambassador, made Gropper's cartoon in the August Vanity Fair as celebrated overnight as an old master. Vanity Fair has of course been prohibited from circulating in Japan; the publisher, Frank Crowninshield, has been beating his breast and wailing that he didn't mean any harm; but Gropper is just beginning to fight. He told the reporters that Secretary of State Hull might apologize to the Japanese Ambassador all he wanted to but that Gropper had nothing to apologize for and meant to go on exposing Japanese Imperialism. The militarists of Tokyo have succeeded in covering themselves with ridicule and a lively interest has been excited in the internal situation in Japan, which makes the fascist forces there so jittery. In his Vanity Fair cartoon Gropper was being playful; in THE NEW MASSES this week he shows the murderous face of Japanese Imperialism, represented in the Emperor, as it really is.



Redfield

"Misunderstanding" Moscow

HARASSED bourgeois editors probably will breathe a sigh of relief when the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International ends its deliberations. For two weeks now they have been printing contradictory reports designed to prove one day that the Comintern has abandoned its revolutionary outlook and on the next that it is plotting the wholesale overthrow of capitalist governments. Not a few of them have set the whole business down to Communist trickery and let it go at that. The confusion, whether real or simulated, arises out of a persistent refusal to make a realistic appraisal of the world situation. For years the Communists have been appealing for working-class unity in order to forestall war and defeat fascism as well as prepare for the final seizure of power. The objective situation has not remained the same during the entire time and any political party worth its salt must make its tactics conform to reality. Today great masses of people, workers, peasants and petty bourgeoisie alike, have awakened to the dangers facing them. They are ready for the struggle against war and fascism and the Comintern has striven to evolve a program broad enough to enlist all honest fighters. As Dimitroff put it: "The Communist International makes no other conditions for unity of action than that the united front be directed against the class enemy, against the offensive of capital, against fascism and the war danger." The Communists will fight on that platform even to the extent of entering into anti-fascist people's governments. But, again to quote Dimitroff, the Communists "say frankly to the masses: This government cannot bring final salvation. It is unable to overthrow the class rule. . . . Therefore we must arm for the social revolution. Only Soviet power will bring salvation." Where is the trickery in such an approach? Is it not rather a frank recognition of the truth that the masses must learn through struggle—that the logic of events must shortly convince all anti-fascists that radical changes in the economic and social order are necessary to give democracy any real and lasting meaning?

The West Coast "Plot"

THE capitalist press, when necessary, is phenomenally short of memory. Last week it "discovered" in the speech before the Comintern by Sam Darcy, Pacific Coast organizer of the Communist Party, facts printed in The Daily Worker many months before. Darcy's latest statement that the agreement between dock workers and employers expires on the West Coast in September seemingly came as a shock to the newspapers, although the expiration date has figured prominently in all discussions of the situation for almost a year. The further discovery that when the agreement ends the employers may not renew it and thereby would precipitate "a strike of unprecedented scope" has sent the press into a dither of excitement over something it has been predicting itself for months. The issue on the Pacific Coast waterfront has recently become more clearcut; a fight for control between the rank and file and the reactionary officials of the A. F. of L. who have cooperated with the hard-pressed and consequently vicious employing clique. So far, the militants have won every important dispute—through their economic strength.

IN OPPOSITION, employers have launched their own offensive. Nothing original about it — machine-guns, gas, bullets; legal terror against the leaders. In Modesto, Calif., the Standard Oil Company with the aid of stool pigeons has "unearthed a dynamite plot" which smells suspiciously like the Burlington frame-up. Eight marine workers—of course known militants—are indicted. Farther north, in Eureka, the police have followed the example of Gallup and have rounded up fifty lumber strikers, charging them with riot (read picketing). The press is filled with employer-inspired attacks on labor. For the financial powers know, as fully as Sam Darcy, that the showdown must come. They have chiselled on their agreements with the men for ten months. When the agreements lapse in September, they want to resume the old remunerative policy of exploiting workers without restrictions. They refuse the longshoremen's challenge to a public debate on the issue. The threatened "Communist strike" will prove in reality to be deliberately fomented by the shipowners, in cooperation with the employing class as a whole, the A. F. of L. officials and the government agents

William Sanderson
THE STRONG MAN

who swarm up and down the Coast. The "Moscow conspiracy" ferreted out by the press, is a restrained statement of known facts; the press could discover many more blood-curdling tales by printing what actually occurs everyday on the West Coast labor front—but the press does not want that sort of a "scoop."

Southern Hospitality

THE committee of writers (Jack Conroy, Emmett Gowen, Shirley Hopkins, Alfred H. Hirsch and Bruce Crawford) that went into Alabama last week to test the notorious Downs' Law, got a taste of southern hospitality. They were arrested, fingerprinted, photographed; later, sixty-three miles south of Birmingham, the automobile in which they were traveling was fired upon by vigilantes. Two bullets hit the car. A demand for police protection was laughed at; Governor Bibb Graves, ex-Kleagle of The Klan, pronounced the shooting "one of the plainest frame-ups for publicity purposes ever perpetrated in Alabama." While Klan-vigilantes circled the hotel where the delegation was stopping, the police chief told the writers that he could not be responsible for the group's safety because there were lawless elements in and around Birmingham which he could not control. Local papers seized upon this statement, intimating to lynch elements that open season had been proclaimed on the committee.

THE writers visited Alabama to test the Downs' ordinance which forbids the distribution of "seditious" literature in Birmingham. Possession of more than one copy of literature which police might not approve is defined as a crime subject to $100 fine and six months' imprisonment. The group attempted to make a test case (to be carried if necessary to the U.S. Supreme Court by the National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners) by selling The Nation, The New Republic, The Labor Defender, The Daily Worker and THE NEW MASSES. They were taken into custody, "received," according to the press by the chief, but no charges were preferred against them. They were illegally fingerprinted and photographed. Refusal by police to enforce the Downs' ordinance prevented an immediate test of its constitutionality. But it is worth noting that immediately after the committee's visit, Governor Graves vetoed a criminal syndicalism bill passed by the state legislature—a bill designed to abolish even the theoretical remnants of civil liberties. That these liberties do not exist in a state that has refused fair trial to the Scottsboro boys for over four years goes without saying. Mob rule and lynchings—directed against the working class, Negro and white—have become the tradition of the South. But southern gentlemen in state executive positions shy from publicity when signing anti-sedition bills: Governor Graves apparently found that he was too much in the spotlight to risk endorsing the criminal syndicalism act. The committee, unable to bring the Downs' Law before the courts for an immediate test, were able to see Governor Talmadge of Georgia and demand official clemency for Angelo Herndon.

Madison Square Garden

WHEN workers pulled the swastika from the bow of the Bremen, the action dramatized the resentment of the world at large to the recent barbarism of the Hitler government, to the renewed attacks on Protestants and Jews, Catholics and militant workers. On August 8, the Anti-Nazi Federation is holding a united front meeting in Madison Square Garden. Organizations whose membership totals 139,000 will participate; they will represent the most divergent opinions, both in the religious and the political field, but they are united in their condemnation of the

Nazi atrocities which abolish all fundamental liberties. The German Workmen's Sick and Death Benefit Fund, representing 50,000 German-Americans, the International Workers' Order, the A. F. of L. unions, many other religious and anti-fascist organizations have joined the protest. Roger Baldwin of the American Civil Liberties will preside; speakers include Representatives Marcantonio and Amlie, Otto Satler and James Waterman Wise. The rally will not only protest the Nazi regime, but will also denounce the arrest and shooting of the seamen who participated in the demonstration on the Bremen and demand their immediate release, as well as the release and safe conduct of Lawrence B. Simpson, American citizen and seaman kidnaped by the Nazi secret police. The Madison Square meeting promises to become the nucleus of the broadest and most effective fight against German fascism.

Whom Will Dewey Investigate?

INEVITABLY the New York vice inquiry will be compared to the Seabury investigation, and Thomas E. Dewey, special racket prosecutor for New York County, will sooner or later be termed a new William Travers Jerome. But comparisons will have to stop right there. Except for the sum voted him last week by the Board of Estimate, a mere $122,000 for the next five months—in which is included his annual salary of $16,600—Mr. Dewey's probe will be fundamentally different from the rest. True it is that the Roosevelt-Fusion forces are hoping to destroy the sons of the wigwam before 1936 by discrediting District Attorney William C. Dodge. But that still doesn't give the new inquiry the sinister possibilities it actually possesses. Dewey's main emphasis will be, as he said in his letter to the District Attorney on July 15, on the "highly lucrative organizations, known as rackets, for the extortion of huge sums by various devices from many industries in the city." This was later narrowed down to the trade unions in a number of industries and trades, including the following: fish, poultry, restaurants and cafeterias, trucking, baking, building construction, the motion picture industry, food markets and retail merchandising.

ALREADY, by that method best known to the Lord of San Simeon, the Hearst press is beginning to link racketeering and Communism and to demand that Dewey center his fire on the Reds in the unions. The danger is already apparent that the highly-touted drive on racketeering will become a crusade against the trade unions. Already there is considerable ground for fear that the tendency may be to discredit unionism generally and thus deal a blow to the trade unionists of the city. We, of course, hold no brief for the racketeering elements who hold sway in a number of unions —among them gentlemen who have excellent relations with the city administration. These gangsters are one of the curses of the American labor movement and must be wiped out if labor is to make any progress. But Dewey's probe is not the weapon of the rank and file of New York unionists against the mobsters in their ranks. It would be a fatal illusion to imagine that Dewey and his staff will free the unions of racketeers and turn the unions back to the membership. The hope of the unions of the city, as well as those of the whole country, lies in a militant, organized rank and file and in aggressive leaders such as Harry Bridges of the longshoremen, described recently in THE NEW MASSES by Bruce Minton. *Union racketeering must be destroyed,* but labor itself must do the job. No one else will do it.

Boycott at Columbia

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY gets out of one jam and immediately steps into another. The dismissal of students from the Medical Center for anti-war activities made the administration's pretensions of liberalism look sick, particularly as they came on the heels of the Casa Italiana episode. Now, with the backing of the acting dean, the manager of Teachers' College Cafeteria, Miss Reed, has discharged a world war veteran employed by the college food stores for thirteen years. The cause alleged was that Miss Reed found Manuel Romero "unsatisfactory." Upon investigation, it turned out that Romero was an active union man who, Miss Reed said, "belonged to an organization which was against her." Students at Columbia take a different attitude. A mass meeting demanded Romero's immediate reinstatement. A permanent committee has taken charge of the picket line stationed before the cafeteria and directs the boycott against it. Protests pour in to Acting Dean Del Manzo, Teachers' College, New York City. The "liberal" university makes another anti-labor gesture and once more finds that its students are alive to the danger and willing to fight for their fellow workers.

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The Peace Policies of Moscow

PEACE can best be defined as the interval between wars. In the history of feudal, dynastic and capitalistic diplomacy, periods of peace have always been ephemeral and transitory. Enduring peace is impossible between competing ruling classes of rival states pursuing power, glory and profits by force and fraud. Today it is clear that the "war to end war" has given way to the "peace to end peace."

> Under conditions prevailing in the capitalist world, the "inter-imperialistic" or "ultra-imperialistic" alliances—irrespective of the form these alliances might take, whether that of one imperialistic coalition against another imperialistic coalition, or that of a general alliance of all the imperialistic Powers — will necessarily be merely "breathing spaces" between wars.

So wrote Lenin in *Imperialism as the Highest Stage of Capitalism.* His words are as true in 1935 as they were in 1916 when he wrote them.

Communist certainty of the inevitability of war has been a source of confusion in the minds of critics of Soviet foreign policy. These critics, whether counter-revolutionary, liberal or Trotzkyite, have created other artificial difficulties for themselves by seeking for alleged "inconsistencies" in the recent course of the Narkomindel. How, they ask, can the U.S.S.R. aim at peace if Communists are agreed that a Second Imperialist War cannot be avoided? How can Moscow pretend to consistency if it flirts with Germany at one time and allies itself with the French bloc at another; if it calls for world revolution on one occasion and "soft-pedals" world revolution later; if it denounces the League of Nations in the 1920's and joins the League in the 1930's? Soviet policy, they conclude, is purely opportunistic, perhaps hypocritical, possibly even nationalistic, certainly not sincere, forthright, logical.

No conclusions could be more false. No questions could be more indicative of profound ignorance of imperialist diplomacy and of the dangers and opportunities which it offers to the Soviet Union.

The foreign policies of the U.S.S.R., like its domestic policies, are unintelligible unless their basic characteristic is constantly born in mind. That characteristic is merciless realism and its corollary—complete flexibility in the application of principles to changing situations. Statesmen, as distinct from cheap politicians, act on principle, not on expediency. Realists, as distinct from muddleheaded dreamers, face changes as they occur, not beforehand or afterwards. Lenin was a realistic statesman and a political genius because of his phenomenal ability to hold tenaciously to permanent objectives while he adapted means to ends in accordance with changing circumstances. Chicherin, Litvinov and Stalin have been realistic statesmen for the same reason. And for this reason Soviet diplomacy has been extraordinarily successful, as Lenin's political leadership was successful. Where unbending dogmatists or unprincipled opportunists would have failed, the diplomats of the U.S.S.R. have achieved their purpose through having clear and enduring goals before them and through adopting new methods for their attainment whenever new external conditions have rendered old methods obsolete.

A brief survey of fundamentals will demonstrate the validity of this thesis. No Soviet leader has ever pretended that enduring world peace can be achieved by pacts and covenants, by disarmament efforts or non-aggression agreements, by bourgeois diplomacy or by Soviet collaboration with bourgeois diplomacy. All Communists know that permanent world peace is possible only through world revolution and the establishment of a world federation of proletarian republics. Revolution is a product of capitalistic decay and of imperialist war, which create the necessary prerequisite conditions of revolution. It is not a product of agitation or propaganda save when these conditions are present. Neither the Soviet Government nor the Comintern can induce or prevent capitalistic decay and imperialist war. They can merely recognize facts and, within limits, retard or accelerate the process.

The first Imperialist World War delivered one-sixth of the world to Communism. The second will probably enlarge the realm of Communism. But this probability will become a certainty only if the great Communist Power, the U.S.S.R.—which Lenin felt from the beginning could and would build socialism within its own borders without immediate world revolution — is strong enough both to defend itself and to lead the workers of the world to victory. Strength requires time—for reconstruction, for industrialization, for collectivization, for the achievement of efficiency in socialist industry and agriculture. Time is to be had only by postponing the Second Imperialist War as long as possible, by doing everything to insure that it will not assume the form of a concerted attack upon the Soviet Union, by keeping the U.S.S.R. neutral as long as possible after war comes. This is the meaning and the only meaning of "peace" as an objective of Soviet diplomacy. In the words of Karl Radek:

> The object of the Soviet Government is to save the soil of the first proletariat state from the criminal folly of a new war. To this end the Soviet Union has struggled with the greatest determination and consistency. The defense of peace and of the neutrality of the Soviet Union against all attempts to drag it into the whirlwind of a world war is the central problem of Soviet foreign policy.

This problem has necessarily been met by different methods at different times, since its solution demands constant vigilance and unfailing ability to analyze correctly the total international situation. The basis of the solution has been a new application of the old technique of "divide and conquer" and the balance of power. Moscow, in order to prevent a united bourgeois attack upon the Socialist Fatherland, must at all times know the direction and imminence of possible attack and must checkmate each hostile move by manipulating to its own advantage the irreconcilable inconsistencies and conflicts in the world of capitalism and imperialism.

In 1917-1918 Soviet survival demanded an end of the war with Imperial Germany, either through general peace, through successful resistance or through surrender. Lenin sought general peace. Failing this, he sought Allied aid against Germany, not disdaining to use the imperialist coalition which was least menacing to the Soviet against the coalition which was most menacing. Failing this, he made separate peace at Brest-Litovsk.

A year later, with Germany crushed, the Allied coalition became most threatening by virtue of its interventionist

support of counter-revolution. Moscow, being unable to checkmate the intervention by diplomatic maneuvering, was obliged to defeat it by force and by the threat of immediate world revolution. This threat was not idle or visionary in the war-shattered Europe of 1919. The force of the Red Army triumphed. The world revolution failed to materialize. Soviet policy was henceforth directed toward consolidating military victory and toward accepting a temporary stabilization of capitalism.

After 1920 it again became possible, though it was no longer urgently necessary, to seek security by "supporting" the weaker imperialisms against the stronger. The "war after the war" between France and Germany removed any immediate threat of a new attack on the U.S.S.R. Moscow had no important stakes to win or lose in this situation and could afford to play the diplomatic game as a somewhat detached observer. Chicherin limited Soviet objectives to recognition and trade relations with all bourgeois states. Balance of power considerations were reflected in qualified diplomatic support to Germany against the French bloc, in encouragement of "revisionism" against the status quo and in aloofness toward the League of Nations which was then primarily a coalition of the war-time Allies.

The years 1925 and 1926 brought a new situation. Germany made a new peace with the Allies at Locarno and joined the League. Again the bourgeois powers were temporarily united. Soviet diplomacy took cognizance of the dangers and possibilities of the Briand-Stresemann era and devised a new instrument of peace and protection: the non-aggression and neutrality agreement, offered first to Turkey and Germany and then to all states willing to sign. This system of peace, supplemented by the Kellogg-Briand Pact and the Litvinov Protocol, was coupled with Soviet cooperation in League efforts to promote disarmament and international economic cooperation. It was adequate to the needs of a time in which danger of war seemed remote and the U.S.S.R. was not acutely menaced with aggression.

During the past four years the international scene has again shifted and Moscow has once more faced new problems with new devices. Japan's seizure of Manchuria threatened the Soviet Far East with invasion. No ally against Japan was available, though the resumption of diplomatic relations with Japan's greatest imperial rival, the United States, doubtless had some sobering effect on the Tokio militarists. More important was the concentration of a large army and air force along the Amur. Without this step a Japanese assault upon an undefended Siberia would probably have developed. At the Sixteenth Party Congress, Stalin stated the principle of a Soviet power, now strong and self-reliant, but facing once more the danger of attack: "We do not want a single bit of foreign land; but at the same time not an inch of our land shall ever be yielded to any one else."

Meanwhile a far more menacing threat developed in the West with the seizure of power in Germany by a militant fascism bent upon a new *Drang nach Osten* and the conquest of the Ukraine. Here, too, threatened force was met by force, i.e., by the doubling of the Red Army. But allies were also needed to meet the Nazi danger. They were to be found among the temporarily satiated and pacific bourgeois powers also threatened by Nazi imperialism. If the ultimate peril of a new Brest-Litovsk were to be averted, Litvinov must act vigorously to take advantage of the diplomatic revolution precipitated by the rise of the Third Reich. Poland was lost to the French bloc. But Italy was won to the status quo camp by the German threat to Austria. With Germany and Japan out, the League became a coalition of status quo states, bent on checkmating German and Japanese imperialism.

Again in the words of Radek: "Against an attacking imperialism, agreement is permissible with any opponent to defeat an enemy invading Soviet territory." For this reason the U.S.S.R. joined the League. To meet the new menace Moscow devised still another instrument of protection: the mutual assistance pact, again open to all states willing to sign. Germany and Poland refused. France and Czechoslovakia accepted. The Soviet Union made common cause with France and the Little Entente to check Hitler.

In this there has been no departure from past purposes, but simply a necessary means of meeting an acute danger. Never before has the U.S.S.R. been so directly threatened with attack in Europe. Never before has Moscow agreed to come to the aid of certain bourgeois states if attacked by others. The magnitude of the danger is the only test of the necessity of the means devised to meet it. As the new system stands at present, it is highly advantageous to the Soviet Union, but not yet fully advantageous to France and Czechoslovakia. If Germany and Poland attack the Soviet Union (and Germany cannot attack save through Poland), Paris and Prague, with frontiers adjacent to the aggressors, are bound to fight Moscow's enemies. But if Germany attacks France or Czechoslovakia without Polish aid, Moscow, though bound to aid the victims, will be unable to do so because the U.S.S.R. has no frontiers adjacent to Germany. Only if Rumania or the Baltic States are brought into the system can the Red Army reach Germany through their territories. This defect the Quai d'Orsay may ponder over and seek to remedy. Moscow has done its part and has attained security for itself by so doing.

From a long-run point of view it is plain that the anti-Nazi coalition with which the U.S.S.R. now cooperates can only postpone war, not prevent it. Britain has already sanctioned German rearmament in violation of Versailles. Poland and Germany threaten Lithuania. Japan threatens Mongolia. London, Paris and Rome quarrel and bicker, all to the advantage of Berlin, Warsaw and Tokio. Militarism and imperialism reassert themselves in all their cynical dishonesty and greed and render the League futile. Mussolini's projected assault on Ethiopia may give Hitler a new opening for attack. In this connection, too, there are no illusions in Moscow. The object again is postponement, not prevention, since prevention of war is impossible save through a world victory of Communism. But within a few more years the Soviet Union will be so powerful that neither Germany nor Japan will dare to attack. The Second Imperialist War, if deferred until this time, will be the suicide of the imperialist powers themselves, not an attack on the U.S.S.R. Meanwhile, any European power which attacks the Soviet Union will be faced with war by France and Czechoslovakia. Moscow postpones war by preparedness, both military and diplomatic. When war comes Moscow will be ready. And in war's bloody aftermath of social and economic collapse, the Comintern, which has necessarily been "quiescent" in the now vanishing epoch of capitalistic stability, will face new opportunities and new tasks.

THE MIKADO BEHIND THE JAPANESE SCREEN

William Gropper

THE MIKADO BEHIND THE JAPANESE SCREEN

William Gropper

Dickstein Gets a Biographer

JOHN L. SPIVAK

SEVERAL years ago Bernarr Macfadden, the big muscle-and-spinach man who made millions by telling America that it was constipated and needed true-story love titillations, concluded that he was important people. All important people get biographies written about them, but since no one seemed to appreciate him, he hied himself out and hired *three* biographers. That shows what opportunities America offers to poor boys who become millionaires. Book reviewers were flabbergasted. I think it was Harry Hansen who remarked drily that so far as he knew only one American—Lincoln—had had three biographies published of him in one year.

And now the Honorable Samuel Dickstein also comes to the conclusion that he is a great man. Here he is, fifty years old, with spacious offices in the Wall Street sector—Sam, an East Side boy who made good. Here he is—a man who inspired a Congressional investigation, but got no credit for it, a man who would like to be liked or at least respected and instead finds himself, in the declining years of life, considered a nuisance by his colleagues in Congress and generally disliked. What Sammy needed was a biography, a book that would show his East Side constituents that he was important enough to have a whole book written about him and at the same time explain that it was really he what saved America from the Communists, fascists and—worst of all—the Republicans, and not that Boston Yankee, Congressman McCormack.

So Sammy got a biographer and of all the people in the United States who think they can write, Sammy had to pick for his biographer a woman who entertained and worked with anti-Semitic Nazi propagandists, a woman who helped distribute Congressman McFadden's vicious anti-Semitic speeches! It just goes to show how innocent Sammy is.

And then Sammy picks for himself as a publisher a man who recently got out of jail—Robert Speller of 2 West 45th Street, a gentleman who publishes the works of Major Frank Pease (who was kicked out of England for trying to part Joseph Conrad's widow from her inheritance). Sammy's ability to step into the wrong piles is nothing short of genius.

The author of *American Defender: The Biography of the Honorable Samuel Dickstein* is one Dorothy Waring who lives in a swanky apartment at 935 Park Avenue (BU8-8459). Keep the number in mind; it will be funny in a few minutes. She has little visible means of support and yet dresses well, eats well and goes to cocktail parties. She worked secretly with Nazi agents and propagandists in New York, especially with Royal Scott Gulden, head of the anti-Semitic espionage Order of '76. She was a bosom friend and crony of the chief Nazi propagandists here and helped disseminate anti-Semitic literature. In between working with the Nazis she entertained Ralph M. Easley at the time that patriotic luminary was busily disseminating the anti-Semitic *Communism in Germany* which George Sylvester Viereck imported into this country as part of his Nazi propaganda activities. She says she did that to spy on their activities. The young lady considers herself a sort of unsung Mata Hari and is simply nuts about spying.

After this biographer split with Nazi agents in this country she tried to develop friends among radicals. Communists and Communist sympathizers viewed her with suspicion so she fluttered about the fringes of the counter-revolutionary movement, making friends with Trotzkyites, asking questions about radicals and the radical movement. Of course it may be just a woman's curiosity or it may have a deeper significance since she writes frankly in the biography:

> "I consider such banners as 'Stalin is our leader,' 'Soviet Government was the right Government,' and other placards carried by the Communists in the recent May Day parade, or singing the *Internationale* tantamountly seditious as to any display of Swastikas or chanting of the Nazi anthem," said the Congressman. . . .
>
> With the death of the Investigating Committee there were many who rejoiced. Uncle Sam, however, has other and less conspicuous methods of gathering evidence against the anti-American. . . .

Publication of *American Defender* was financed in an old-fashioned way. In a number of places, financing the publication of a book in this way is known as a racket. Several months ago a letter went out to prominent politicians informing them that a special edition of Dickstein's biography would be issued at the low price of $10 a copy. For his ten dollars the name of the sucker would be printed as among those who appreciate Sammy's patriotism, under the following cagey legend:

> In appreciation of the patriotism, ability, sincerity and distinguished service of Hon. Samuel Dickstein, we hereby inscribe our names. Such inscription does not, however, necessarily mean that we subscribe to the political tenets of Congressman Dickstein.

In addition, the ten-dollar volume would contain Sammy's autograph.

James A. Farley, good politician that he is, gave ten bucks. Senator Royal S. Copeland, another good politician, gave ten more. Two-by-four politicians who wanted their names hooked up with Farley and Copeland dug down for more ten-dollar bills. The promoters tried to get 130 but only a little over eighty bit. And among those whose names are writ in ten-dollar bills, one searches hopefully but in vain for the name of Congressman McCormack, Dickstein's associate on the Congressional Committee—the same Congressman to whom, according to the biographer, Dickstein unselfishly gave up the chairmanship of the Committee.

WHICH brings us to the contents of the book. There is a little about Sammy in it. Most of it is about the anti-Communist and anti-Nazi activities of the great statesman—which is a rehash of what the Congressional Committee brought out and which, in the mad struggle for publicity between Chairman McCormack and Congressman Dickstein, the latter was almost swamped. The impression the biographer gives of why Dickstein, who introduced the bill to investigate "subversive activities" did not head the committee is that Dickstein just didn't want it to be known as a "Jewish committee."

> . . . the proper selection of a chairman became more and more acute. One thing had been definitely decided: the chairman must be a Christian with a distinguished Anglo-Saxon name. Flying trips were made to Washington by men unofficially but auspiciously connected with the Committee. Congressmen X, Y and Z were approached. They shook their heads. The post was not considered a political plum. . . . When Representative McCormack of Massachusetts finally became chairman, heads of the various Nazi factions breathed easier.

Surely Miss Waring must have known of the bitter fights behind the scenes to keep Dickstein from heading the Committee. When I read stuff like that, knowing all about the inside struggles and the bitter fights between Dickstein and McCormack before, during and after the Committee's activities, all I can do is repeat what one of Dickstein's constituents said: phooey!

For some time I had been wondering how the young lady, with little visible means of income, managed to support herself and two daughters. I also wondered why she was inspired to write Dickstein's biography. I telephoned her.

She was a little coy about being interviewed, but finally agreed to see me "as soon as I get back from Washington." On the morning that she returned I telephoned her.

"I saw Congressman Dickstein in Washington and he said not to give you an interview," she announced and thereupon talked for fifty minutes by my watch.

"What I want to know is how you happened to think of writing Dickstein's biography," I said.

"Why, Speller came to me with the suggestion."

"Isn't Speller one of those publishers who prints books when he is paid for it?"

"Don't you dare say anything like that!" she exploded. "Speller was never subsidized. Dickstein never gave him a penny. You better be careful what you say because Dickstein and I are going over every word you write. The best thing you can say is nothing."

"Didn't they send out letters to prominent politicians asking for $10 a copy of a special limited edition——?"

"Dickstein never sent any such letter," she said excitedly.

"Okay. May I ask what royalty you are getting, if any, for this work?"

"That's none of your business!"

"Surely you didn't write the book just because you were fascinated with Dickstein's patriotism. There are other patriots. Just what did you get out of it?"

"That is absolutely none of your business!"

While I waited for her to calm down, she blurted:

"Why I wouldn't touch pen to paper without an advance from a publisher!"

"I'm always in favor of authors getting advances from publishers. May I ask how big the advance was?"

"You may ask—but it's none of your damned business!" she shouted.

"Please don't think it's just idle curiosity on my part," I assured her. "I know a lot of authors and I never ask them how big their advances are or what their royalty agreements are. I ask you because I am wondering how you make a living. You live in a swanky apartment on Park Avenue; you have two maids and you make mysterious trips to Washington—so I was just wondering whether the advance was large enough to support you in that fashion."

"Say listen," she shouted again. "You'd better be damned careful what you say. Fifteen minutes after THE NEW MASSES is out I'll have a copy in the hands of Phillip Wittenberg. He's my attorney. And so help me God there'll be an injunction out against THE NEW MASSES!"

"Lady," I said soothingly, "I am asking questions."

"No, I don't think I'll go to Wittenberg," she said suddenly. "It'll look too much like a Jewish affair. I think I'll go to a gentile attorney."

"That would be better," I said helpfully.

"I'll sue you and THE NEW MASSES! Say—you know I'm applying for a Guggenheim Fellowship and what you say may stop it and I'll sue you!"

"I hope this interview won't keep you from getting it—"

"I'll bet you I get it!"

"I'm sure you will——"

"You louse!" she suddenly broke in. "I'd like to put a bullet through your heart!"

"What calibre?" I asked curiously.

For a moment she spluttered. Then she said: "I don't see why I should talk to you!"

BY this time she had been talking for thirty-five minutes in following out Dickstein's advice not to talk to me.

"Eliminating your desire to put a bullet through me, will you tell me how you make your living? You know you used to be very close to Nazi spies and propagandists. You say you broke with them. That was about a year ago. Since then you have been making weekly or more frequent trips to Washington—may I ask what those trips are about?"

"Say, you better be careful what you say! I got influence!"

"Really?"

"I gave a copy of the biography to Mrs. Roosevelt at the White House and I know Mrs. Roosevelt!"

"A charming woman. How did you get to her?"

"Congressman Dickstein's got plenty of influence, too. It was through him. I'm warning you—you better be careful!"

"What did Mrs. Roosevelt say when she got your opus?"

"I wouldn't tell you anything."

"Do you work for anybody?"

"I work for a British syndicate!"

"Now, we're getting some place. What's the name of the syndicate?"

"None of your business! You're supposed to be the best reporter in America. You tell me!"

"Why, of course. You've sold two stories to the British General Press as a free lancer and you had to split with them for selling it. You got less than $100 all told and they are now considering your offered story of an American girl spy in which you are an honest-to-goodness Mata Hari. But—Miss Waring—the British General Press has never paid your expenses to Washington or any other place and, incidentally, they don't like the idea of your using their phone to make long-distance calls to Senator Huey Long. I might add——"

"Say, listen, ya cockroach. There's no reason why I should talk to you!"

"You've been talking for fifty minutes by my watch," I assured her. "There's nothing to stop you from hanging up."

She thought that over and then said:

"I'm going to! Now I want to tell you again—you better be careful what you say. I know Mrs. Roosevelt!"

"Yeah, I know—and you got influence, too."

When Miss Waring finished her fifty-minute refusal to talk to me, I thought I would telephone the publisher for an appointment. Being naturally lazy, I asked information for the telephone number of Robert Speller, Inc., publisher, of 2 West 45th Street.

"The number is Vanderbilt 3-4675" said the operator.

I dialed the number. After a moment the telephone girl asked:

"What number are you calling, please?"

"Vanderbilt 3-4675," I repeated.

There was another moment's silence. Then:

"Vanderbilt 3-4675 has been changed to Butterfield 8-8459."

I hung up. Butterfield 8-8459 is Miss Waring's number. By this time I did not know whether Speller was running a publishing house or whether Miss Waring was the publisher of her own book. It was all very puzzling and mysterious. But then the lady biographer has a flair for the Mata Hari stuff.

So far as the book itself is concerned, it's not worth reading. Dickstein's rise to fortune and biography is well worth being recorded. Some one really should do it. But then—if a true picture of Dickstein were painted, I very much doubt if Dickstein would send out complimentary copies to his associates and friends.

SOUTHERN ORGANIZER

Lanterns swing; they curse and trip
on the loose boards of the pier
It is night in Dixie: the Southern Cross
Is cold above the cotton fields.
"Black man, let us do this together.
Demand to have what is yours.
Black man we must together—"
Badges gleam; they dump the sack
into the water, turn and go.
It is peaceful in the southland; tomorrow
They will hang and shoot some more
Of ours: but tonight, as all true men
with southern blood will tell you,
The possum is abroad, the bloodhounds sleep,
And it is beautiful. Comrades.
"Let us do this thing together.
Black man, comrade, we must together."
And he is dead. There is work for living
Men to do. We salute him.
We have no tears for him.

KENNETH PATCHEN.

Harlem Without Make-up

LOREN MILLER

VIOLENT conflicts involving Negroes are no novelty to Manhattan Island. As long ago as 1712 a group of Negro slaves revolted and marched on the scattered settlements. The uprising was crushed and of the twenty-seven slaves condemned to death "some were burnt, others hanged, one broke on the wheele and one hung alive in ye towne." Poor whites and slaves were charged with plotting another revolt in 1741 with the result that eighteen Negroes were hanged, fourteen were burned alive and seventy-seven deported. Disapproval of the Civil War draft laws in 1863 was turned against Negroes and for three days a frenzied mob raged up and down the city, burned dwellings and public buildings and killed a number of hapless victims. A Negro killed a policeman in 1900 while defending his wife against unwarranted brutality and in retaliation officers organized and led a mob that vented its wrath on every Negro who could be found. Mayor Van Wyck appointed an investigating commission and the whole affair was whitewashed.

Harlem had no part in these early disturbances; its growth as a Negro community did not begin until a quarter of a century ago. Its history is prosaic enough. The earliest Negro New Yorkers lived far downtown. Northward moves finally took them as far as the region between Fiftieth and Sixtieth streets, where they remained until James Payton, a Negro real-estate agent, pushed through a practical business deal. Roughly, Harlem is bounded on the south by 110th Street, and on the north by 155th Street, on the east by Fifth Avenue and the Harlem River and on the west by Eighth, St. Nicholas and Amsterdam avenues. That section of the city had been overbuilt in the early part of the century, but there was no rapid transit, with the result that many of the apartment houses were empty. Payton approached the owners and proposed to fill the buildings with Negro tenants. Eventually he secured three large apartment houses.

The World War caused a tremendous labor shortage in the industrial centers and inspired stories were circulated in the southern states to the effect that Negro workers could get almost fabulous wages in New York. Civil rights, it was said, were also respected there. A wave of Negro migrants, particularly from Virginia, the Carolinas and Georgia, swept into Harlem. Another group came from the West Indies. Today Harlem has a Negro population of 200,000, almost 25,000 of whom are West Indians.

The first Negro newspaper ever published in the United States was founded in New York in 1827. The city early became one of the political and cultural centers of Negro life and by the time Harlem began to grow as a Negro community its preeminence was well established. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People had headquarters here and was publishing its then very influential magazine, The Crisis. The National Urban League, a nationwide organization founded to help Negroes adjust themselves to urban life, had its national office in New York. There were numbers of other influential Negro organizations, encouraged in many instances by liberal whites. Fairly adequate civil-rights laws and the cosmopolitan character of the city encouraged self-expression by Negroes and when America entered the war New York was startled to see more than 10,000 Negroes march down Fifth Avenue behind muffled drums in silent protest against discrimination.

In 1916 a West Indian by the name of Marcus Garvey landed in New York. Five years later he had built up to tremendous proportions his Back-To-Africa movement, an almost exact parallel of Zionism. The movement enlisted the loyalty of hundreds of thousands of Negroes, particularly the West Indians, intrigued by this appeal to their nationalism.

After the War

THE United States discovered Harlem after the war. Everybody was tired and disillusioned and looking for diversion. Startled New Yorkers discovered that right in their midst were 150,000 self-assertive Negroes who lived in what almost amounted to a foreign community. And, my dear, the Negroes were so amusing. They had the most outlandish customs. They held rent parties. They ate, and relished, such odd dishes as pigs' feet and chitterlings. Their dances were fresh, much fresher than the staid ballroom dances then in vogue. They sang gaily and drank bad gin. They amused themselves by strolling along the streets in clothes not cut to the latest patterns. Tired sophisticates flocked to Harlem to see the strange sights and be amused. Enterprising Negroes with an eye to turning an honest penny caught the idea: there were white people willing to pay for entertainment of a kind; they were eager to provide it. Harlem began to assume its character. Few visitors who have thrilled to the atmosphere of a Harlem night club know even today that the most exclusive and popular cabarets in Harlem refuse Negro patronage.

The Negro people were restless in the early 1920's. Thousands of Negro soldiers had returned from France where they had learned that racial restrictions do not exist everywhere. The government's failure to carry out its war-time promises provoked resentment and Garvey's preachment of an African Empire ruled by black kings added to the turbulence. A militant note crept into Negro letters and young poets like Langston Hughes and Countee Cullen established themselves in Harlem. Negro art became a fad, then a craze, then an obsession.

Tin Pan Alley drew on Negro music for popular songs. Negro musical comedies made a hit on Broadway. The columnists, the smart magazines and even the newspapers saw that Harlem was a rich mine. They dilated on what they thought were its exotic aspects and converted it, in the popular mind, into a never-never land where happy, carefree Negroes danced and whiled the time away with never a thought of tomorrow. Later, a song writer viewing the scene convinced himself, and thousands of others, that "that's why darkies were born." Poets, playwrights and novelists turned to Harlem for inspiration and Eugene O'Neill wrote *All God's Chillun Got Wings* and *Emperor Jones*. Carl Van Vechten summed up the literary attitude in his novel of Harlem, *Nigger Heaven*—a derisive term applied by Negroes to the third and fourth balconies where they were seated in southern theaters and where they carried on a good deal of neighborly and good-natured rivalry.

Housing Problem

THE sudden emergence of the Negro into the foreground of Negro life called for explanation. The critics of life and letters had an easy answer. Everything that was happening in Harlem from rent parties to poetry was interpreted in terms of race. Negroes, it was explained, had certain race gifts and tendencies. They were a primitive, kindly and simple people of whom, to quote a writer of the time, "The white man's education had never been harnessed." V. F. Calverton even speculated as to whether or not a "calcium factor in bone structure" might account for "the Negro's superior response to jazz."

As a matter of sober fact, these explanations were wide of the mark. What was happening in Harlem was that essentially rural people were adapting themselves to the demands of urban life. They brought with them customs and habits that seemed outlandish and amusing only because all foreign customs seem so. Rent parties will provoke amazement until it is learned that they are means of raising the rent by holding a party and pooling resources. Harlem Negroes drank bad gin because they had no money with which to purchase good gin. Dances and songs stemmed from traditional folk

songs and dances that had grown up during slavery and plantation days. Clothes weren't in style because some of the country folk hadn't learned how to dress in the city. Nor was there anything racial about eating habits. Chitterlings, a delicacy prepared from hog intestines, became an article of diet when slave owners and landlords preempted the more choice cuts of pork. And if there was something of a carefree note in the air it was but the natural response to better wages and improved living conditions. Had most of the observers looked further than night clubs they might have learned that there was always a little bit of faking in the side presented to inquiring and sensation-seeking whites. Part of it was acting in character and part of it was a defense against prying and hostile eyes.

There was another side of Harlem life that attracted little attention and almost no serious study or comment. It was never quite true that wages were fabulous or even adequate. Food was high; rent was high; clothing was high. White workers took over the skilled jobs during the labor shortage and Negro workers had to be content with employment as porters, messengers, elevator operators or personal servants. The man at the head of the house often found his wages inadequate to support the family and Negro women were forced to seek employment. Many of them became household servants or found work in the needle trades.

The rapid influx of Negroes early created a housing problem because the area of Negro settlement was limited. The shortage played into the hands of the landlords who promptly raised rents. Workers' families found themselves forced to take in roomers or give rent parties to forestall eviction.

Despite the fact that white shopkeepers remained to prevent the growth of a group of Negro buisness men, not all Harlem Negroes were underpaid workers. There was an upper strata composed of professional men, civil-service servants and a few skilled workers. Members of this group found it possible to purchase property and to enjoy ordinary middle-class comforts.

The Crisis

THE crisis struck Harlem a hard blow. Jobs vanished overnight. Professional men found that their clients had no money for fees. Discrimination is the norm in American life and it was altogether natural that when relief agencies were established they should discriminate against Harlem folk in a thousand and one subtle, and not so subtle, ways. Embroiled in other and more serious problems, those who had once spent so much time and thought on Harlem and its quaintness forgot about it. Anyhow the mania had spent itself. Few people noticed that unrest began to stir Harlem after 1930. There was a constant clamor by Negroes for more jobs; boycott movements directed against merchants who solicited Negro patronage but refused to hire Negro clerks sprang up. There were complaints against inadequacy and discrimination in relief. Spontaneous rent strikes broke out. Politicians who detected the rumbling of trouble scattered a few jobs around; the humanitarian La Guardia named a Negro to a $10,000-a-year job on the tax commission. But nobody but the Communists seemed alive to the real situation—they were only agitators. An uneasy peace brooded over middle Manhattan.

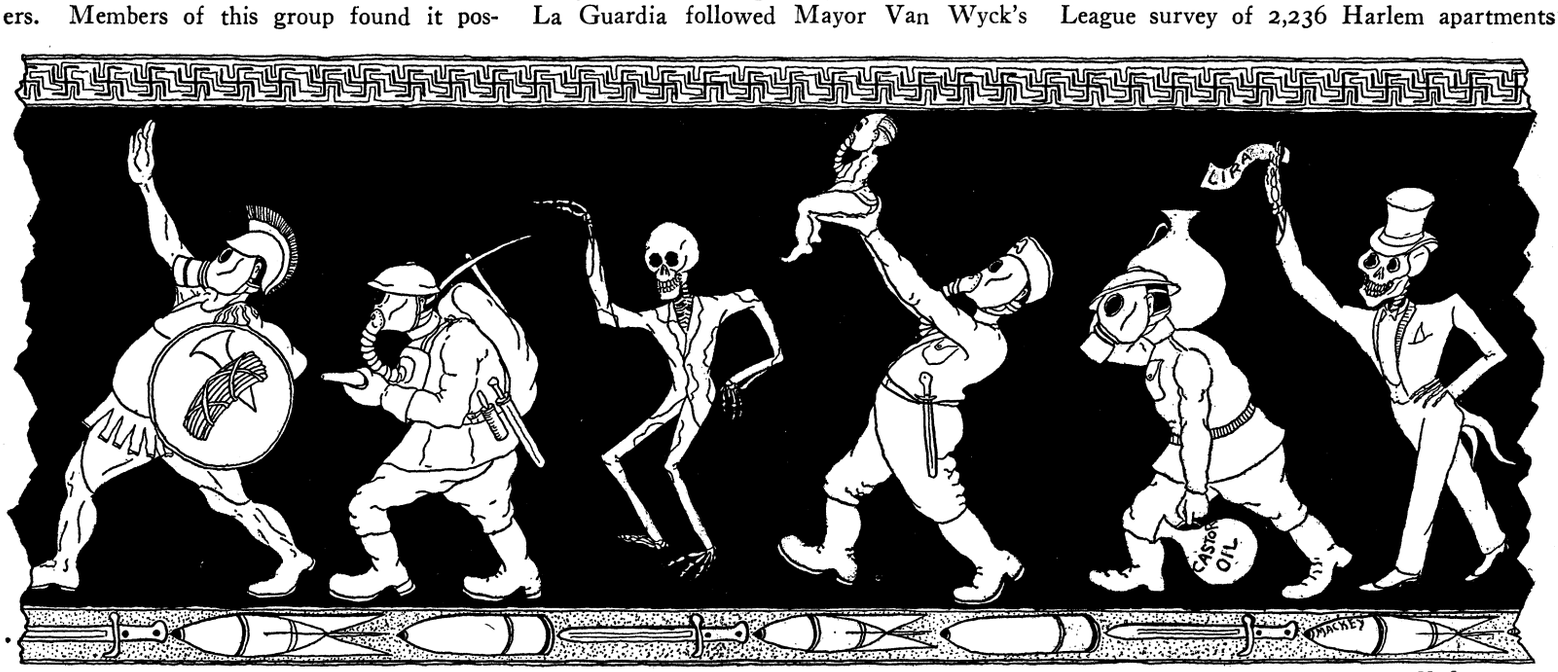
Harlem broke the peace on March 19 when angry Negroes surged through the streets, defied police and smashed windows in the 125th Street region. Liberals were shocked into silence at this spectacle of happy-go-lucky Negroes—so quaint, you know—acting so out of character. Newspapers tried to paint the outbreak as a race riot instigated by Red agitators. But the truth could not be denied; the disturbance was a violent demonstration by Negroes against discrimination, high rents, unemployment, police brutality and callous neglect by officials. Mayor La Guardia followed Mayor Van Wyck's precedent and named an investigating committee. There the parallel will end; a whitewash will not restore complacency.

The mayor's committee, headed by a conservative Negro physician and sprinkled with liberals of both groups, will do little more than hatch an elaborate report detailing conditions that everybody knows exist. But Harlem and friends of Harlem will have the last word and the mayor's committee has served some purpose in focusing attention on conditions. The story begins with unemployment.

Nobody knows how high unemployment is in Harlem. Some estimates place it as high as 80 percent. This much is certain: Negroes constitute only four percent of the population, but they furnish 14.5 percent of the employable relief population. Fifty-one out of one thousand whites are on relief rolls, the figure for Harlem is 129 per thousand. Discrimination keeps the number down. New York laws require applicants to prove two years' residence by means of letters or receipted bills and many members of an insecure group like Negroes cannot show such proof. Although Negroes furnish 14.5 percent of the employable relief population they get only eight percent of the jobs. On one project it was learned the Negro draftsmen were being paid $21 per week for work for which white workers were getting $27.

Cops' Clubs

THE housing situation is remarkably bad. Crowding has always been prevalent and it is steadily growing worse as families find it impossible to retain homes and are forced to move in with neighbors and friends. Surveys show that rent takes from 40 to 50 percent of the average income and the Hoover housing commission report disclosed the fact that "the average rental per room of low income groups in New York City is $6.67, whereas the rental for Negroes was placed at $9.58." A New York Urban League survey of 2,236 Harlem apartments



Mackey

Mackey

showed that more than half of them had no baths. Nothing vital has ever been done to allay these conditions, the only step having been taken by the philanthropic Rockefellers who got themselves an amazing amount of publicity for a "slum clearance" project a few years ago. When the apartment was completed, rents were so high that only high salaried middle-class folk like W. E. B. Du Bois were able to occupy apartments.

The Children's Aid Society reported in 1932 that "the whole Harlem district is almost totally devoid of recreational facilities" and that congestion rendered "practically impossible any normal, decent family life." A recent report shows 23.8 percent of Negro school children suffer from malnutrition. Of course juvenile delinquency is high. The health problem created by these conditions is treated in almost a criminal manner. Death rates from almost every cause are much higher than those of the city at large: the Harlem tuberculosis death rate is five times that of the rest of the city. There are few adequate facilities to combat this situation, but the worst example is the Harlem Hospital. Located in Harlem itself, the hospital is understaffed and rife with discrimination against Negro doctors. Overworked nurses contract tuberculosis at an alarming rate and Harlem folk dub the hospital "the butcher shop."

Such conditions breed unrest for which officials have one answer: police brutality. Testimony offered at the mayor's committee hearings showed that officers bully-rag Negroes and call them "black bastards" and "niggers" with impunity. Murder is resorted to when it is felt necessary and facts are made to fit a case of self-defense for the offending officer. Inquiry boards whitewash these killings with monotonous regularity. A case in point was the shooting of Lloyd Hobbs, 16-year-old school boy, at the time of the March 19 outbreak. He was shot in the back and when protest arose the police department used its machinery to paint him as a looter. Some semblance of fairness on the part of the police department is maintained by the appointment of a few Negro police officers and one was promoted to the rank of lieutenant last spring.

Statistics could be cited at great length to improve the points that Harlem is overcrowded, that unemployment is amazingly high, that health and sanitation are bad and that police officers are brutal and arrogant. These are the things that the mayor's committee will report after long and arduous hearings.

Harlem folk have a certain advantage over the commission; they know beforehand just what will be found out and they need not wait for publication of the report to take action. Contrary to the general impression Harlem is not a unified community in which everybody sees eye to eye. There are deep and thoroughgoing divisions of opinion reflecting economic groupings.

Bulwarks of Conservatism

HARLEM'S conservative spokesmen draw their support from the numerically small group that has some degree of economic security: civil service servants; professional men; skilled workers and the like. The median family income of the professional group was never high: it was only $2,229 in 1929 and it had declined to $1,440 in 1932. It must be even lower at the present time, but that does not alter the fact that these people are property-minded. Advantages of training and education make them articulate and their words carry weight with the masses. Harlem newspapers reflect their views.

Bulwarked behind such organizations as the Y.M.C.A., the Urban League and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, these middle-class folk preach a doctrine of gradual reforms and protest of invasions of civil liberties. The Urban League is dominated by Secretary James Hubert, a man who has a pathetic faith in a return to the farm as a cure for the ills from which the urban Negro suffers. He is almost convinced that that program, although sound, is impractical. Prospective Negro farm workers ask him whether farms will afford electric lights or steam heat. "Do you suppose the Pilgrim Fathers asked whether or not Plymouth Rock afforded those facilities?" he asks with the air of a man who has proved his point that Negroes are not pioneers. The local branch of the National Association has never been very militant or influential. "Present officers of the Association are more radical than their predecessors," a newspaper man explained to me, "they write more indignant letters." Secretary Henry Craft of Harlem's million-dollar Y.M.C.A. didn't want to be interviewed. It is all so difficult and "we can't have all that we ought to have, right now."

Formerly the church was one of the bulwarks of conservative thought, but the leaven of exploited communicants is doing its work and such ministers as A. Clayton Powell, Shelton Hale Bishop and William Lloyd Imes are impelled to cry out against abuses. At the other end of the religious scale is Father Divine, who has convinced his followers that he is God and exerts a large influence over them. His flock comes from the under-privileged and despite his fantastic religious ideology, Father Devine marshalls them for united front parades and demonstrations on occasions.

The middle-class ideal of slow but steady progress toward equality in American life dominates in the political field. For the past fifteen years Harlem has had Negro representatives in the State Assembly and the Board of Aldermen. There are two aldermen and two assemblymen at the present time. Both assemblymen and one alderman are Tammany men; politicians with an eye on the main chance and the ballot box. Of course the Democrats have no special platform for the Negro, Tammany Assemblyman William Andrews said. He was sure that no party had. "Negroes just have to go into all parties and build up their own demands." Against the Tammany machine, one supposes.

Garvey's preachment of an African Empire left a deep impression on Harlem. He was deported a number of years ago, but his organization, the Universal Negro Improvement Association, is active. The official Garvey organization still furthers the Back-to-Africa movement, but the emphasis on the racial aspects of the Negro question are not so strong. The preaching of a race war is carried on by former Garvey followers who have split from the official organization. The Ethiopian situation has given them renewed vigor and their voices are raised on a half-dozen street corners crying out against the white man's injuries and urging Negroes to turn their eyes to the ancestral fatherland.

Rise of Sufi

Leadership in the movement to foment racial feeling and hatred against whites has passed to Sufi Abdul Hamid, a former soldier who claims to have been born a Moslem in the United States. Sufi is a crafty and clever demagogue who counts as colored all of the millions of the earth's population who live in Asia and Africa. His dream is a grandiose one: a billion and a half colored peoples—Japanese, Chinese, Hindus, Africans—conscious of their own strength arrayed against a puny half billion whites and driving the whites off the face of the earth to take possession of their ancient heritage.

Formerly very active in the boycott movement, Sufi was not above using anti-Semitism to further his ends. He made a fairly plausible case to Negro workers burdened with unemployment and angered at discrimination and rising prices at neighborhood stores. Most Harlem shopkeepers are Jews and Sufi twisted their middle-class outlook into manifestations of racial characteristics. His anti-Jewish activities finally landed him in jail and he now denies that he is anti-Semitic, but he will admit that Olin Hearst, member of the National Socialist Party, has spoken at his meetings. The Ethiopian situation is grist in Sufi's mill and he now heads the African League for International Justice, a paper organization which he says will send him to Asia and Africa next year to begin the work of rousing the world of color. Meanwhile, his close connections with the Nazis and his call to racial warfare are playing their part in complicating the situation in Harlem.

Communists, white and Negro, had been active in Harlem long before the March 19 outbreak. The work of the Communist Party was very difficult in the beginning. Constant emphasis on color had done its work and Negroes were suspicious of white men and women who came to them, no matter how fair their words or how practical their program. The Communists had no formula to overcome this distrust except intensified work.

They led the fight for the Scottsboro boys, they popularized the Herndon case. No issue was too small and none too large to enlist their support. They took an active part in rent strikes and in struggles against discrimination. Always their emphasis was the same: unity and cooperation of all workers against every assault on workers' rights. In the wake of the Communist Party came mass organizations like the League of Struggle for Negro Rights, the International Workers' Order and the International Labor Defense. The thorough-going character of the work of the Communist Party can be seen in the confidence and following it has won for itself and its Harlem leader, James W. Ford, former vice-presidential candidate.

Communists in Harlem

ACTIVITIES at the Harlem headquarters reflect the Communist Party's position in the community. Surely there were never any other political headquarters like these. I was there to interview its leaders when a man came to see "Mr. Ford." He was disappointed that Ford wasn't in because he had been having trouble with his wife and he just wanted Mr. Ford to speak to her and persuade her to adjust their difficulties. A butcher came in. He had been fired and his union couldn't help him. "I told them I would go to the Communists," he said a little triumphantly. As a matter of fact the Communists could do something and he was later reinstated. Another worker came to say that his merchant was constantly cheating him. I expressed my doubts about the ability of the Communists to deal with that kind of a complaint. He pitied my ignorance. "Man," he said, "these Reds can do anything." A group of doctors came to lay plans to aid Ethiopia in the medical services.

These and similar incidents suggest the extent to which the Communist Party has implemented itself in Harlem life. As a conservative newspaper editor explained it: "the Communists have made the poor Negroes articulate." An ever widening circle of United Front activities is growing; ranging from the Committee Against Discriminatory Practices to the Provisional Committee for the Defense of Ethiopia. Churches, fraternal organizations and kindred groups are entering these United Fronts. There is still much to be done from the Communist viewpoint. There is a vast difficulty in understanding and adjusting the intricate questions that agitate Harlem life flowing out of the Negro's position as an oppressed minority and in relating these problems to the wider working-class question that underlies them all. The struggle is two edged: to marshall Negroes for a constant struggle and to prevent the dissipation of strength on sporadic outbursts.

The Socialist Party has a long Harlem history but it lacks the influence of the Communists. Socialist headquarters, in charge of pontifical, albeit somewhat bewildered Frank Crosswaith, are quiet and restrained. Crosswaith talks incessantly of building a labor movement but in action his talk simmers down to cooperation with A. F. of L. leaders and the barring of militant unions from his labor conferences. Their very suggestion of a United Front pains him: "No sane man can make a United Front with the Communists." The Socialist Party? "It is rather weak now partly because of factional strife." Ethiopia? "Well, we have to remember that there are still slaves in Ethiopia and we Socialists are against oppression everywhere. Our fight is at home. Yes, our fight is at home. Of course we're against Italian agression. But— But— But—"

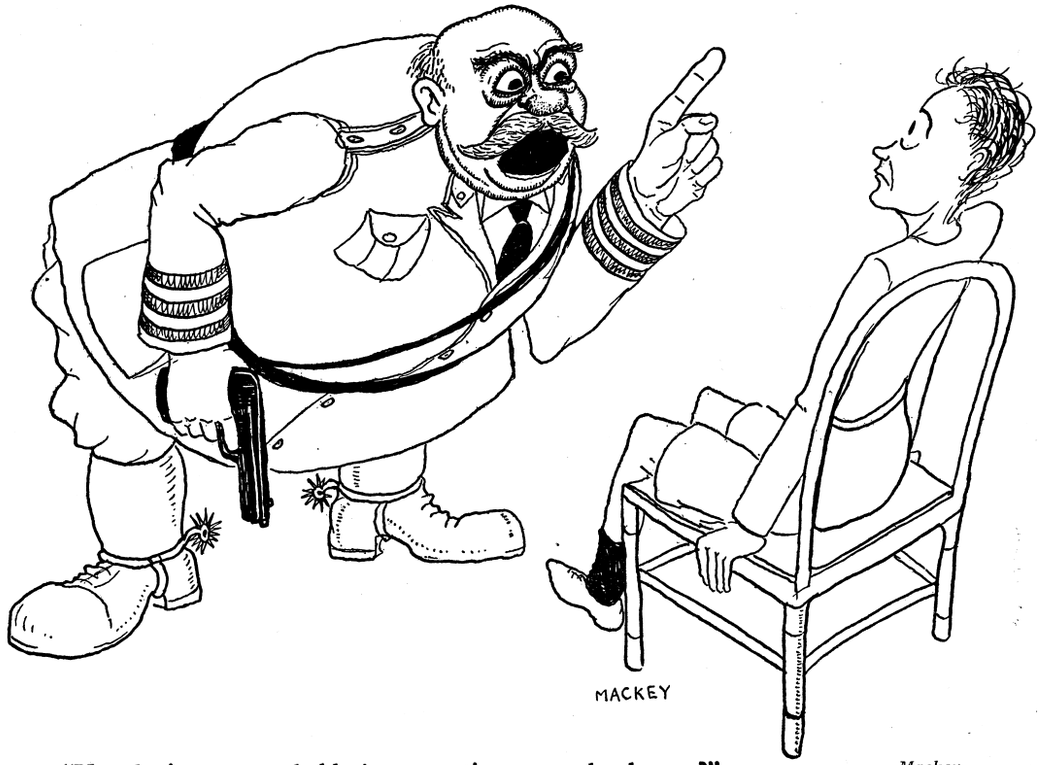
A New Era

THAT is Harlem. Not a giant but a long-suffering strong youth who awoke from his passivity March 19 and turned on his tormentors in bitter wrath armed with the memory of a thousand wrongs. Harlem is a little proud of its new-found strength too and a little contemptuous of those who would restore the old ways. Those days are done for. Oh, of course there are still night clubs and tinsel spots to attract the tourists who want to thrill over strange folk, blind fools who can still believe that "darkies were born" only to entertain the sensation-seeking sophisticates who still visit in the evenings after theatre.

Harlem has a new sense of its position and importance. Frightened officials have already let up on discrimination in relief agencies. Negro conductors have been hired on city-owned subways. Everybody has been forced to admit that *things are bad* in Harlem. The government has purchased a site for a slum-clearance project, a move that makes the knowing in Harlem smile because they know that a paltry $4,700,000 will do almost nothing toward relieving congestion and because they know too that the purchase of the site relieved the Rockefellers of a large tract of vacant land. Meanwhile old slum apartments still stand.

When you sift it down nothing fundamental has been done. Not a dent has been made in unemployment, not a single blow struck at police brutality. The pattern of discrimination is woven into the very warp and woof of American capitalism. New York is still in the Union.

Will there be further outbreaks? It is easy to make out a case to prove that very end. There have been minor flare-ups terminating in an encounter between police officers and a Harlem crowd last week. Newspapers called the affair a "riot." The trouble began when a Negro police officer jostled a Negro woman and the crowd stoned Negro and white officers with impartiality in defending themselves. A community-wide rent strike is planned for October 1 and trouble may occur if force is attempted. Privately, Harlem merchants claim that they are frightened and that they can *feel* the hostility of their customers. The Ethiopian situation is the most explosive factor at the moment. Irresponsible preaching of racial hatred may transform a small incident into a dangerous situation if the idea that the Italo-Ethiopian clash is a war of races is pursued far enough. The truth is that nobody can foretell what is in store. But everybody is agreed on one point. You hear it over and over again: "Something's got to be done." And despite differences of opinion and conflicting ideas Harlem is organizing to do something.



"You don't see your daddy in any anti-war parade, do you?" *Mackey*

THE "DEATH SENTENCE"

Russell T. Limbach

THE "DEATH SENTENCE"

Russell T. Limbach

Congressman Amlie Sees Red

MARGUERITE YOUNG

THE "native American radicals" of the American Commonwealth Political Federation plan to set up national headquarters here in a day or so. From this journalistic nerve center, thenceforth, many "third party" yarns will be impelled. One can imagine the headlines, canceling each other like Senators paired on any important roll call:

THIRD PARTY LEADER
TROUNCES "JIM" FARLEY

SAYS THIRD PARTY
WOULD OUTLAW PROFIT,
DESTROY CAPITALISM

FEAR NEW PARTY HEAD
NABBED BY COAST ANTI-REDS

THIRD PARTY WILL BACK
ROOSEVELT IN CALIFORNIA

DENIES THIRD PARTY
WOULD SEIZE PROPERTY
OR ALTER U. S. FORMS

200, ACCUSED AS "REDS,"
READ OUT OF THIRD PARTY

To be able to interpret them one needs only to spend a while in conversation with Congressman Thomas R. Amlie of Wisconsin. He is the most—or the more—important Congressional front left to the A.C.P.F.; three of the five initiators of its Chicago conference have pulled away from or altogether out of it.

Congressman Amlie makes some show as its theoretician. It was he who produced the "native American radical" slogan. This is an achievement worth emphasizing. It epitomizes the political technique which, in its frenzy to avoid the class struggle, will fall back upon and further such a reactionary force as chauvinism to qualify dissent.

It is particularly pertinent in the case of Mr. Amlie, one of those people who "was reading Karl Marx when—" but who, during the week of the Terre Haute general strike, pronounces America "psychologically classless." Whose acquaintance with Marx doesn't prevent his dubbing Harold J. Laski "perhaps the world's most eminent political scientist." (Mr. Laski is the British Labor oracle who on November 19, 1932, the eve of the German monopolists' hoisting Hitler to power, wrote, for The London Daily Herald, an article entitled, "Hitler: Just a Figurehead"! Laski predicted: "Hitler or some of his partisans may enter the von Papen Cabinet; but in that case they will be rapidly submerged by the forces of the Right. . . . He reveals himself as a myth without permanent foundation.")

"I feel that the radical movement in this country has to proceed on one or two courses of action," Congressman Amlie told me. "One is essentially the approach of the British Labor Party. . . ."

(The British Labor Party. At first pop, by way of explaining the exclusion of those so, so "un-American" Communists from his A.C.P.F. he turns to British guidance toward "native American radicalism." And there is a reason.)

"Oh," confided the Congressman, "I merely use that with you because I know you are familiar with British Labor Party policy. I would not take that to the people. I use it also to indicate that I do not accept the viewpoint of the Communists—of precipitating everything into the arena of the class struggle."

So here was the distinction! Your so, so "un-American" Communists are devoted to class struggle, the B. L. P. is not! (Indeed, it has been pulling chestnuts out of the fire for Tory imperialism since Lenin called Shaw a good man gone Fabian. But, having resorted to chauvinism to screen the issue, we'll keep this cozy little secret between us. We will not "take that to the people.")

"The second possible approach, Mr. Amlie?"

"Oh . . . the Communist position . . . you know that! But I have tried working with the Communists for fifteen years and I feel their course is inevitably what it is." His voice sharpened. "I know that they will continue their theory of social fascism, they will continue to consider liberals false and to believe that the way to accomplish their object is to bore from within. I feel that the Communists, with their conception that the instrumentality of change to a new social order is a dictatorship of the proletariat. . . ."

Thus he began. And before the interview was over, he had employed some of the slanders and virtually every crude distortion in the Red-baiting handbook of Messrs. Hearst, Woll, Dickstein and Lang. There occurs to me just one which he forgot—that one about Communists having no sense of humor. He mentioned their fabled incapacity to "deal with people in an above-board manner" (the implication was that this is congenital with them). Their "extreme bitterness," which leads them to think that "the end justifies the means . . . that being open and above-board and simply honest is 'bourgeois'!"

No matter what question was asked, he had one response to throw in—by golly, the Communist answer was wrong! It went so far that I blurted sheer astonishment that so practical a politician as he could dream, apparently, of answering the questions which are in the mind of the masses with—Red-baiting!

There is at least one reason why the Congressman is so obviously seeing Red these days. While the "third party" movement just projected at Chicago has been reduced in leadership, the seeds of a mass Labor Party, vigorously for a class-struggle program and against the exclusion tactic, are taking root. In Chicago, the scene of the anti-labor-party conference, delegates to the city Federation of Labor held two meetings to discuss the formation of a mass Labor Party . . . the going Labor Party of Lodi, New Jersey, with a majority of the workers in this world's biggest textile-dye center, launched its local ticket. . . . Detroit, 38,060 members of American Federation of Labor, fraternal, cultural and political groups including the Socialist and Communist parties are welded in a United Labor Conference for Political Action . . . in the San Francisco United Labor Election Conference, representatives of thirty-seven union, political, civic and cultural organizations locked hands in an effort to sweep out the Rossi machine and guarantee free lunches for school children of the unemployed, as well as unemployment insurance; they are from Communist, Utopian, Democratic groups. . . . Connecticut sees a statewide Labor Party conference.

They come from thirty-one towns, 168 A. F. of L. locals, 48,000 members of workers' organizations; Socialist and Communist Party observers are present; the chairman, Munitions Worker William Kuennel, president of the Hartford Central Labor Union, is receiving inquiries from groups who wish to initiate a similar Labor Party movement in Pennsylvania, New York, several New England states. . . .

The Chicago "third party" conference was an aggregation of observers. The delegates appeared as individuals without authorization to commit. Most numerous were members of the Farmer-Labor Political Federation and the League for Independent Political Action. Next, technocrats. There were members of the Socialist Party, of the farm groups whose landlord-capitalist officials are knotted up with the Committee for the Nation of inflation fame and—finally—unemployed and labor groups. There were 250 registered delegates. The official minutes, listing about 200, identify only about two dozen as members of trade unions. The Congressional Committee, hornswoggled by Mr. Amlie, had refused to invite the leader of the Unemployment Councils; it included not a single Negro leader of any political philosophy. Despite this so, so careful sifting, the delegates tabled a resolution to exclude Communists. The exclusion policy rests upon an "interpretation" by Professor Paul Douglas of Chicago and Mr. Amlie of a

conference statement of "belief in the democratic process and in the achievement of its end through peaceful means. Members and groups shall be admitted to the A.C.P.F. who support these principles."

Plain and fancy technocratic phrases "production for use," "a rational economy based upon the same scientific methods that have developed modern technology," "an economy of abundance;" slogans of the reactionary-utopian fad whose brief moment was marked by David Ramsey's epitaph, "the press-the-button counter-revolution"—these dot the A.C.P.F. platform. It contains not a word on the general peril of fascist reaction. It says nothing on behalf of Negro rights so imminently threatened by the fascist danger. Nothing against the pending alien and sedition bills which are the spearhead of the open-shoppers' thrust against the civil rights of labor. In the controlling forces' determination to avoid sponsoring the Lundeen Bill (H. R. 2827, initiated by the Unemployment Councils and the Communist Party) they wrote one plank calling for "abundant provision" for unemployment, maternity, old age, etc., and another favoring "production for use by and for the unemployed," the self-help trap.

THE fifteen-point platform touches, however vaguely, most of the issues put forward by the sprouting Labor Party movement —"high" wages generally and union wages for the unemployed; opposition to police and soldiery for strikebreaking; free speech, press and assembly rights, etc. However, it now develops that these immediate issues, so obviously associated in the mind of the masses with the necessity for political action, *are to be soft-pedaled by the A.C.P.F. leadership while they harangue their following with the "ultimate" phrase, a "new economic order." And most particularly a "new economic order" achieved by opposition to class struggle!* This Mr. Amlie disclosed in a roundabout way. I asked him about the immediate issues and he confidently assured me they were all in the A.C.P.F. program.

"Why," I finally asked him, "do you oppose the class struggle as a matter of political theory when the program you mention, of necessity, must be one of class struggle—if it be any more than sheer demagogy?"

He thought a moment. He said, "The question resolves itself into one of leadership. The American people will not follow Communist leadership."

"Oh, a person can take the position, intellectually, which is taken by many Communists," he said at length. "That is one thing. It is another to take the leadership and discipline of the Communist Party."

"You have been a sponsor of the League Against War and Fascism for a long time," I reminded. "Of course you know there are Communists in that group. Did they or the Communist Party ever seek to subject you to Communist Party discipline or to force the full Communist program upon you?"

Again he thought. And said, "On those things I've gone along. Those organizations are essentially propaganda and educational organizations. There's a difference between that and going to the American people and demanding a change in the economic system by means of dictatorship."

"In other words, your A.C.P.F. is going to the people with all the emphasis on a "new economic order" achieved by opposition to class struggle—instead of on the immediate issues?"

"That's a fair statement," he responded. He added aggressively, "And the middle class people are ready to go along."

"If you are so dedicated to putting all your emphasis upon a 'new economic order'—via opposition to class struggle, why don't you take in President Roosevelt and the Democratic Party?" I inquired. "You know, Democrats too, from the beginning of the 1932 campaign, have been promoting the 'Roosevelt revolution,' and the 'better society' based upon 'social justice.' To this day we hear these things from the New Dealers—particularly upon such occasions as a new relief cut."

"I know," he nodded. "The Democratic Party has two sides. One side is Roosevelt, who means well and would take steps that would make a change inevitable. The other is the Farley side, which means four reactionaries for every liberal."

(Again the admission of facts, but the denial of the element that counts, the relationship between the anti-labor act and the saccharine phrase that screens it. Precisely as the Social Democratic leaders' "lesser evilism" blessed Hindenberg giving quarter to the pure Nazi doctrine that the Fuehrer is benign; whatever hell his government delivers is the handiwork of the bad, bad lieutenants who try to thwart his purposes!)

A couple of days later Mr. Amlie publicly embraced the faith of "lesser-evilism." He told a radio audience that, as compared with Republicans, "President Roosevelt is the lesser of two evils."

The next day Mr. Amlie told me that the decision on placing a presidential candidate in the running in 1936 left to a committee by the Chicago conference, is still to be resolved by "future events." He indicated that they would probably work "through" the Democratic Party "in some states." In California, for example? "Why, yes; we wouldn't want to disrupt the Sinclair movement." (Disrupt! But the Labor Party movement in San Francisco found a way to unite Utopian, Epic, Democratic Council and Communist forces on a simple, straight-forward class-struggle platform placing all emphasis upon the immediate issues and leaving all free to pursue their ultimate ends independently.)

The A.C.P.F. is significant insofar as it reflects the realization by sitting politicians of the mass awakening to the necessity of forming its own party and insofar as it may impede such action.

At present the "third party" party projected at Chicago is a political amoeba minus a nucleus. The prime movers were seeking to secure that rather vital party by gathering in the masters of liberal machines which evolved from third capitalist party forays of the twenties. But they reckoned without the fact that events had pushed that gentry considerably along the natural course of their logic, so that today they are quite happy, thank you, with their own safe Republican and Democratic ties. Thus the "third party" hasn't had a nibble from the LaFollettes. Let the A.C.P.F. go ahead and build its own "independent" machinery in 1936 and the LaFollettes will talk (should one say take?) things over for 1940. Senator Gerald P. Nye of North Dakota is doing quite nicely, thank you, with his own Non Partisan tail to the Republican kite.

Likewise the A.C.P.F. generals hoped to fall heir to the left-moving following of such politicians as Upton Sinclair by allying the leaders — but again they counted, unrealistically, without Roosevelt. Representative Byron Scott, the California Epic Democrat, signed the call to Chicago, but shunned the meeting. Sinclair telegraphed he was still with Roosevelt and would have none of any "third party" opposition.

The faith, thus vain, in the reactionary mirage of building a new political movement from the top down to the masses, has netted the A.C.P.F. an open break with Representative Vito Marcantonio, New York Republican, and the loss of the active support of Representative Ernest Lundeen, Minnesota Farmer-Laborite, both of whom backed a Labor Party while participating in the preliminaries to the Chicago conference. Representative Lundeen ducked the Chicago conference and has taken occasion to state publicly, since: "A labor party is the only kind of a party I'm interested in. Whenever the farmers and the laboring men and their organizations get going, I'm going with them. Only a mass movement can succeed. Any movement will dry up at the top unless it is rooted in the soil—the people—and that means everyone who has a right to vote. I'm opposed to excluding anyone." Before the microphone last week, Representative Marcantonio drew the line even more plainly. "Any third party movement which fails to meet the requirements of immediate mass demands and confines itself to long-range, visionary, synthetic solutions is bound to be relegated to the political dumpheap," he declared. He added that the Chicago party "could very well be called the Technocrat Party . . . unsound in economic concept and impractical . . . it does not meet the demand for a Labor Party." He espoused a Labor Party, saying, "I believe the time is more ripe than ever before . . . a labor party is imperative . . . exclusion of any group is a confession of a political inferiority complex."

It looks like a genuine Labor Party is in the offing—notwithstanding Mr. Amlie and other leading "native American radicals."

A Love Letter for France

MICHAEL GOLD

MID-ATLANTIC, JULY 15,
S.S. ILE DE FRANCE.

IT'S sad, wet, cold, the gray Atlantic and the gray skies are drab as eternity or a hungry man's sleep in a flophouse and the people in the third class are seasick and all my thoughts are of Paris.

I think of the easy-going, friendly city, Paris of the innumerable fine bookshops, Paris of the chestnut trees, colleges, gardens and crazy taxicabs, Paris with its lovely girls and fat, vain clerks and shopkeepers with the elaborate whiskers and the Legion of Honor. I think of the spirit of revolution and art that haunts every street and I think of the workers of Paris—these gay, ardent, talented people who have such an instinct for fine living.

Our "exiles" have slandered Paris. I never wanted to go there because of their tourist café gossip. They were escapists and Paris was their opium.

But now I am glad that for even a month I was permitted to see this Paris, so different from their adolescent dreams.

2.

FRANCE has had three revolutions and the workers have never lost their self-respect. Waiters will familiarly discuss politics with you, or literature, or your family problems. This is the most democratic land I have ever been in, outside of the Soviet Union.

Everywhere, in subways, streets and parks, one meets soldiers—France has the largest standing army in Europe. It is a conscript army of young peasant boys with fresh naïve faces, just up from the provinces. They are the least militaristic soldiers I have known—no swagger or toughness, just boys in uniform, sons of the people.

It is hard to put the thing in words, but the attitude of the people to these soldier boys is different from that of Americans or Germans to their own army. It is more like the Soviet Union—the people act as if these boys belonged to them and show no self-consciousness in their presence.

And every day, in the papers, one reads of strikes and protests in the barracks—the boys, too, refuse to be considered mechanical robots in a military scheme, but insist on their human rights as workers and peasants. Every day reports come of another regiment of young conscripts that as it marches home after the year of service, raise the Red Flag and sing "The Internationale" in the streets.

The fascists will not easily turn this army against the people.

Everywhere one sees cripples—men without legs, arms, noses, faces, the mutilated of the last war. There are so many of them that special seats are reserved for them in the subways and buses. Most of the Army of Mutilés are Socialists and Communists. It is their miserable pensions that Laval and the bankers are attacking, "to economize" and to save the bankers' gold.

It is the wages of the state functionaries, too, that are being attacked. These state employes are organized in trade unions and are in the United Front. I attended a meeting of delegates from all the custom houses of France, deliberating under pictures of Lenin and Stalin. This radicalization of the rank and file of the state apparatus infuriates the banker-fascists. They are always wailing about the "Moscow" enemy within the state machine. Fools, hogs, they themselves have done it with their shameless taxation of the workers' life, their wage cuts and their currency juggling!

Life is more expensive in France than in New York. And the wages for those who work are so much pitifully less that one wonders how the people manage to keep alive.

Unemployment is increasing rapidly. France was the last country to be hit by the crisis, but now this grows in momentum like a rockslide. You find signs of it in Paris—every morning, on my way to the Writers' Congress, I saw a couple out of Stienlen, a ragged old woman and her man, resting in the same doorway, her poor old weary head on his lap, "waiting for nothing." You see them around, lying under the bridges, the groups of pale, hungry men sleeping on newspapers.

The price of horse meat has doubled and wine is dearer. There are state taxes on everything, even on the rent. The Seine flows through Paris; and along its banks there are hundreds of fishermen. Maybe this looks picturesque to tourists, but I know why these working men are not at work, but are fishing in daylight—it is not for pleasure. When you travel through our own South you will see Negro men and women fishing at every stream—and also, not for fun. It is because they are out of work and are fishing desperately for their next meal.

The fascists propose to solve this all a la Hearst, by deporting the foreign workers, for whom life has already been rendered so difficult.

They propose to solve it by increasing the army budget (the Armament Trust subsidizes the fascists.) They propose to solve it by abolishing the republic and regimenting the French people so that they will learn to enjoy starvation, because it is patriotic (but the Metal Trust, which subsidizes the fascists, has never paid bigger dividends).

But the polite, the gay, the passionate French people still dance to accordions in the little *bal musettes* and drink their wine and kiss their girls. In the open air markets where the workers buy their cheap meat and vegetables they also are careful to buy little bouquets of field flowers, blue lupins and white lilies for the breakfast table. Nothing will crush their spirit. The subway guards openly read Humanité, the Communist daily, or Le Populaire, the Socialist paper.

Everywhere the great tide rolls up of the United Front, soon strong enough, perhaps, to form a government. The French people are not ready for revolution. But they are passionately aroused against the fascists, the bankers and wage-cutters. Thirty percent of France now votes Socialist or Communist. If the exploiters press the people too far, there *will* be a revolution.

A little fact: the achievements of the Soviet Union are daily described and praised in the republican and socialist press of France; you would think you were reading our own Communist Daily Worker. Leon Blum, the outstanding Socialist leader, for years opposed the United Front; but I chuckled when I read a recent article in which he spoke warmly of our "good friends, the Communists."

The Abe Cahans and Jim Oneals, those poisonous enemies of the Soviet Union and the United Front against fascism, ought perhaps be deported to France and there forced to study the program of their own party.

In France, anyone who tries to break up the United Front is considered an enemy of the working class and an ally of the fascists. I wonder whether one ought not feel this way in America, too. I wonder why more Socialists don't ask the Old Guard misleaders whose cause they are serving. Does their sabotage help even the Socialist Party itself?

3.

I SPENT one day walking around the Jewish quarter of Paris with Isaac Babel, the artist who fought under Budenny and who wrote *Red Cavalry*.

As everyone must now know, writers are not at all like their books. Some are much better and some are amazingly rottener. Babel is neither better nor worse but different. He is stocky and baldheaded, with a kind, broad, homely face and he doesn't seem like a poet or ex-cavalryman but like the principal of a village school.

If you will read his work, you will find that his is an intensely romantic nature, which sometimes distorts reality because he is vainly trying, like Arthur Rimbaud, to pierce behind all its veils. But the frenzied poet, Isaac Babel, for the past six years has been the manager of a big horse-breeding collective

farm in the North Caucausus. He had come to Paris for the Writers' Congress, because he is a famous Soviet writer, but he was also visiting French stud farms to study their methods.

(Sholokov, the author of *Quiet Flows the Don,* recently took a trip abroad, too, and spent his vacation not among the literary men of Europe but in studying the model dairy farms of Denmark—he is passionately interested in cows. The Soviets are developing a new sort of writer in a world that has grown tired of tales about the dark souls of writers.)

Yes, Babel is a practical and humorous human being. He made one of the most original speeches at the Congress. He sat simply at a table and chatted in French with an audience of several thousand, telling them anecdotes about the Soviet peasants and the naive way in which they went about the historic task of acquiring culture; witty, tender, proud anecdotes that made one see intimately the new Soviet life.

Babel loves France and Paris. I was glad to hear him say this, for I myself had feared to say it, thinking it was American naiveté on my part and also because I remembered the "exiles" and their escapism.

"You cannot be a writer until you know French," said Babel earnestly. "No writer can acquire a feeling for literary form unless he has read the French masters in their own tongue. Of this I am sure."

(There must be something in this dogmatic theory; after visiting the gardens of Versailles and the Luxembourg, that affected me like some strange and beautiful dream, I was impelled, for the first time in my life, to attempt the writing of a sonnet!)

Babel and I sat in a Jewish restaurant on a Friday night in Paris and I told him about the East Side and he told me about Odessa.

He was surprised and glad to hear about the militant Jewish workers of New York. "In the Soviet Union one forgets one is a Jew. The whole race question has already become dim, like ancient history. But here in Paris it comes back to me." Babel is soon to publish a new book, an experiment in a new form, but the novel that he has been writing for six years he isn't satisfied with; this horse-breeder has one of the most painful artistic consciences in the Soviet land.

4.

ANDRE MALRAUX is lean, intense, and young, the restless aviator type. I saw him first in the office of the Congress, where he was swamped like a commissar in a mass of organization detail. He was one of the active organizers of the Writers' Congress, spending weeks at the "dirty work," like Aragon and Jean Richard Bloch and the others. These French writers throw themselves into what they do with passion and directness. How is one to explain it? America is supposed to be the land of energy, but so many of our authors seem afraid of *doing* anything. It is as if working with other human beings were somehow dangerous. But Malraux did not seem afraid of losing his "individuality."

And he was not afraid of banging on the table and shouting at the top of his voice like a human being when the Trotzkyites made their mean little disruption foray and tried to turn a United Front congress against fascism into a demonstration against the Soviet Union. Malraux was chairman at that session.

Aldous Huxley, lanky, pale, boyish, shy, was more like some of our own intellectuals. Is it because Anglo-Saxons still believe with the philistines of commerce that there is something unmanly and unworthy about being a writer? Only the stock that produced a Shakespeare has brought this attitude into the world. It is a real mystery.

After the Congress ended, Malraux left for Algiers, to address a huge anti-fascist meeting. The fascists threatened to break up the demonstration and to attack Malraux. In the Socialist Populaire, I read the lyric report of its correspondent, who said, "Our brave young Socialists and Communists formed a defense corps and were sufficient protection for Comrade Malraux, this author who charmed us all with his ardor, his intellect, his youth and his devotion to our the great cause." That's what French authors are like these days; would that a few more British and American authors might learn from them.

5.

OR FROM Martin Anderson-Nexo.

It is years since I first read the working-class epic, *Pelle the Conqueror.* I have never had the lust to meet famous authors; the best of them is in their books. But I had always wanted to meet the great Anderson-Nexo, whose book had such a deep influence on my youth.

He is a solid and powerful man, like some ruddy sea-captain or master-workman. He is simple, like a worker; he likes babies and wine and food and fresh air and working with his hands and jokes and simple men and women; he despises stuffed shirts, be they authors or politicians, and he has that organic hatred of the parasites, the emotion that finally crystalizes into Communism.

The King of Denmark once invited him for a visit to the palace. Anderson-Nexo informed the King he had no objections to meeting him but since the King knew his address, he could call on him first, on Martin Anderson-Nexo, good shoemaker, trade unionist and proletarian author, as good as any King. The King dropped the whole matter.

Anderson-Nexo told us many stories, gay and sad, about his life. He is a happy man, because he has lived for the working class and every day this class comes nearer to its goal. It happened to be his sixty-fifth birthday and several of us made a little party of the event. We toasted him in champagne and told him (Ralph Fox, James Hanley and Pearl Binder of England, two Australian authors and myself were there) what his books had meant to us in the English-speaking lands.

"But meeting you younger revolutionary writers means more to me," said the old fighter. "I am happy when I see our youth and know that the great work will never die." It sounds, perhaps, like politeness as I write it, but it is a feeling all good revolutionists have as they grow on in years. It is what keeps them happy.

"The first portion of Pelle, the childhood, is largely invention. I wanted a story of lyric pathos and tenderness to win my readers. You see, at that time there had been nothing like a proletarian novel in Europe. They would have flung my book away had I plunged at once into the story of a trade-union organizer and his spiritual life. The critics would have been bored with such a vulgar theme. They could accept only lurid, sordid, sensational tales of the workers' degradation. But I wanted to write about a class-conscious worker who was a conqueror of life, not a victim. So I had to use strategy and I began my novel with pathos and weakness." (The trilogy was written in 1905-7.)

"But the latter portions are not invention —they are my own story. Like Pelle, I was apprenticed to a shoemaker and worked at this trade for many years. Then I helped form our trade unions and was one of the leaders in our great general strike. Yes, I have lived as a worker for many years; only out of the depths of revolutionary experience will come our proletarian art.

"As to form; it has never troubled me. I believe that one must write from the heart; the form will follow naturally. One must, of course, knead and knead the material; slow, as the proverb has it—slowly one must grow a tree or write a book or make love. But above all, follow the deepest instincts of your youthful heart. Give my heartfelt greetings to the youth of your countries."

6.

PAUL VAILLANT-COUTURIER, a rugged Gascon with a barrel chest, innocent blue eyes and the free and fearless manners of a pioneer, is the author of some six novels, a book of poetry and as many political essays. He is a horseman, a crack shot, an aviator and a boxer. He fought all through the war in the tank corps. He is one of the editors of Humanité, the Communist daily and one of the Party leaders on the central committee and also the Mayor of Ville Juif, a workers' suburb of Paris.

About a year ago, Comrade Paul was given a six-months term in prison by a fascist judge for something he had written. He was naturally bored with his vacation and persuaded the prison authorities to permit him to have some paint and canvas. Paul had been too busy to experiment in this art, which, like all good Frenchmen, he adored. So in prison he painted and painted and ac-

cumulated canvasses. When he came out, his friends persuaded him to hold an exhibition. It made quite a stir; even the bourgeois critics praised the prison artist.

But now Paul is up to his neck in Party work again. He is one of the most popular Communists in France. His painting adventure has not handicapped him politically. I wonder what would happen to Clarence Hathaway if he began to write sonnets or to Earl Browder if he should join the Composers' Collective and write proletarian songs. Bob Minor felt it necessary to suppress his great art in order to do political work. Nobody would have felt that way in France, I believe.

Comrade Vaillant-Couturier is also a remarkable cook. Babel and I visited his suburb with him one Friday morning. We first visited the clinic, where for less than fifty cents workers get a thorough medical examination, with X-rays and the finest apparatus. (Unemployed free.) Then Mayor Paul sat in his office and the workers poured in with their troubles—unemployed workers, mostly, who'd been cut off relief and the like. Then Mayor Paul went shopping in the butcher shops and groceries, and smiling chauffeurs, street cleaners and housewives came up to shake hands, saying "Comrade!"

At home, the Mayor turned into a master cook; I tasted nothing better in France, home of the world's greatest cooks, than his sauces, delicate as the herbs of the springtime.

As we were sitting at lunch, the bell rang. A very fat and stylish man of the middle class came puffing in. He mopped his brow and talked to Comrade Paul earnestly. He was the owner of a laundry. During the war he had served with Comrade Paul in the tanks and was one of his best friends. For years, however, they hadn't seen each other; but during the past year, this man, a Radical Republican, grew deeply aroused against the fascist menace. This had brought him around to seeing Comrade Paul now and again.

Well, the day before, a friend of his who owned a café had had a group of fascists eating in his place and had listened in on their talk. They were gleefully planning, it seems, to make an armed raid soon on the home of Comrade Paul.

"You must be on your guard, Paul," said the fat, respectable businessman, earnestly. "Whenever there is a sign of trouble, you must phone me at once. I will bring my friends with our guns and we will finish these people."

Paul thanked him and said he would be sure to phone. When the friend had left, he smiled and said, "Do you see how some of our businessmen feel these days?"

The Sunday before that was one of the great days at the Communist suburb, Ville Juif. A new main boulevard that runs to Fountainbleu was to be opened. The Communist suburb had decided to name it after Maxim Gorky. Everywhere on the walls were red posters calling on the people to assemble in homage to the great proletarian writer, Maxim Gorky.

Ten thousand men, women and children were gathered on the hot asphalt of a burning summer day. The fireman's band played "The Internationale." André Gide unveiled the name-plaque and Michael Koltzov spoke briefly.

Red flags, gray old leonine workers in red sashes and velvet pants, smoking their pipes; the lively, happy Pioneer kids in their red scarfs and khaki shorts; gymnasts, mothers in shawls pushing baby carriages, the lean, fighting youth, in berets and overalls; workers with big moustaches and beards, wearing caps; shopkeepers and clerks, the people of France.

Vaillaint-Conturier introduced André Gide as "our great comrade who has risen to the defense of world culture and the working class." And the crowd of proletarians shouted, "Vive la culture!" André Gide dedicated the Maxim Gorki Boulevard. He was deeply moved. He said later it was the first time in his sixty years that he had spoken to workers at a demonstration in the streets.

Then we marched for several miles behind the firemen's band to the athletic stadium. Songs, cries, slogans; and from the sidewalks, other workers cheered from their front doors and little gardens.

I will never forget a fiery old man in the procession who was the delegate of the Paris Commune. He shouted and sang at the top of his powerful lungs, this rugged septuagenarian and by the hand he led a little boy of three.

The old Communards have an organization in Paris and he was here to represent them, dressed in a red sport shirt, like Garibaldi's, a big red sash and an armband that said, "Vive la Commune, 1871." He sweated with excitement, his eyes flashed, his long white hair waved in the breeze. He taught the little boy, who was carrying a red pennant, to raise his little fist in the Red Front salute and to sing "The Internationale."

I talked to the old Communard. His name was Louis Gomet and he was a Socialist. "Ah, it is a great day! I am rejoiced to see this day of the young. If my wife were only here! She is not in her first youth, you understand, but still charming. Yes, charming! Do you know, I spent three days in prison last month for fighting a fascist in a café. He had insulted my Communard shirt. Here is the warrant they served me. I am proud of it. Here, little one, let's sing the 'Carmangole.' I will show you the way we sang it on the barricades."

Slogans: "Disarm the Fascist Leagues!" "Put Chiappe in Prison!" "De La Roque to the Gallows!" "Soviets Everywhere!"

The stadium: young athletes of the Red Commune go through a series of exercises, while the band plays the "Carmangole."

We visit the Karl Marx Children's School, one of the finest in the world. Designed by André Durcat and a collective of Red architects, erected by the Red carpenters, stonemasons and plumbers of Ville Juif, in the year 1932. The first modern children's school in France. Architects and other visitors have come to see it from all over the world. It is well worth seeing; an entrancing monument to a new and freer life, built in the midst of the old.

I have always had a slight prejudice against modernist architecture. Much of it seems faddist, a straining to be different at any cost. Inhuman and cerebral exercises by bourgeois artists who are removed from the people, it gives one no joy. But this school is both modernist and human and a joy to the heart and the mind.

It was built, not to please the architects, but the children. But the architects were Communists and loved and understood the children, so they too found a joy in the task. Great glass walls everywhere; so that the sunlight pours in on the children all day; it is like being outdoors, even in the wintertime. Beautiful yellow and blue tiling, murals everywhere, to delight the children; beautiful laboratories for little scientists, great porches to play games in on rainy days; marvelous maps and a dining room and model kitchen; classrooms that are interesting as little theatres; a children's palace, clean, happy and bright with color, sunlight and a new spirit.

All the Socialist and Communist suburbs are now building such schools for the workers' children. But in wealthy New York, under capitalism, many children still spend their days in dismal old firetrap buildings, where the toilets stink and the air smells like prison and the teachers are driven like factory slaves.

A little banquet had been arranged for the visiting authors in the dining room of the school. Here, surrounded by the workers, we drank toasts in champagne to Karl Marx, to the Soviet Union, to the Communist Mayor Paul Vaillant-Couturier and to the Socialist and Communist workers of Ville Juif.

Then back to the stadium; where through the loudspeakers, each of us made a brief address of salutation—Alexie Tolstoy, Michael Koltzov, Louis Aragon, André Gide, Isaac Babel, Erich Weinert and others. And as each speaker ended, a worker of Ville Juif stepped forward with a great bouquet of roses, lilies, gladioli and fern, all from the local gardens, and presented it to the visiting author and kissed him on both cheeks.

7.

GOOD-BYE, Paris, au revoir, beautiful city that for centuries has held the world's imagination. I am going back to my own raw, young city and land that I love painfully, the way a man loves a woman who is bad for him. France, your devoted sons love you in a different manner. Did I not hear Leon Moussinac, the gifted and passionate Communist novelist and critic, argue with great fervor that a revolution was necessary soon, if the glorious wines of France were to be saved, if the traditions of the great

vineyards were not to be destroyed by the capitalist depression?

Au revoir, Paris. Your generals and bankers love blood and gold but your ditch-diggers and machinists love flowers and song and love. Your clerks dream of painting and poetry and your scientists and artists are ready to fight on the barricades for humanity against fascism.

Au revoir. I can understand why Americans, like the rest of the world, have ever been fascinated by your charm. Some of them have found only the tourist perversion and filth in you but your real self has been revealed to the artist and the revolutionist. Au revoir. I shall never forget your streets where the great story of humanity is revealed on every corner, where one meets memorials to a Danton, a Pasteur, a Claude Bernard, where side by side with an ancient monastery one finds a statue to a young student who was tortured by the Inquisition or to the first printer of libertarian books, his arms tied behind his back as he proudly awaits the executioner.

The great tradition of democracy and science that began here in the Renaissance hovers with wings of terror and beauty over every one of your alleys. Paris, it is an old story to you but to me it was still thrilling to travel by subway to stations bearing such names as Danton, Jean Jaures, Saint Simon, Place de la Bastille and to walk on streets named after Balzac, Baudelaire, Laplace and Lenin.

Au revoir, dear Paris. Now I know that the bourgeois dilettante lied about you. You are not a city of cheap vice and easy emotions. You are deep, serious and passionate unto the death over the great human things. You have always been so. It is no accident that you were the birthplace of the Commune, which served as model for Marx and Lenin and the proletarian democracy of the Soviets.

Your working people, as I studied them in mass meetings, in cafés, in streets, have a collective soul beautiful as anything I have seen. Hungry, cheated and oppressed, they have never been degraded. They have a deathless instinct for culture and beauty and through blood and anguish, you must beat the fascists, for they would destroy all this, they will take this soul of your people and make of it a dull, senseless cog in a brutal military machine.

The free soul of French culture and the French people is too good for such a fate. But the Soviets will release all this mass genius, this wonderful spirit. Your people have traveled far, they are ready to be a super-race, when the wisdom of your past is incorporated in the daily life, when culture will be free to all, when democracy releases every talent, when workers and intellectuals build a new socialist France.

Les Soviets partout! Soviets everywhere! Until then, au revoir, Paris, and accept the gratitude and hopes of another infatuated American!

Correspondence

Butler Not a Fascist

To The New Masses:

In the July 2 issue of The New Masses a serious political error was made. In an editorial the following sentence appears:

> He [the middle-class man] is a natural prey to the Huey Longs, Father Coughlins, the Hearsts and the Smedley Butlers, because he does not distinguish between promises and action.

The editorial was correct in so far as it characterized Long, Coughlin and Hearst, to whom could be added Macfadden and the signers of Hearst's "new declaration of independence," including one of the co-signers, William Green, president of the A. F. of L., who thus openly associates himself with the most reactionary forces in the country. A number of names of other individuals and organizations could be added, showing the wide ramifications of fascist forces in this country.

This, however, should not lead to linking up others whose *actions*—the measure of political line—take a different course. No matter what his past has been, it cannot be said of Smedley Butler in recent periods that he is lining up with the fascists. On the contrary, Butler's disclosure before a Senate Committee that he had been offered the job of leading 500,000 veterans to Washington to take control, either with Roosevelt accepting the fascist line or deposing Roosevelt and setting up a dictatorship, was an act against fascism. Butler, it will be remembered, also declared that the offer came from Wall Street.

Butler endorsed the students' anti-war strike on April 12. He also appeared on the same platform with Earl Browder at a meeting in New York on the bonus issue, I believe. A man who is willing to speak at a meeting with Communists, adopting a similar line, cannot be called a fascist and certainly is running counter to the fascist policy of Hearst, Coughlin and Long.

No one can tell today how far Butler will go. Political developments might be such in the near future as to change his course. It is not our job to create gulfs where none exist, but on the contrary to build bridges that will enable sincere people of all political and religious opinions to come closer and cooperate with us in the burning task of mobilizing the forces against fascism and war.

New York City. I. Amter.

Dr. Sealock's Suicide

To The New Masses:

In a correspondence brief of a letter I sent you on the Sealock case, printed in your issue of July 23, through an error you quote as my own a statement by Paul Martin, one of the regents of of Muncipial University who resigned in protest against the dismissal of Sealock.

Martin said, in part, "Dr. Sealock was not the sort who enjoys a fight, but he fought with courage when he was forced to. I think he had simply gone through so much that he could not face the prospect of a long fight ahead."

For myself, I cannot subscribe to this justification of Dr. Sealock's action. It was the logical conclusion of the typical liberal response to incipient fascism. Some of these destroy themselves physically; braver no doubt than those who commit moral suicide and fall lower and lower until they are accepting a pension from Hitler or writing a column for Hearst. But whatever Dr. Sealock had "gone through," however painful and trying, it cannot be mentioned in the same breath with what Communists in Germany, Japan, China, Bulgaria, to mention only some, are enduring bravely and with undying resistance.

The Scott Nearings, the Granville Hicks, those who, in whatever degree, feel their strength in the rising consciousness and militancy of the working class, do not shrink from a fight, nor feel themselves overwhelmed by the brutal, slavering appearance of capitalism at bay. They can see past the terror to the advancing movement it is trying vainly to quell—the coming to power of the working class, which alone will advance education, expand culture.

Dr. Sealock would not have taken poison if he could once have felt the relationship between the struggle of the Municipal University to maintain itself as a free educational institution and the fight for decent living conditions of the street-car men, going on at the same time. Petersen, Johnson, the heads of the Chamber of Commerce that was trying to shackle and crush the University, are on the board of directors of the car company, the spearhead of the capitalist offensive against the trade unions in Omaha. The people here feel this relationship. Their response to both situations was instant and the same—fight. How could this man have been so insensible of the forces behind him as to have left them leaderless and confused in the midst of the battle? The "No" of a vicious corporation head meant more to him than the emphatic "Yes" of thousands of workers, students, teachers who had rallied in the fight for academic freedom.

Some of the liberal professors yet on the campus are making the same mistake. One of them said, "It would hurt our cause to involve the trade unions in the University fight." Still holding illusions of academic dignity, still in hopes of "keeping politics off the campus," although the local fascists, under the aegis of the regents, daily invade it with patrio-pathologic antics, and Mrs. Harris, angel of the local Silver Shirts, makes the front page with the statement that the faculties of the local universities are "uninformed" as to the danger of Communism on the campus," "and refuse to be taught"; and their classrooms are invaded by spies paid with F.E.R.A. funds.

The people of Omaha will look to stronger leaders in the fight against the C. of C. and its Silver Shirts and scab-herding agents. Dr. Sealock was only a pitiable victim of menacing fascism, where he might have been a standard bearer in the fight to defeat it.

I hope you will make a correction of the error. My comrades will think I have gone soft in the head.

Malvina Reynolds.

P. S. Additional material on the Finerty story. The chief of police of Council Bluffs came to the strikers and asked them if the company might replace the windows in their buildings, since it might rain in. "Sure," said the strikers. "It's no fun throwing bricks through windows with no glass in them." So the windows were boarded up. At present writing, however, glass is in the windows. The enclosed leaflet announces a picket line which effectively kept the cars in the barn this morning—in Council Bluffs, that is. Omaha cars still run. Continual stonings on the outside, where the packing workers live, are not reported in the papers.

M. R.

Omaha, Neb.

"Teachers Fight Back"

To The New Masses:

An editorial paragraph in the July 16 issue headed, "Teachers Fight Back," makes favorable comment on the fact that an organized opposition at this last N.E.A. convention forced through a resolution to cooperate wtih other agencies in maintaining the principles of academic freedom as well as a plan to have a committee of the organization investigate violations of academic freedom with a view toward combatting these conditions.

The militancy that drove this resolution through (over the opposition of the reactionary leadership) was good. No doubt it springs from the rank-and-file classroom teacher who has suffered most both

from such onslaughts as well as from the betraying leadership of the N.E.A. which has never even made a gesture in defense, although at last year's convention a resolution upholding academic freedom was passed.

But the leadership of the present fight in the organization, as reported in the press, is a very bad one, perhaps even worse—if we take note of the increasing need of defense which present conditions show. And for this reason, the tone of approval in the paragraph, even though it was somewhat tempered by the last sentence, is generally misleading. For it gives one the impression that the teachers have only to follow their new leaders, to safeguard their interests. In fact, the opposite is the case.

Prof. William Heard Kilpatrick of Teachers College, one of these "leaders" has an approach to the fight for academic freedom that is as dangerous as that of the conservatives whom he fought.

In the first place, though he sounds, at times, like one who is eager to do battle, Prof. Kilpatrick has proved himself on at least one occasion, as unwilling to make a forthright move, as the worst of those in the N.E.A. whom he fought. James M. Shields was ousted last year by the tobacco interests of Winston-Salem, N. C., for his novel, *Just Plain Larnin'*, which tore the cover off the intimidation in that baronial fief. It was Prof. Kilpatrick who refused to allow the committee that interested itself in the case, to give any publicity to it, even though the reporters were waiting for it at that time. The committee never met again. No action was taken. The slim news note which appeared a few days later must have gotten out in spite of him. Mr. Shields received a lesson in militant talk and nonexistent action. A suggestion made that evening that the case be broadcast to the classroom teachers everywhere and that protest action be based on the rank and file instead of the "leaders" of organizations as he suggested, was passed by in cold silence by the professor.

If his action on that occasion justifies the suspicion that the new N.E.A. fight for academic freedom will end just where the old one did, then his basic approach, his line, so to speak, promises even worse.

In a Times article on July 14, Prof. Kilpatrick's discussion of the "great step forward" which the N.E.A. convention took at Denver omits entirely the sole reason why boards of trustees and enquiry on the part of students and free speech on the part of the teachers did not threaten to hamper the program of the ruling capitalists who control schools and colleges; if academic freedom for both students and teachers did not lead to action against their program of hunger, fascism and war, then, of course, Granville Hicks, Isidore Begun, Williana Burroughs and Isidore Blumberg, to cite only a few, would not have been expelled, nor would the students all over the country have been victimized for opposing fascism and war.

Yet, with two columns at his command, Professor Kilpatrick "leads" the fight for academic freedom by saying:

"The only way to solve the new problems (i. e. 'changed conditions') is by thinking out new solutions or making new adaptations." And he concludes with "It was essentially a victory for intelligence over obscurantism," having previously emphasized the point that "Those who would hamper and restrict the schools are enemies of intelligence."

Are we going to win the fight for academic freedom with such a plan of battle? Not by a long shot. These "enemies of intelligence" are our boards of trustees and education who are by their very nature the executives of dominating finance-capital today. When they fire teachers and victimize students, they use precisely this cry of "intelligence" to conceal their real reasons. Their cool excuse is, in one form or another, that they want "intelligent discussion of all sides of the question." But they do not want action, they do not want decisions made either by students or by teachers. This is propaganda. In this connection, note the professor's contribution; he says:

"If people are to be intelligent, on any issue; they must be so on all sides and aspects of that issue."

Harold C. Hand, assistant professor at Stanford University, is another of these progressive educators "leading" the fight for academic freedom. Before the opening of the Denver convention, he delivered himself of a speech on "Freedom of Teaching." It is interesting that the station which put itself at the service of this drive for freedom of teaching was station KYA—operated by Hearst. Apparently, no objections from this foremost opponent of academic freedom were seriously made. After sketching the "changing conditions" (a term which these progressive educators hold dear without ever making it clear that these conditions are changing for the worse and will continue to become worse until a fight puts an end to these worsening conditions), he concludes with this flourish:

"If we would *'think'* [his italics and quotes] and not fight our way out of our present social and economic perplexities we dare not intimidate and gag the teachers in our schools and colleges."

Like his "progressive" colleague, Prof. Kilpatrick, he shadow-boxes vigorously while those who are slowly depriving him of security strike blow after blow at the schools throughout the country, and themselves encourage "thinking" rather than fighting.

Another sample of the new leadership. The leading bureaucrat of the New York local of the American Federation of Teachers, Dr. Abraham Lefkowitz was also on the spot to support these resolutions. His "leadership" at home, during these few months just passed, has been devoted to initiating a move for the expulsion of minority opposition groups in the local. Together with the reactionary president of the local, Henry L. Linville, he has succeeded in getting a committee of the A. F. of L. to "investigate" the local. Discussed in the New York educational pages of the newspapers as a likely candidate for appointment by the Red-baiting Board of Education, to the post of principal, what prospects are there for a sincere and effective fight for academic freedom from such a "leader"?

Moreover, when Granville Hicks appealed to Henry L. Linville for assistance in his fight for reinstatement, he was met with the usual "militancy" of such hypocrites. Sorry, you are an unemployed teacher, he was told, and therefore, our constitution prevents us from fighting your case; furthermore, we cannot, under our rules take up a case which already has a grievance.

Moreover, when Granville Hicks applied to Henry L. Linville for admission to the New York local, he was met with the following in substance: that he was unemployed and further, that he was entering with a grievance, and therefore he was not eligible to membership; politely, however, Mr. Linville added that they would look into the case.

Now, what prospects for an effective fight can one see in such leadership? True, it was a victory for the rank and file at Denver to have at least obtained "investigating" committees over the heads of their bureaucrats. But, there is not the slightest doubt that it was only an *initial* victory. The enemies of academic freedom are among the teachers as well as about them. And unless this new "leadership" is cast aside by the classroom teacher who organizes the fight himself on the basis of school organization, school committees, and fights on his home ground against every infringement of academic freedom in his own bailiwick, and protests every national case of this kind, also school by school, the succeeding year will see even a greater number of victims to the drive toward lowered living standards, fascism and war.

In the light of these facts, to approve what happened at the Denver convention without discussion or explanation of the prospects, does not help the situation. The false sense of security which such approval gives is harmful.

New York City. B. JOSEPHSON.

An Appreciation

TO THE NEW MASSES:

Your issue of August 6 was simply magnificent. It seems to me that it came close to an ideal fulfillment of its aim and function.

This is the revolutionary craftsmanship that speeds the day when America will "Awake and Sing." One thrills with pride that such editing and writing (from Gold and North, all the way through to the correspondent, Miss F——) springs so naturally and inevitably from the Marxist camp. One thrills to such able play with the rapier whose point will not be blunted. And one thrills especially to recordings of the seven-league strides being taken in the U.S.S.R. by humanity unchained—strides across frontiers of cultural activities, frontiers of security and dignity and decency in human living, frontiers which mock every philosophy except the Red.

For my part, possibly because I am an "average" reader in the audience you address, I can find no fault with the general balance of the material appearing in THE NEW MASSES. I can only rage against an "average" impotence to blast away more of the killing financial worries from the shoulders of your staff, to the end that you give us more, and more, and more, of the same.

Cambridge, Mass. W. W. HAYNES.

Letters in Brief

Mass picketing of Lebanon Hospital in support of twenty-six workers, locked out three months ago, continues, the Association of Federation Workers of 685 Jackson Avenue, The Bronx, advises us. Fifty-two pickets have been arrested but the struggle has attracted the support of the League Against War and Fascism, Young Socialist League, Communist Party, Home Relief Bureau Employes Association and the Young Communist League.

C. W. Pilgrim, member of the Cooks' Union, San Francisco, takes issue with Leonard J. Grumet because of the latter's statement that lawyers do practice their profession in the Soviet Union. He makes the point that the persons referred to as lawyers are trained students of jurisprudence who explain the law to workers. Lawyers, he insists, have no place under a Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

Ella Winter writes from Carmel, Calif., to correct an error in her article "Love in Two Worlds" in the July 16 issue: "I understand Stanley Richardson is no longer A.P. correspondent in Moscow and that the despatch I spoke of as coming from his typewriter actually came from another A.P. man's. My apologies to Stanley Richardson."

Frank Lloyd Wright's answer to Alexander's review of the Broadacre City Art Exhibit at Radio City has stirred the ire of Garlin Henri. He writes us that Wright's theory of creative individuality makes for social retardation.

Louis A. Thompson, member of Sailors Union of the Pacific, writes to praise Bruce Minton's article on the longshoremen's convention. Seattle longshoremen found the article very much to their liking, he says.

The consistent refusal of New York city colleges to employ Negro faculty members and administrative workers is under fire from the Provisional Committee Against Discriminatory Practices in City Colleges, Secretary Jerry Jonson, of 409 West 141st Street, writes. The Committee is urging that qualified Negroes apply for positions and asks to be informed as to what happens.

REVIEW AND COMMENT

Mr. Jackson Sees It Through

THE POST-WAR WORLD—A Short Political History, 1918-1934. J. Hampden Jackson. Little, Brown and Company. 436 *pages.* $2.50.

MR. JACKSON teaches history in Haileybury College, England. He has written a book which, he says, aims "to make the history of the world intelligible to the ordinary newspaper-reading man." This is an outline of history since the Armistice. Mr. Jackson is another British liberal. Like H. G. Wells' Mr. Britling, he is pained and disturbed by the suicidal collapse of capitalistic civilization and wants to be kindly, dispassionate, clear-headed and hopeful. Like Britling (Wells), he is more than a little muddled and shrinks from unpleasant conclusions.

Nevertheless—to give praise first where praise is due—Mr. Jackson's book is a useful survey of events. It is lucidly written, sometimes charming, occasionally suggestive, once in a while naive. It is curiously proportioned. Western Europe gets only 114 pages and the Soviet Union forty-two, while the Near East gets sixty-four and Africa, the Far East and America almost two hundred. Hu Shih, Chinese intellectual, gets five pages, but Nazi Germany only six. Nazi militarism and imperialism do not exist. Mr. Jackson does not know that fascism is breeding war in Europe, no less than in Africa. But, paradoxically, these blindnesses and disproportions give the book added value. It is all but worthless on continental politics, national or international, but excellent on Turkey and Arabia. It is weak on Germany and the Balkans, but strong on Egypt, Persia, Indo-China and South Africa. The "backward regions," which do not get into the newspapers, do get into Mr. Jackson's book. He summarizes recent developments within them with considerable skill.

A historian, however, should at least be accurate. Mr. Jackson says, "it is impossible to be accurate when writing of movements which are still in progress." But Mr. Jackson may reasonably be expected to know (to cite but a few of the gross mistakes) that American trade unions were not "outlawed" in 1920; that no Italians, but only fifteen refugee children, were murdered in Corfu in 1923 and not by the Greeks but by Mussolini; that the Nazi putsch of 1923 was not a "march on Berlin"; that the T.V.A. is not "collectivism"; that the U.S.A. has made no barter agreement with the U.S.S.R.; that a Soviet shop committee is not a "collective"; that the Soviets did not attack Poland in 1920; that French and British troops in the intervention did not "desert" their White allies and "very successfully evacuate" Russia, but were driven out by the Red Army and by internal mutiny; that the Nazis did not win a majority in the election of March, 1933; that there is no such body as a "Council of Soviets" and that it is not the supreme legislature of the U.S.S.R.; that. . . . But a complete list of errors would be too long. It is too long, even in a book of such wide scope as this.

"Liberal" historians are also supposed to be "impartial." Mr. Jackson makes a great show of impartiality, even though he concedes that "it is impossible to be impartial." Like most British liberals, however, he is anti-French, pro-German, anti-Soviet. He cannot conceal his prejudices. Fascism has made Italy "united, alert, proud and hopeful." Hitler "very properly" took Germany out of the League in 1933. Russia is "oriental" and "childish." Allan Monkhouse gets half a page to describe the "terror" of the G.P.U. There was "truth" (!) in stories that the Bolsheviks tortured prisoners, raped women and butchered babies. Trotzky is kosher, but Stalin is "not a prepossessing character." And so on.

But the pity of it is—and this is the tragedy of all contemporary liberalism—that Mr. Jackson has reasonably sound humanitarian instincts and has more than an inkling of what is wrong with the world, albeit seen darkly through a glass. He hates oppression and exploitation. He is all for "justice" to workers, Negroes, Jews and miserable colonial slaves. He detests Bolshevism, but he concedes that it has made the Russian workers free, prosperous and enlightened. And "the only government in China which offered the workers a square deal was that of the Soviets." Mr. Jackson, moreover, perceives that capitalism is bankrupt and that "industrial riches cannot be converted into communal wealth by the oppression of class by class and of nation by nation."

In the sequel Mr. Jackson is bewildered. And the end he only knows, vaguely, that his age is "the age of the second great Revolution in the history of the modern world." The first, 1789, gave the people a voice in government. The second is to give them control of the wealth they have created and of the economic institutions they have labored to build. The last sentence in this stimulating and exasperating book is: "There is no need to emphasize the fact that the second Revolution was far from complete in 1934." Mr. Jackson would think more clearly if he devoted some attention to a particular organization which is concerned with this Revolution. He does not bother to mention it. It is called the Communist International.

ARNOLD W. BARTELL.

The Peasant Poet

THE POEMS OF JOHN CLARE. Two vols. Edited by J. W. Tibble. Dutton and Co. $8.

JOHN CLARE: A LIFE. By J. W. and Anne Tibble. Oxford Univ. Press. $3.25.

THE appearance of the peasant as artist is a rare phenomenon in English literature, which is almost entirely a record of bourgeois expression. Centuries separate Langland and Burns and those are the only outstanding names. A little over a hundred years ago the poetical works of John Clare, the peasant poet of Northampton, had great vogue. His poems outsold those of his great contemporary Keats; then he was quickly forgotten. Within the last ten or fifteen years there has been a revival of interest in his work (as bourgeois literary criticism is driven to look beyond its immediate field for values): a volume of Clare's poetry was issued by Edmund Blunden and Alan Porter in 1920, another by Blunden in 1924; in 1932 J. W. and Anne Tibble published a biography of the poet, and now J. W. Tibble has brought out two volumes of Clare's poetry, almost a thousand items, about a third of which are here printed for the first time. The two volumes retail for eight dollars, and so it is unlikely that they will reach many members of Clare's own class, either in England or America, nor will many workers be able to afford them. Clare will have to remain the property of libraries and such scholars as can reach him there, or be passed on to a wider public by those reviewers who can beg copies from the publishers. His career offers an interesting study of what force the antagonism of classes can exert on the life and mind of a poet.

Clare was born in 1793 in Helpston, a small village in the northeast corner of Northamptonshire, a district of no particular prominence in literary geography. Clare was the runty one of twins, a condition which was not improved by undernourishment. But this runtiness was a factor in his subsequent literary career, for it not only developed his sensitivity by marking him off as different, but also exempted him from labor in its most arduous and exhausting phases. (Clare, like Keats, never grew much over five feet high.) He went to school: we are told that the wages for eight weeks work paid for one month's schooling,

and that schooling was available three months out of the twelve. But Clare managed to get a pretty good education, studied nature as well as books and began to dabble in rhyme. His aspiration was stimulated and his powers grew and expanded under the influence of his love for Mary Joyce, but the relationship sowed the seed of great unhappiness in Clare's later life. The causes were primarily economic. "She felt her station above mine; at least I felt that she thought so; for her parents were farmers and farmers had great pretensions to something then." This was in Clare's teens; there followed a period of demoralization arising not only from this personal frustration but also from the changes that were imposed on the general life of the village by the operation of enclosure acts. These "altered the very structure of the village, obliterated its long-established customs, swept away the independence and freedom of the old community. . . . In spite of the growth of luxury among farmers and the better classes after this alteration in the land, the class to which Clare belonged sunk deeper and deeper into poverty and distress . . . [what the Clares lost was the chance of near and permanent work for father and son. Farmers bought up the land from those who could not afford to keep it, enclosed their farms, and hired bailiffs to work them as economically as possible. While the laborer lost his independence and his cow, at the same time he frequently lost his work as well."] The illness of his father and mother forced the Clare family on the parish bounty in 1815 or 16, but by 1818, Clare, in spite of the fact that he had taken over the main responsibility of providing for father, mother and sister, had found enough encouragement to warrant trying to publish his verses at his own expense. He proposed to issue them by subscription, if he could secure 300 subscribers. The whole business went very slowly, but eventually led to his publication in 1820 by the firm of Taylor and Hessey, of London, who were also the publishers of John Keats.

Clare's stuff went over with a bang. *Poems Descriptive of Rural Life and Scenery* went into four editions, selling around three thousand copies before the end of the year. Clare visited London, making a host of literary acquaintances who treated him with great admiration and respect. Friends known and unknown gave him books, and money, both earned and given, seemed to pour in. Nitwits of all varieties, including autograph hunters, came out to take a gander at him and make general nuisances of themselves. During the year he had married: this was something of a shot-gun affair, for Patty was eight months pregnant at the time; Clare said he held out as long as he could and then married her. He now had what seemed a small fortune to live on in Helpston; it looked as if he had brought off one chance in a million and actually succeeded in elevating himself, as he said, "out of the dull and obstinate class from whence I struggled into light like one struggling from the nightmare in his sleep." But the appearance of prosperity was more illusory than real. "His new income," Tibble points out, "was in fact just a little more than the thirty pounds a year he might have earned as a day laborer. Now the earnings of a day laborer in 1820, in view of the cost of living at that time, were not sufficient for even the barest needs; from the first Clare had to support his parents as well as his own family; and the little more was swallowed by those necessary expenses, unknown to the peasant, which he incurred as a writer. It is true that his patrons thought he could easily add to his income by part-time work at his old occupations; his letters from London friends often contained idyllic pictures of the happy life he was supposed to be leading in his country retreat, composing poems or working in the fields just as it pleased him, free from care. They do not seem to have considered what employer would hire a laborer on those terms. Clare did in fact work in the fields in the busy harvest months whenever he was able; but at other times there was little enough work for the full-time laborer. Knowing from experience the difficulties and uncertainties of the peasant's lot, Clare naturally turned his hopes toward his new profession rather than his old."

He now began to learn something about the trials as well as the joys of authorship. He found, for one thing, that fellow-authors who had little title to consider themselves his superior, could be other than friendly; Sir Walter Scott, for instance, acted towards him in a quite snooty manner. Patrons were inclined to assume the privilege of censoring his writings; persons whom he considered his very good friends asked him to exclude from future editions such radical and ungrateful sentiments as

> Accursed Wealth! o'er-bounding human laws,
> Of every evil thou remain'st the cause.
> Victims of want, those wretches such as me,
> Too truly lay their wretchedness to thee:
> Thou art the bar that keeps from being fed,
> And thine our loss of labor and of bread;
> Thou art the cause that levels every tree,
> And woods bow down to clear a way for thee.

He found publishers dawdlesome, difficult to do business with on a clearcut basis of understanding; and the situation was complicated by the interest and interference of well-meaning friends. *The Village Minstrel,* published in '21, did not sell nearly so well as Clare's first book; and Clare, who had shown excellent level-headedness in his ability to stand prosperity began to worry, misbehave a little, drink more than he should. By 1825 the boom in the literary market was showing signs of collapse and the publishers' lack of confidence, plus their actual financial distress in the crash of '26, kept Clare's next book, *The Shepherd's Calendar,* from appearing until 1827. By then the market was completely cold. There is an interesting passage in Tibble's biography dealing with the situation. "Writing to Montgomery, Clare suggested that the rage for novels was perhaps the cause of the decline of interest in poetry. Montgomery replied, 'Poetry has had its day in the present age and two more generations must go by before there is such another revival in its favor, as was excited by the agitation of human minds of every degree and order, by the events of the French Revolution'." At any rate *The Rural Muse,* published in 1835, was the last book of Clare's to be published during his life time. It contained his best work, but after two years the first edition was still on the market with no takers. The law of diminishing return had operated in Clare's case with a vengeance: as his ability and need increased, the monetary return grew less: the crash of 1826 had cut the income from his securities, and it seemed as if only his marriage paid any dividends. He had seven living children in 1836.

The failure of *The Rural Muse,* to all intents and purposes, marked the end. Clare had put up a hell of a fight. In '32 he had moved his family to Northborough to try his luck as a cottage farmer; the transplanting to new and more commodious quarters was a matter of scarcely more than furlongs, but the feeling that his life was being uprooted weighed heavily upon a sensitive spirit with Clare's attachment to his native soil. Economic independence—"to arrive at that climax when I can say I owe no man a shilling and feel that I can pay my way"—was still beyond reach. Clare had insufficient funds to stock his farm, and had to rent it out for less than it cost. The mind had exhausted its ability to bounce back from disappointment and the mental crisis became acute. In 1837 Clare was removed to an asylum, and except for a brief interlude of escape remained in that kind of special environment till his death in '64. In its earlier stages his derangement did not seem past remedy: Dr. Allen, in 1840, offered prescription: "I had not the slightest hesitation in saying that if a small pension could be obtained for him, he would have recovered instantly and most probably remained well for life." But even after Clare's case was considered hopeless, he persisted in devotion to his Muse, as if in disintegration the poetic element was the last to be affected. The complete edition of his poems contains over two hundred items written in High Beech and Northampton asylums, and these are by no means inferior or eccentric pieces.

Clare was not a major poet, but what he wrote was honest, amiable and at times quite fine. By our standards he wrote too much and had too little distrust or self-repetition. He tended to be a child of Nature rather than a mature artist. In criticising one of his earlier poems, Keats observed that the description prevailed too much over the sentiment; it was a fault that Clare later somewhat corrected, but in general he seems to have assumed that a faithful enumeration or cataloguing of poetic items was enough, that arrangement and selection made less difference and that the emotion could be taken for granted. Few poets have had a better eye than Clare; not Keats nor even Shakespeare had a more passionate perception of the diminutive. His ear was less attuned to intimate effects within the line than to the line's general fluency. He was an imitator skilful enough to pass off as Elizabethan

discoveries some of his own poems composed in the manner of the older poets, and these include some excellent work. Where he seems to us to be guilty of less conscious imitation, he was probably using the general literary vernacular of his time rather than appropriating any particular poem which has accidentally survived for our recognition. This vernacular, of course, was peculiarly unsuitable for a peasant poetry, because it derived directly from the authentic town, or phony pastoral, diction of of the preceding literary generation. Clare's genius was not potent enough to invent the new forms necessary for complete expression. Even within the conventional framework he was accused of debasing the language by the introduction of common words, coinages of his own, phonetic renditions of bird-songs, etc. This was a reproach which Clare was inclined to embrace; the language of Nature, he said, was never disgusting, and as to his provincialisms, which were common with the vulgar, "I am of that class, and I heartily desire no word of mine to be altered." But his words were altered in spite of him; the present editor is entitled to our thanks for restoring from the manuscript words and lines that seemed offensive to the taste of the publishers. Thus, a local legendary figure, one Jinny Burnt-Arse, reappears in proper guise instead of the bowdlerized "Jack O' Lantern," and there are many similar instances. Two topics in particular seem to have been equally taboo to the public taste, references to sexual pranks or to social injustice, even when merely incidental to the main theme of a poem. Clare could not, of course, and did not expect any one but himself to be responsible for the publication of a satirical poem like *The Parish*. "This poem," according to Clare's note, "was begun and finished under the pressure of heavy distress, with embittered feelings under a state of anxiety and oppression almost amounting to slavery, when the prosperity of one class was founded on the adversity and distress of the other. The haughty demand by the master to his laborer was 'Work for the little I choose to allow you and go to the parish for the rest—or starve.' To decline working under such 'advantages' was next to offending a magistrate, and no opportunity was lost in marking the insult by some unqualified oppression." We might quote from this previously unpublished satire a few verses which still ring with pertinence:

What is that shuffling shadow of a man
Where self-deceptions shine in every plan,
Who spouts of wisdom as the thing he craves
And treats the poor o'er whom he rules as slaves,
Who votes equality that all men share
And stints the pauper of his parish fare,
Who damns all taxes both of church and state
And on the parish lays a double rate?
Such is our hero in his tyrant pride,
Then is his honour's title misapplied;
Such with one breath scoff at the poor's distress
And bawl out freedom for their own redress.
These soft politic saints may freedom preach,
And vacant minds believe the lies they teach;
Who think them walking Canaans, flowing o'er
With milk and honey for the starving poor.
And sure enough, their wants may richly fare
If like chameleons they can feed on air;
Their promises, sown thick, degenerate run
And mildew into broken ones when done;
And though a plenteous seed-time dreams of gain,
A blighted harvest falsifies the pain;
Such promises to-day, to-morrow straight,
Like an old almanac, are out of date,
Thus freedom-preaching is but knavery's game
And old self-interest by another name.

Clare's failure in the aesthetic area as well as in the economic indicates not his lack of determination but, again, the measure of the odds against him. He was a man of resolute class-consciousness, yet condemned by that class-consciousness to aesthetic isolation. He might, without debasing his poetry, have improved his technical methods, or he might have debased his poetry and achieved a career if he had been more able to suck around after a lot of literary gents and publishers. He liked London, made friends and had a good time there, found stimulus for his work—but he knew when he had had enough and that he belonged in Helpston. He had no desire to turn his back on his own class, nor did he want indulgence as a poet because he happened to be a peasant; he despised that sort of adventitious interest in his writing. He wanted to be judged on his merit and paid accordingly. His work is a repository of source material concerning the peasant culture of his day; both the brighter and darker sides of peasant life are reflected, and it is a tribute to Clare's bravery and optimism that the brighter side predominates. It is curious that as his art progresses from a concern with community to a concern with self (or perhaps degenerates would be the more appropriate term), its tone more nearly approaches that of modern convention. Those who prate of art's right to independence might see how it worked in the case of Clare. By the end he had reached the goal of almost complete individualism. He does not seem to have been very happy about it.

I feel I am, I only know I am,
And plod upon the earth as dull and void;
Earth's prison chilled my body with its dram
Of dullness, and my soaring thoughts destroyed.
I fled to solitude from passion's dream,
But strife pursued: I only know I am.
I was a being created in the race
Of men, disdaining bounds of place and time;
A spirit that could travel o'er the space
Of earth and heaven like a thought sublime;
Tracing creation, like my Maker free,
A soul unshackled like eternity:
Spurning earth's vain and soul-debasing thrall—
But now I only know I am, that's all.

Reading of the life and career of John Clare, we can not help wondering what would be the fate of such a poet were he to attempt to function in the contemporary scene. Similar conditions exist; it would be absurd to argue that our country has nothing like a peasant class or the parish bounty. A review by Jack Balch in a recent number of THE NEW MASSES called attention to the neglected work of H. H. Lewis, who operates in the middle-Western area. Here is at least one interesting clue; there may be others: certainly Balch is right in suggesting that the non-urban field deserves fuller critical attention than it has so far received.

ROLFE HUMPHRIES.

Burial of Immortality

THE ILLUSION OF IMMORTALITY, by Corliss Lamont. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York. $3.00.

HAVE you a hankering suspicion that there might be a life after death? Do you easily dismiss the question by saying that there is no evidence on one side or the other? Then *The Illusion of Immortality* is the book for you. Lamont states his purpose clearly: "If the establishment of immortality as a basic fact in the minds of men is of crucial importance for religion, then the establishment of *mortality* is of equal significance for anti-religion" (p. 17). This thesis is not only logically true but important. Lamont shows beyond doubt that the essence of religion is the faith in some kind of future life. To turn away from religion is to turn away from the contemplation of heaven and a future life to the finding of significance and value in our daily life on this earth. As Marx so aptly put it: "The abolition of religion as the *illusory* happiness of the people is the demand for its *real* happiness. The demand to surrender illusions about its conditions is a *demand to surrender the conditions which need illusions. . . .*"

But just this is the shortcoming of such a book as Lamont has written on immortality. His thesis is a correct one, but in the mind of the present reviewer at least, he does not correctly follow it out. He seems to close himself to the idea of immortality and this leads him into the error of "arguing" against immortality, of marshalling scientific evidence against it and so forth. This means that the book is directed to a very small body of readers, a small group of college students and middle-class intellectuals who have not yet cut altogether clear from their religious heritage. Lamont himself is well aware of this for he expresses clearly the type he is writing for.

Today in the world large numbers of persons find themselves in a state of unhappy suspense over the idea of immortality. They are unable either to believe or disbelieve. They feel that personal survival is a rather doubtful proposition; yet the possibility of it continues to haunt them. A definitive settlement of the issue cannot but be for them a psychological gain. And there can be no question that their resolute acceptance of the fact that immortality as an illusion would be all to the good. It is best not only to disbelieve in immortality, but to *believe* in *mortality*. And this means not only to believe positively that death is the end, but also to believe in the worth-whileness of human life on this earth and in the high intrinsic value of the goods that men can attain during that life.

This is a noble sentiment nobly expressed. But this can lead today only to a relatively shallow and tedious book. It is the position

of Epicurus and Lucretius, of Helvetius and Holbach, rather than that of Marx and Marxists. For Marx has succinctly expressed himself on this question. He maintained that "The criticism of religion ends with the doctrine that man is the supreme being for mankind and therefore with the categorical imperative to overthrow all conditions in which man is a degraded, servile, neglected contemptible being. . . ."

It is not that Lamont ignores this point of view. He recognizes that just as a better society will weaken the belief in immortality so will a prior weakening in this belief help to bring about a better society. But his argument is directed *abstractly* to the refutation of the belief in immortality rather than concretely to the social conditions that foster it and the actual struggle for a better society which will cause its overthrow. The scientific portions that follow from his conception of his problem are terrifically tedious, simply because men do not believe or disbelieve in immortality merely because of scientific knowledge.

Still, with these general shortcomings, the book stands as a definite work of its kind. Beautifully written, its marshalling of the materials, its copious illuminating quotations and its fervent spirit make it an excellent treatise for those it sets out to convince—the agnostics who try to avoid the issue of a future life.

STUART GREEN.

Literature for Use

THE FARMERS' WAY OUT: Life Under a Workers' and Farmers' Government, by John Barnett. Workers' Library Publishers. 5 cents.

THE MINERS' ROAD TO FREEDOM: In a Soviet America, by Anna Rochester and Pat Toohey. Workers' Library Publishers. 5 cents.

SEAMEN AND LONGSHOREMEN UNDER THE RED FLAG: In a Soviet America, by Hays Jones. Workers' Library Publishers. 5 cents.

THE NEGROES IN A SOVIET AMERICA, by James W. Ford and James S. Allen. Workers' Library Publishers. 5 cents.

WAR IN AFRICA: Italian Fascism Prepares to Enslave Ethiopia, by James W. Ford and Harry Gannes. Workers' Library Publishers. 5 cents.

RELIGION AND COMMUNISM, by Earl Browder. Workers' Library Publishers. 3 cents.

THE SUPREME COURT'S CHALLENGE TO LABOR: The N.I.R.A. Decision a Signal for Intensified Attacks on the Workers, by William F. Dunne. Workers Library Publishers. 3 cents.

THE SOVIETS AND THE INDIVIDUAL, by Joseph Stalin. International Publishers. 2 cents.

THROUGH the medium of the pamphlet, many workers make their first contact with revolutionary thought. An individual desires information or clarification on a certain subject. The pamphlet is cheap and convenient. He takes it home, glances through it, puts it down, picks it up again. If the impact is sufficiently forceful, the pamphlet becomes the wedge opening the worker's mind to further literature and discussion.

For this reason, the importance of pamphleteering, so valuable a weapon in the hands of the working-class movement, cannot be overstressed. The pamphlet must be readable in type and text; its cover must attract; facts must be pertinent and accurate to gain and to hold the reader's confidence. When the pamphlet serves its purpose it invariably becomes a social possession rather than a personal one. Its reader becomes a participant in its message. The following is a typical example: a working woman procured a little two-cent brochure on the menace of fascism. It was not particularly well-printed, the type was too small, the paper was coarse newsprint, the cover was commonplace. But she liked the contents. After finishing it, she placed it in an empty milk bottle in the hall. The next morning it was gone. A few days later, the milkman rang the doorbell. He wanted to know where he could get additional copies and where he could obtain pamphlets on other subjects.

As a result of his recent reading he had subscribed to The Daily Worker. He had handed the pamphlet to his friends on other milk routes; in fact, it was falling apart even though it had been patched several times. Most of the men wanted more literature on similar topics. The pamphlet had clearly served its purpose, out of all proportion to its price.

The titles above represent, in almost every case, a thoroughly successful approach to pamphleteering. They are well printed, well put together, attractive—and cheap. The first four are designed in each instance for a definite audience—farmers, miners, workers on the waterfront, the Negro. Each one analyzes the present status of the category of workers under consideration, points out the evils and difficulties which these workers, individually and collectively, are up against in our present society. They all avoid a ranting, petulant tone; they explain with care and lucidity how capitalism inevitably brings conditions unfavorable to the working class as a whole and the specific forms these conditions take in the field under discussion. The pamphlets proceed to contrast this with what these same workers could expect were they living in a government run by and for workers and farmers. Twenty years ago, such predictions might have been labeled mere wishful thinking. But today, the Soviet Union stands as the proof. We often hear capitalist apologists in this country remark, "We admit things aren't ideal here; but after all though workers have gained something in the Soviet Union, still no American would be happy under such conditions." But facts speak for themselves. Security for the individual and his family, equal opportunity, cultural and physical benefits and steadily improving standard of living are universally good; whereas, inexorably, the once celebrated "American standard of living" is slipping to below the subsistence level and increasing unemployment and insecurity are becoming the characteristics of American economic life—as they are of life everywhere under capitalism. Each pamphlet carries the argument beyond mere comparison of conditions under the two economies: each pamphlet points the way out—not on a false basis of a promised alleviation overnight, but on the solid and sure basis of organization and struggle.

The four pamphlets are only the first of a number treating the problems of workers, professionals and white-collar elements. The series will deal with textile, steel, auto, railway workers; with the youth and white-collar groups; with the small businessmen and other categories. Each, like the four considered above, will be written either by workers in the occupation discussed or from first-hand knowledge of and experience in the field to be treated.

The remaining pamphlets under review deal with problems of general interest, in which every worker, every intellectual and middle-class reader is concerned. The least satisfactory is the pamphlet "War in Africa." It is attractively bound, well-printed, informative; it contains valuable material which the bourgeois press has slid over or deliberately ignored; but the presentation of what could be dramatic material is heavy-handed and the writing is burdened with outworn phraseology. Nevertheless, the urgency of the situation and the fact that only in this pamphlet can much salient and undisclosed information be found, make it worthwhile reading.

In direct contrast is the splendid "Religion and Communism" by Earl Browder, the record of a discussion between students of the Union Theological Seminary and the General Secretary of the Communist Party of America. Presented in the form of questions and answers, the Communist position is outlined with masterly clarity and force. The scientific, integrated attitude of Communism to religion, ever the bulwark of the prevailing economic and social system, is here fully explained, in a way to silence slander and set at rest the hysteria of terrified believers.

William F. Dunne's discussion of the Supreme Court's decision on the N.I.R.A. is lucid and well-printed. And Joseph Stalin's speech to the Red Army Academy is an answer to those who feel that the Soviet Union is on the brink of collapse because Mr. Hearst's "reporters" have raked up fifteen-year-old photographs of starving peasants. It

is a decisive piece of Soviet self-criticism. Stalin points out:

> Formerly, we used to say that "technique decides everything." This slogan helped us in this respect, that we put an end to the famine in technical resources and created an extensive technical base in every branch of activity. . . . That is very good. But it is very, very far from enough. . . . Without people who have mastered the technique, technique is dead. . . . That is why the old slogan . . . must be replaced by a new slogan, the slogan, "Cadres decide everything."

In this country, we have mastered technique. In this country, we have plenty of men, plenty of "cadres" who can utilize and control our technical equipment, improve it, expand it. The series of pamphlets, "In a Soviet America," prove that despite this technical skill and equipment, men in industry, in the professions, in the white-collar occupations cannot benefit by these advantages. Dunne's statement at the end of his pamphlet summarizes the necessity of all who believe in civilization and progress to change this system to one in which the majority can enjoy the benefits of what is already there to enjoy:

> We workers made this country what it is. We workers conquered the forests and we built the factories. We operate them. We built the railway systems. We run them. And when we say workers, we mean Negro and white, native and foreign-born and everybody who depends for his living on laboring for a wage or salary. This country belongs to us. . . . The time has come to take it back. It will not be so very hard to do this.

BRUCE MINTON.

Wood-Pulpiteer

LOST ON VENUS, by Edgar Rice Burroughs. Edgar Rice Burroughs, Inc., Tarzana, Calif. $2.00.

ONE worker I know reads every Tarzan book he can lay hands on. "Gee that guy's got some imagination!" he bubbles.

I tried to get him to read Cantwell or Dos Passos. "Aw, when a guy's worked hard all day what does he want with something like that? He just wants a good story."

If Edgar Rice Burroughs were merely the writer of "good stories," there would not necessarily be objections to anyone's reading his hackneyed stuff. Unfortunately the creator of Tarzan, in common with certain wood-pulp writers whose example Alan Calmer has pointed out from time to time in The Daily Worker, doesn't keep his nose clean. Having amassed a tidy fortune purveying vicarious adventure to the masses from his comfortable villa at Tarzana, California, Burroughs views with an alarm almost as great as that of neighbor Willie the rising revolutionary movement.

This fear vibrates in his latest volume, *Lost on Venus,* in which we follow the amazing career of Carson Napier, late resident of California, now wandering under the cloudy sky of Amtor, or, as we earth-dwellers term it, Venus. Carson is seeking to return Duare, whom he loves dearly but to whom he may not speak of love (for is she not the daughter of a jong?) to her home in Vepaja.

Unluckily they are captured by the Communists (pardon, I mean the Thorians) of Noobol, a slovenly, loutish folk who live under the tyranny of a stupid oligarchy.

As a matter of fact it was the Thorians from whom Carson Napier had just rescued Duare, at the close of an earlier work, *Pirates of Venus.* He continues his holy war against "the rulers of the so-called Free Land of Thora" (read U.S.S.R.) with "their world-wide attempt to foment discord and overthrow all established forms of government and replace them with their own oligarchy of ignorance."

But let us return to our hero whom we just left in such desperate straits. Carson is led before "a large, gross-appearing man—asleep in a chair with his feet on a table that evidently served him both as desk and dining table, for its top was littered with papers and the remains of a meal."

We cannot do better than to allow the author to depict the pleasant scene which follows:

> Disturbed by our entrance, the sleeper opened his eyes and blinked dully at us for a moment.
>
> "Greetings, Friend Sov!" exclaimed the officer who accompanied me.
>
> "Oh, is it you, Friend Hokal?" mumbled Sov sleepily. "And who are these others?"

Upon discovering that Carson is not a doctor, of whom they are greatly in need for they are rapidly dying of disease and old age, Sov sentences him to death. He is thrown into the room of seven doors, a torture chamber primarily designed as a "means for converting unbelievers to Thorism."

Miraculously, Carson escapes in time to rescue Duare from the sadistic clutches of high commissar (I mean ongyan) Moosko, (Moscow?) who is having a fine time tickling her with a dagger;—"when he pricked her and she screamed, he laughed—a hideous, gloating laugh. I guessed at once the psychopathic type he represented, deriving pleasure from the infliction of pain upon the victim of his maniacal passion."

After trials and torments Carson escapes to Havatoo, where super-men rule over a fascist paradise.

Here in this city of super-men he finds order and beauty. In contrast with the "box-like, unprepossessing structures with no hint of artistic or imaginative genius" which he noted in Noobol, Carson sees "magnificent buildings set in a gorgeous park." Among the people "there was no hurry, no bustle, no confusion; nor was there idling or loitering. All suggested well-considered, unhurried efficiency."

Not always had Havatoo been the happy land that it is now. Once, in the words of Carson's friend, Korgan Ero Shan:

> Half our people lived in direst poverty, in vice, in filth; and they bred like flies. The better classes, refusing to bring children into such a world, dwindled rapidly. Ignorance and mediocrity ruled.
>
> Then a great jong came to the throne. He abrogated all existing laws and government and vested both in himself. Two titles have been conferred upon him—one while he lived, the other after his death. The first was Mankar the bloody; the second, Mankar the Savior.

This Venusan Mussolini immediately butchered the social democrats. Then "he encouraged the raising of children by people whom . . . scientists passed as fit." But of course in improving the strain of Havatoo, Mankar never thought to breed out the warlike tendencies of his people. Instead, every year a bloody tournament is held to prevent the decay of public morale. Admittedly, "sometimes that policy is a cruel one, but results have demonstrated that it is better for the race than a policy of weak sentimentalism."

By now most everyone should have received the impression that Burroughs would be a splendid contact man to the masses for Lawrence Dennis. His books are read by millions. Capturing that audience, rather than receiving laudatory reviews in The New Republic, is the problem confronting proletarian novelists.

WILSON WAYLETT.

Brief Review

THE UNITED STATES AND NEUTRALITY, by Quincy Wright. (Public Policy Pamphlets. Chicago University Press. 25c.) In treating the history of the American policy of neutrality, Mr. Wright shows that it has always followed the needs of trade. He realizes that "neutrality," has not kept and cannot keep us out of war any longer, but he offers in its place such instruments as the Kellogg Pact and the League of Nations, instruments visibly crumbling. The inescapable solution is the one he shields from his eyes, the destruction of war-breeding capitalist imperialism.

THE REIGN OF GEORGE V, by D. *C. Somervell. (Harcourt, Brace and Co. $3.)* Against their will even the lightest-minded bourgeois historians today must comment on the class struggle and so it happens that in this solemn and courtly chronicle the discerning reader may get further evidence of the fact that the principal use monarchy in England serves is to provide a "supra class" symbol of the "unity" British capitalists strain to make the exploited English masses and the exploited colonial peoples believe in, the "unity" of capitalists and workers, of imperialist exploiters and the exploited colonial peoples.

The Theatre

O'Neill's Technique and Social Philosophy

EUGENE O'NEILL'S career as a playwright is of special significance, both because of the abundant vigor and poetic richness of his earlier dramas and because of the tragic confusion which casts a shadow across his later work. This confusion is not merely a *personal* matter; the author's philosophy is a reflection of the middle-class thought of his period and reflects a general trend in the middle-class theatre. The philosophy of mystic pessimism has eaten like a disease into the structure of the modern drama. Since by its very nature this philosophy negates action and denies logic, it makes unified dramatic development impossible.

Strange Interlude is a revealing example of O'Neill's later technique and of the social concepts on which this technique is based.

What is the structural character of *Strange Interlude?* The story of the play, expressed in its simplest terms, is the story of a married woman who has a child by a man who is not her husband. The plot rests chiefly on a sense of foreboding, the threat of horrors which never concretely materialize. In the first three acts, Nina marries the dull Sam Evans and intends to have a baby. She then discovers there is insanity in her husband's family. We then find that these three acts have been exposition to prepare for the real event: since the threat of insanity prevents Nina from having a child by her husband, she selects Dr. Darrell as the prospective father. We watch eagerly for the consequences. But one may say, literally, that there are no consequences. In Act V, Nina wants to tell her husband and get a divorce, but Darrell refuses. In Act VI, Darrell threatens to tell Sam, but Nina refuses. In Act VII, the activity centers around the child (who is now eleven): the boy's suspicions now threaten to upset the apple cart. But in the next act (ten years later) everybody is on the deck of a yacht in the Hudson River watching Gordon win the big boat race: "He's the greatest oarsman God ever made!"

This outline may seem unfair. There are those who will say that I am applying an arbitrary technique and that O'Neill has brilliantly realized the psychological conflict. I can only reply that psychological conflict must be expressed in action. The failure to bring the action to a head means a failure to understand the psychological roots of the drama.

Now let us consider the asides. It is generally assumed that these serve to expose the inner secrets of character. This is not the case. Nine-tenths of the asides deal with plot and superficial comments. The characters in *Strange Interlude* are very simply drawn; and they are not at all reticent in telling their inmost feelings in direct dialogue. For instance in Act III, Mrs. Evans says, "I used to wish I'd gone out deliberately in our first year, without my husband knowing, and picked a man, a healthy male to breed by, same's we do with stock." Coming from an elderly farm woman, one would reasonably expect this to be an aside, but this is direct dialogue. Mrs. Evans's asides (like those of the other characters) are devoted to such expressions as "He loves her! . . . He's happy! . . . that's all that counts!" and "Now she knows my suffering . . . now I got to help her."

Then are we to conclude that the asides are a whim, a seeking after sensation? Not at all. They serve a very important structural purpose. They are used to build up the sense of foreboding: again and again there are comments like Darrell's in Act IV: "God, it's too awful! on top of all the rest! How did she ever stand it? She'll lose her mind too!" But the asides have a much deeper use: in every scene they foretell what is about to happen and blunt the edge of conflict. What might be a clear-cut scene is diluted by needless explanations and by annotating the emotions.

Thus we discover that both the asides and the length of *Strange Interlude* are dictated by a psychological need: to delay, to avoid coming to grips with reality. The function of the asides is to cushion the action, to make it oblique; this same obliqueness creates the need for spreading the story over nine long acts.

Strange Interlude reaches no climax and no solution. However, the final scene of the play contains a fairly thorough summing up of the author's position and gives us a further key to O'Neill's philosophy. It is not enough to say that the drama simply ends on a note of frustration. O'Neill tells us a great deal more than that: he shows that he is trying to *avoid* frustration, he is twisting and turning in an effort to find an affirmative meaning.

The last act of *Strange Interlude* begins with a scene between the young lovers, Madeleine and Gordon. Here we have the idea of a new life: the saga of love and passion will be repeated. Marsden offers a rose to Madeleine, saying mockingly, "Hail, Love, we who have died, salute you!" One expects the playwright to emphasize this line of thought, but he turns sharply away from it, turning to Gordon's bitterness against his mother, his feeling that she never really loved the man whom he regards as his father. Nina, tortured for fear Darrell will tell the boy the truth, asks her son a direct question: "Do you think I was ever unfaithful to your father, Gordon?" Gordon is shocked and horrified . . . he blurts out indignantly: "Mother, what do you think I am—as rotten-minded as that!" Here is the germ of a social idea which might lead to something if the conflict between mother and son were developed. However, O'Neill cuts it short at this point: Gordon leaves, soliloquizing as he goes, "I've never thought of that! . . . I couldn't! . . . my own mother! I'd kill myself if I ever even caught myself thinking . . .!" It is significant that Gordon, who represents the new generation, leaves the stage with these negative words.

Darrell then asks Nina to marry him and she refuses, saying, "Our ghosts would torture us to death!" Thus the idea of the repetition of life turns into one simple fact—that Nina has built her life on a lie and that this accounts for all her troubles. Her son, as he leaves the stage, tells us that he is just as cowardly as his mother: "I've never thought of that! . . . I couldn't!"

It is to be noted that this fear of truth is not regarded as personal cowardice, but as *destiny*. O'Neill endeavors to rationalize this idea of Fate in terms of psychoanalysis. Fate is directly identified with the mother (and father) complex. But this is an incorrect and unscientific approach to psychoanalysis. Freud (and other psychoanalysts) represent the ego in continuous conscious and subconscious conflict, *not* helplessly under the domination of static complexes.

In spite of his reliance on the mother complex, O'Neill shows that this too leaves him dissatisfied, feverishly uncertain. The last scene of *Strange Interlude* contains a welter of unfinished ideas—references to religion, pure science, womanly intuition, "mystic premonitions of life's beauty," the duty

"to love that life may keep on living," etc. The pain of the author's search lends dignity to his confusion. But it is obvious that this confusion cannot lead to situations which are dynamic, meaningful or clearly outlined.

A similar mystic content, and a similar dramatic flabbiness, are to be found in a wide variety of current plays. It is generally true that the architecture of the modern play is off center. The preparation is excessive and the *event* is ignored or minimized. What Freytag called the "erregende moment" or "firing of the fuse" is unconscionably delayed (or altogether omitted).

Ibsen avoided preparation, beginning his plays at a crisis, illuminating the past in the course of the action. This method has now been carried to a further extreme: the crisis is diluted and the backward-looking or expository moments are emphasized—so that the play (in many cases) is *all* exposition and no crisis.

The playwright whose attitude toward life is negative and mystic will naturally express a dread of action, a lost desire for emotional stability. He achieves this by delaying or avoiding the moment of conflict. This may satisfy the playwright, but it does not satisfy dramatic construction. When the dramatist runs away from life, he runs away from his own play.

JOHN HOWARD LAWSON.

(*The above is an excerpt from a forthcoming book on the technique of playwriting.*)

Shooting China

MIKE PELL

HOLLYWOOD is in need of fresh backgrounds for its kissing parties, so cameramen have been sent to Alaska, Mexico, China and all ends of the earth. China seemed a very promising field, and several studios had units working out there during the past two years. *Oil for the Lamps of China* (Warner Bros.) and *The Painted Veil* (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer) were the first fruits of those ventures, and we shall soon be treated to some more pictures with the genuine Oriental background. One of the pictures shortly to be released will be *The Good Earth* (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer). A tremendous ballyhoo will escort the showing of this film, for it has been one of M-G-M's ambitious ventures, on which they have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars. We will be shown in this film masses of real Chinese workers, real Chinese soldiers, real Chinese temples, cities, countryside. Yet will we be shown the real China?

Let us see. When this M-G-M unit arrived in Shanghai it contained, besides the usual technical workers, a "contractor." This was a certain prominent lady, who knew all the big shots among the Chinese diplomats and officials. Her job was to smooth the way, cut the red tape and ascertain whose palms had to be greased and to what extent. Before any shooting could be done, the entire scenario script had to be okayed by Chiang Kai-shek's publicity department in Nanking. Although nobody could classify Pearl Buck's *Good Earth* as being in any way "Red," the script was mercilessly mutilated with oppressive restrictions imposed on the manner in which the scenes could be shot. There must be no showing of women with bound feet. There must be no filming of ragged Chinese or their grass and mud hovels. There must be no filming of the beggars, the starving, the sick and emaciated. There must be no filming of anything, any place without the permission and presence of Kuomintang agents. Even taken, no films were to leave the country without first being submitted to the scrutiny and approval of the Nanking censorship bureau.

Nor was this all. Chiang Kai-shek wanted to show off his pet accomplishment: the Nanking Military Academy, so M-G-M had to agree to shoot several thousand feet for him and present it as a gift. Then various generals wanted their pet troops filmed and this had to be done. The general who had fought the Japanese at Kupeikow, one of the few courageous generals Chiang Kai-shek has, wanted that whole battle immortalized. This was done too, except that instead of showing the Chinese troops defeated as in reality, the film ends with a glorious victory for Chiang Kai-shek. This film is now being shown amongst the Nationalist troops, to bolster them in their fight against the Chinese Red Army.

During the filming of these military scenes, Chiang Kai-shek's generals exhibited callous disregard for the lives of their soldiers and the property of the poor peasants. In order to make the scenes realistic, powder charges were deliberately exploded under the legs of running soldiers. One soldier's clothes were set afire and two others were seriously wounded. Peasants' fields were blown up and their crops trodden down, without apologies and often without indemnification. Once, during a parade rehearsal when some of the soldiers smiled in good humor, the Kuomintang general drew his Mauser, ordered his aides to do likewise and threatened to shoot down every soldier who dared to smile. There were also ludicrous moments. The various generals (and in Chiang Kai-shek's army every gangster chief, opium magnate or warlord's son is a general) were jealous of one another and would refuse to cooperate. Once, when the various units of the Nanking Military Academy were to be filmed, the general in charge of the tanks refused to join the parade because his pride had been hurt. Another time, during a cavalry charge, the cavalrymen revolted because their general had

dared to eat his lunch while letting them go hungry.

The worst cruelty was shown in the use of peasants in mob scenes. Impoverished peasants, learning of the chance to make the fabulous sum of one dollar (33 cents in U. S. money) for a day's work, walked twenty and more miles during the night, in order to be on location in time for work the next day. Most of these scenes were shot north of Peiping, because the peasants of this region were noted for their docility. Two or three thousand would be packed onto a train (exodus scene) and shunted back and forth. For hours on end they were not permitted to get off the train to attend to their natural needs or to get some food. One of the women, exhausted and feeble from the long night's trek and the subsequent waiting, died of privation. After about eight hours of dangerous riding and shunting on the trains, the mob was finally allowed to get down. Most of them hadn't even the necessary few coppers for a bowl of tea and they gazed hungrily as the M-G-M troupe and the Kuomintang officials feasted on chicken, oranges and cooled mineral water. When, after an hour or so, they were ordered to board the train again they showed surprising solidarity in absolutely refusing to budge.

The pay-off at the end of the day was invariably brutal. Soldiers beat the hungry peasants back with the butts of their rifles, officers used the flats of their swords and the gang leaders pummeled the crowd with their fists.

The Kuomintang officials were always afraid to allow mob scenes to be shot within any large town or city. When, in Peiping, consent was finally procured, the following conditions were made: (a) The whole operation must be within the walls of the Forbidden City; (b) The mob was to be recruited by police agents; (c) Soldiers were to be mounted on the walls and emergency police at the gates; (d) For each twenty-five men, there was to be a leader, appointed by the police; (e) The M-G-M was to provide clean caps and other articles of clothing necessary to give the crowd a respectable appearance. (f) The whole operation was to be concluded as hastily as possible. Numerous other conditions were imposed, for the police were in constant fear whenever a mass of Chinese workers were allowed to assemble.

The only filming which was permitted without restriction was that of temples, pagodas, memorials, monuments and grave mounds. This is the "real" China which Chiang Kai-shek and his opium-eaten cohorts want the American public to see.

MIKE PELL.

The Screen

AS life in capitalist America becomes increasingly cruel, horror films grow more lurid and revolting, more fantastic and pathological. *Mad Love* (M-G-M-Roxy) is an example.

Peter Lorre, in his first American film, portrays Prof. Gogol, a great surgeon madly in love with an actress of the Grand Guignol, Parisian horror theatre. But the actress, Yvonne Orlac, loves her husband, a pianist. Orlac loses his hands in a train wreck and Yvonne persuades Dr. Gogol to perform a miracle. Gogol grafts the hands of a freshly guillotined knife-thrower to the arms of Stephen Orlac: the new hands develop a mind of their own and Stephen automatically becomes an expert knife-thrower. In the meantime, Gogol's passion for Yvonne takes the place of his passion for seeing prisoners decapitated. He cooks up a scheme whereby he suggests to Stephen that he is a murderer and has just knifed his step-father. To make doubly sure that Stephen believes him (and to give the audience the necessary thrill) Gogol masquerades in a steel head brace and steel gloves and appears before Stephen in the role of the dead criminal whose hands Stephen now wears. Stephen is arrested and Gogol's insanity grows. In the final sequence, Gogol is in the act of strangling Yvonne "because he loves her so much," when Stephen and the police rush in at the crucial moment; the husband throws a knife through a small grill, ending Gogol's career. This outline of the story is restrained, to say the least.

Peter Lorre, one of the most sensitive and capable of film actors, seems doomed to be cast as a rival to Karloff. Lorre came into prominence as the psychopathic child-murderer in Fritz Lang's German production, *M,* still the most effective horror film. *M* lacked all the artifices of *Mad Love.* Although both *M* and *Mad Love* belong to the same genre, there is as much difference between them as there is between a story by William Faulkner and a story by Erskine Caldwell. PETER ELLIS.

Other Current Films

Dante's Inferno (Fox-Rivoli): A gangster yarn combined with the theme of *The Power and the Glory,* the film contains a five-minute interlude when a sick man describes Inferno to the hero. Hollywood's version of Hell proves to be thousands of semi-nude, prostrate extras writhing in superimposed flames. The modern story deals with a racketeer living through a hell of his own making (he says) and everything is hunky-dory. This is the second spectacle of the season. *She* was No. 1, to be followed by Cecil DeMille's *Crusades* and climaxed by the Hearst-Warner-Rhinehardt, *A Midsummer Night's Dream.* P. E.

Between Ourselves

JOHN L. SPIVAK took time off from a novel he is writing to attend to Congressman Dickstein.

Mike Pell is a seaman. He has been about everywhere and while in China recently worked for the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer field expedition making *The Good Earth,* about which he writes in this issue.

Among the features in next week's issue will be:

"The Rise and Fall of Abraham Cahan," by Paul Novick, managing editor of The Morning Freiheit; an examination of the "patriarch" of The Jewish Daily Forward who for more than thirty years has been the head of that organ of Old Guard "Socialist Partyism."

"Walter Lippmann and Soviet Russia," by Corliss Lamont, author of *Russia Day by Day.* The steady evolution of an ex-Socialist, ex-liberal into a reactionary sophist and defender of the status quo.

A piece by Robert Forsythe (who is now on vacation). "Back in the days when Upton Sinclair was a novelist and not a politician, there was a large body of opinion which held that he wasn't even a novelist," Forsythe begins and goes on from there.

The International Bookshop, 1265 Raymon Boulevard, Newark, N. J., will follow the example recently set by the Brownsville Bookshop in distributing returned copies of THE NEW MASSES, in order to increase sales of the magazine in Newark. THE NEW MASSES can now be purchased at most of the newsstands in Newark, Irvington and Journal Square, Jersey City.

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