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masses & MAINSTREAM

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"OH, TIME! OH, PATIENCE! OH, CASH!"

—HERMAN MELVILLE in *Moby Dick*

IN OUR DECEMBER ISSUE we launched a drive for $20,000. We declared that our objective is to pay off the debt *Masses & Mainstream* assumed for the subscriptions taken over from *New Masses,* and to cover the $6,000 operating deficit for our first year. This, we said, will enable *M&M* "to clear its decks and carry on under full steam." Pointing out that *M&M* belongs to its readers, we urged our readers to invest in it.

This is a Progress Report. In the few weeks since our appeal was issued approximately 275 readers sent in contributions totaling $3,497.12. Many, together with their donations, sent words of appreciation and encouragement which are a source of strength and inspiration to the editors.

But we are still far from our goal. This message is a reminder to those who have either deferred sending in their contributions, or have forgotten about it, to do so at once. It would be a big help if we could wind up our drive this month and be able to focus all our energies and attention on the further improvement and expansion of *M&M* as we enter the new year of 1949.

Please make your checks and money orders payable to *Masses & Mainstream,* 832 Broadway, New York 3, N. Y.

Faithfully yours,

THE EDITORS

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COVER: A Spanish refugee mother and her three children, photographed by Francis Hill in a small mining town near Marseilles. Her husband was murdered in a Nazi concentration camp. Part of her support comes from Spanish friends and part from the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee.

All manuscripts should be addressed to The Editors of MASSES & MAINSTREAM, *832 Broadway, New York 3, N. Y., and be accompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelope for return. Payment is made on publication.*

Vultures *and the* Mountain Eagle

"THE bourgeoisie," wrote Lenin thirty years ago, "is mad with fear."

See how they calm themselves. "Lady Gascoigne," reports the Associated Press from Tokyo, October 25, 1948, "gave the season's dog-gonedest party at the British Embassy today. It was a charming affair honoring eleven French poodles—the father and nine puppies of a litter of Lady Gascoigne's pet, Maruka. The press was invited. Diced sheep hearts and bones were served for luncheon on the lawn by gaily kimonoed Japanese servants. The pups yelped and drooled and devoured the food in a fashion Mayfair would frown upon."

Mayfair's historian, Elsa Maxwell, recorded on December 2, 1948, her embarrassment upon meeting Jacques Fath, a distinguished dress designer and "very young considering the position he apparently occupies." Elsa was perturbed for she could not "recall ever having seen any of his dresses"; yet, happily, she brought to mind some of the young man's handiwork and so saved the day with sparkling chit-chat about "my impressions of his creations for the Grande Semaine in Paris, when he dressed elephants in pink satin embroidered in jewels."

All honor to the men making possible our way of life—diced sheep hearts for dogs and satin dresses for elephants!

Life, organ of the devout Luce household, bestows five pages, complete with color photographs, upon one of "the most impressive" of these heroes of the American Century. General Ma Hung-kwei is the name, warlord the profession, loyalty to Chiang the pre-eminent virtue. But not the sole virtue. No, General Ma is "tough and ruthless." Practical, too: "I have always had one answer for Communists—kill them all." And a romantic figure: he seized power in 1932 by "be-

heading three hundred unlucky" opponents. Withal, however, a just and impartial man who not only "keeps his horsewhip handy" but applies it "sometimes publicly" upon his own sons (who are Lieutenant Generals) in order "to preserve discipline and build morale."

His charm is enhanced further by the "human traits" he displays—*i.e.*, "he dotes on women, Chinese opera and ice cream." He is "a good son as well as husband" though the latter role is complicated by the presence of five wives. Still, upon his mother's death he curtailed his nightly pleasures for three months in order to sing psalms at her grave to which he was driven "in his private weapons carrier."

It is altogether possible that by the time these words are in print the Chinese people will have drowned American imperialism's hero in his beloved ice cream.

THE General Mas are finished. The ideas of "the mountain eagle," as Stalin characterized Lenin, have seized the masses of China—as of so many other lands—and the masses having seized these ideas have transformed them into an irresistible power.

How nakedly and repellantly manifest is the hatred of the rich for this man, dead twenty-five years this January! Never, testified Gorky, was there a man who "loathed and despised so deeply and strongly all unhappiness, grief and suffering." Never, testifies history, was there a man so possessed of this sacred wrath who simultaneously had grasped so well the science of human liberation and so completely devoted himself to the application and development of that science.

Marxism-Leninism, the finest production of man's brain, earns the loyalty of modern humanity's giants—Stalin, Ibarruri, Dimitrov, Fuchik, Neruda, Mao Tse-tung. . . .

The psalm-singing generals and their billionaire press agents are incapable of understanding and unable to prevent this. Partisans of Marxism-Leninism are again and again branded subversive. The intended slur is a real tribute. American leaders who back Chiang, apologize for Franco, assist in the hunt for Neruda, support Sophoulis and prepare the way for economic disaster and fascism at home are traitors. To effectively oppose such deeds is the truest patriotism. When a slaveholding United States built John Brown's gallows, Victor Hugo told Americans from his exile in England that there was something worse than Cain killing Abel—it was Washington murdering Spartacus.

So great are the human resources on the side of progress and so corrupt those on the other that the conflict sometimes takes on the character of a farce—a tragic farce. It was this which once moved Lenin to remark that at times "the struggle against Bolshevism becomes transformed into a joke." Indeed, a joke being blasted from the stage of history by the cannon of uproarious laughter—a veritable salvo issuing from the throats of millions reaching for the future.

Truly did Maxim Gorky say: "There is no force which can put out the torch which Lenin raised aloft in the stifling darkness of a mad world."

—THE EDITORS

Helen West Heller

Johnny Cucu's Record

A Story by PHILLIP BONOSKY

WHEN the steam pipe connecting the furnace door broke, it cascaded a geyser of scalding steam over the yard. Johnny heard howls even before he left his charger and started blindly over to the side. He had made a quick thrust at the levers before he leaped, but the machine hadn't stopped. Down the track a gang of men were working with their backs to the machine, and Johnny had to run back through the steam to catch up with the charger. He had one foot on it, and was swinging the other one up, when he was caught between the smokestack and the machine. There was about eight or nine inches clearing, and about ten feet to go. They heard his scream above the vast echo of the rumble and the geese-hiss of the steam; they heard his scream like the jagged end of a bottle pounded into their ears. Then it stopped.

They ran across the tracks that scored the dark floor like lines of music and found him sprawled on the floor, his hands underneath folded like a puppy's paws, lying on his crushed wrists, his legs bent the wrong way up his side so his toe touched his hip; his shoulders were squeamishly hunched. They threw their coats over their heads to keep from being scalded.

At this sight Jimmie, turning green, sank helplessly to his knees as if in sudden prayer. The others were going to move Johnny; but the first one who touched his body jumped back in horror when out of the shapeless mass Johnny Cucu's voice came: "Don't touch me! Don't move me, fellas!" And this was followed by a breathless string of groans that twisted into gasps. All this came from underneath the pile of flesh. Where was his face? On the ground, flat on the ground; the ground almost swallowed his words, dirt was in his teeth.

By this time someone had turned the steam off, and they stood and looked at him. He had somehow turned his head and they saw one

gleaming eye gleaming up at them. "Johnny," one asked, "are you all right?" And then the man who asked this was suddenly afraid of his own question and stepped back, not wanting to hear an answer.

"Please, fellas," Johnny Cucu was saying, "don't move me. I think my back's broken. That's what I think."

Blood had collected impishly beneath him and began stealthily to flow along a crack turning and twisting as if it had a destination, it was in such a hurry. It was odd, because why should it? They wanted to put their foot there at the next crack; block it, keep it from going any farther, make it stop.

Away, unfurling in the distance, the siren called, saying *coming, coming,* and they began to edge away from Johnny whose free eye moved in jerks at them as they drifted to meet the ambulance. "Don't leave me, guys," he cried with shocking loudness, and they wanted to explain, "We're just doing this to meet the ambulance sooner, that's all. . . ."

The ambulance stopped at the entrance to the shop and, since only the driver was on it, two workers carried the stretcher. When they came to Johnny he began to scream: "No! Don't move me! Don't touch my back!" And as they stopped, bewildered, he explained in a whisper: "You could ruin my back for good that way, see? Get a blanket," he added. "Lift me in a blanket, please, fellas. Go and get a blanket, it's all right, I can wait. You go."

So one went back to the ambulance for a blanket, while the others stood silently near Johnny, a kind of self-consciousness descending on them as if his eye embarrassed them. With almost a cry of relief it occurred to Jimmie, who was Johnny's closest buddy, to pull out a cigarette which he nervously lit in his own mouth, and then as he came toward Johnny he faltered. Where was Johnny's mouth? He dropped the cigarette behind him and tried to hide its winking light.

When the worker with the blanket entered the yard, they all ran to him—all of them; they accompanied him back like a delegation; then they spread it on the ground. How would they get him on? "Easy," he begged, "Slide it easy, *under* me." They got down on their knees and tried to inch the blanket under his body which had almost been molded into the earth.

He held his breath in, and it seemed to leak out in blood; then, giving way, he yelled at the top of his voice, choking in the dirt, when

they suddenly lifted him a little and pulled the blanket through. A nervous hand dropped the end, and the others waited until he got back his grip. Then, gently, they lifted him, breaking out in sweat, and feeling the tightening of the blanket drag through their arms and dig in their brains like a hook.

It was raining outside; Jimmie put his coat over the bloody face.

"Take it off! Take it off!" And when Jimmie did, he heard the now-aged, but familiar still-joking voice say, "Don't put anything on my face, you ham. I'm not dead yet!"

As they walked they jogged him, and he began to chant: "God, God, God, *God,*" four times, somehow in rhythm to their steps; and then he took a breath—they stumbled—and cried, "God, God, God, God," and finally, "damn!" Once he laughed out loud, and they almost dropped the blanket. "I saw those pearly gates open wide, wide, wide," he shouted; and they thought he was out of his mind. "I saw them open up wide and I took a look inside," he shouted.

They met the superintendent on their way out. His face was wet from the rain. He glanced briefly into the sagging blanket and asked, "What's his name."

Johnny himself answered. "Johnny Cucu," he cried.

"What?" The superintendent stared at him and then moved off.

When they got to the ambulance, which stood purring on the tracks, Johnny said, "Is this the ambulance?" And when they told him, he said, "Don't lay me down, fellas. If you can stand it, hold me up in the blanket." Someone else said to the driver, "Take it easy on the way."

Inside, the four of them squatted on their haunches and held Johnny an inch or two off the floor, the heavy weight pulling on their wrists. When the ambulance struck a rock in the road, they convulsively lifted their bundle to keep from bumping the floor. The siren wailed outside, pinning their attention; their knuckles grew white and numb as they kept trying to grip a firmer hold on the slipping blanket.

AT THE mill hospital they stood, the four of them, still holding him, their goggles pushed up on their foreheads, their thick clothes gleaming with bits of coal and flecks of steel, white circles around their eyes, white tongue-licks along their lips. The little hospital was only a way station, with no doctor at this time of night—just a nurse. She picked dirt out of eyes and pulled splinters. Now, plump and

uncertain, she looked down on the man, and he said to her: "Don't you remember me, nurse?" "No," she said. "I'm Johnny Cucu," he cried. "You took a piece of coal out of my eye." "Oh," she said.

The nurse stared at him, then listened; then she stooped to look under the blanket where a drip dripping had begun. She ran to the wash-basin, tore out a handful of paper towels and spread them over the floor under the leaking blanket. Then she looked at him wondering what else she could do. "The doctor is sure to come soon," she cried.

"Fellas," he said, "I hope you don't get tired holding me."

The doctor came and looked at Johnny; even by giving the doctor's face the closest attention they were unable to read anything. How long would Johnny live? The doctor took a pair of scissors and began to cut clothes. When he finally exposed an arm, which the nurse cleaned with a big dab of cotton, he gave Johnny a shot. "We'll have to take him to town," the doctor said. "He'll be asleep in a few minutes and you can put him down."

Johnny heard this and cried, "Listen, guys, don't put me down!"

"What's his name?" the doctor asked one of the men, opening a chart.

"Johnny Cucu," Johnny answered.

The doctor looked at him, startled. "What's his address?"

"824 Maple Street," Johnny said.

Again the doctor looked at him. "You're supposed to be asleep," he said.

"But I don't feel nothing," Johnny replied.

The doctor nodded to the nurse and she came with another hypodermic.

"This'll put you to sleep," she said, looking vaguely into Johnny's face.

"I don't feel nothing, though," Johnny answered. As the needle plunged into the soggy flesh, he said confidentially to her, "Don't call my wife till I'm nice and clean. Make sure she don't see me like this."

"All right," the nurse answered.

"If I could get up, I'd wash myself," Johnny said.

After that, he didn't remember.

In the mill, they memorized what the doctors had found, counting them off, item by item, as if the list were stuck in front of them, awe overcoming sympathy: eight ribs broken, both arms and wrists, shoul-

ders crushed, pelvic bones broken, his nose was broken too, but not his skull; both legs were broken, one kidney was crushed, his hip was broken, six vertebrae were broken.

For twenty-four hours he lay pouring blood out of many holes in his body while receiving plasma out of bottle after bottle hung above his head. But he never lost consciousness unless he was drugged. They had found where his mouth was, and he smoked cigarettes incessantly, cigarettes which the nurse had to remove from his mouth; the ashes collected on the hospital blanket in front of him.

Nobody knew very much about the accident except by hearsay. In the local newspaper had appeared this shy item: "Johnny Kuco, age 36, charger, was injured last night in Number 6 Mill. He is in serious condition at St. Francis Hospital." This was followed by an advertisement of pills for low blood-pressure.

WHEN he was still alive at the end of the week, he became established as a seven-day wonder in the mill. The men said: "Johnny Cucu, you know? He's got most of his ribs broken, his legs and his arms, and his guts are cut up, but he ain't dead. Johnny Cucu ain't dead yet!"

Tales of him seeped out of the hospital; his buddy Jimmie carried them to work. "Man," he would say, shaking his head with admiration, "that Johnny! I never knew how much guts that guy had! I'm telling you! You know how Johnny always was—joking—you know—joking all the time? Well, nothing makes him lose his sense of humor. You know what he did?"

"What?" they'd cry, trying to replace Johnny, bound now to his bed in a hospital, into his role of practical joker.

"Well, this is the truth, so help me. The nurse herself told me. The day after they all thought he'd never live till morning. Here this nurse was sitting by his bed, thinking Johnny was asleep. You know, the stuff they shoot in him to put him to sleep just comes out of him before it gets to his brain," Jimmie added professionally. "You see, there's so many holes in Johnny, it just runs right out again."

"What did the nurse say?"

"I can't help laughing," Jimmie went on, his eyes growing haggard however, only the skin around them laughing. "He said,

'Nurse, I gotta go—' *you* know," Jimmie explained. The men's eyes lit up. "His both arms broken and him tied down?" Jimmie added significantly.

"Be damned!" they cried.

He nodded, then added, "You see, that was just a trick. That was on his mind all the time. So after she was through helping him, he said, 'You sure took a big load off my mind, nurse. I got to thinking —well, maybe—everything else being broken, maybe—but I know everything's all right now, I don't have to hide when my wife comes.'"

They were silent, soberly considering this. Then Jimmie said, changing his voice, "Then what do you think he said? Don't this sound like Johnny? He said, 'Nurse, you're lucky my arms and legs are tied down; any woman ever got that close to me. . . .!'"

The rest of it was drowned in loud laughter, full of relief and appreciation.

"Ah," they cried, "Johnny'll never die; not when a man can still think about that he won't!"

AT THE end of two weeks Johnny had become a medical miracle. Doctors from all over the state had come to look at him. People talked about him everywhere. He had more doctors taking care of him than most people have in a lifetime. Johnny became the doctors' special pet.

They talked about him proudly in the mill, too; they commented on the fact that first of all it took *men* to work in the mill, men you couldn't kill so easy. They said the company already had its eyes on Johnny's two boys, figuring they must be of the same unkillable stock, and had their jobs all ready and waiting for them when they got to be eighteen.

Altogether Johnny had taken in four gallons of blood plasma. He had been operated on three separate times by some of the finest surgeons in the state. There had been 110 stitches taken in his body, and for a week he was fed intravenously. All he got in any case was liquids: soups, a little tea, milk, gelatin.

When Jimmie told the men what Johnny was eating, they worried. "They better give him something more than that to eat," they said somberly. "That would kill a man just out of disappointment."

"Johnny doesn't mind," Jimmie said, and for once there was a frown

in his eyes, a shadow of reluctance to carry on with the role Johnny had played in their tales.

They asked him to tell them the latest crack Johnny had made in the hospital. Jimmie couldn't remember at first, but finally he told them about the doctor who had lived in these parts but had left years ago and become famous. He had been called in on this remarkable case. But when the doctor entered the room, Johnny declared there was something familiar about him but he couldn't quite place him. All of a sudden he refused to have the doctor see him anymore.

"Why?"

"Oh," Jimmie explained, "Johnny claimed the doctor still owed his old man a bill from bootlegging days. Claimed the doctor skipped town without ever paying. Johnny used to deliver the booze himself, wrapped up in newspaper. So when the doctor came into the ward Johnny yelled at the top of his voice, 'Hey, when you going to pay my old man for the hootch he sold you back in Prohibition?' "

The men howled at this, seeing clearly the doctor's predicament and hearing the brazen voice of Johnny, pinned to his bed, but still omnipotent. They carried this story over the whole mill and it was repeated for days in every shop. The story about the narrow escape of the nurse was multiplied into three nurses. The men claimed that every bone but one was broken in Johnny's body, but he never missed the others.

THEY began to accept blood from the men in the mill during the third week, and the local union, where Johnny had been sergeant-at-arms, organized the service. The men in his department were given first chance, and they came to the hospital, waited dutifully in the sterile room until they were called into the ward. Hanging on to their hats with a grim grip, they would follow the interne into the ward. It was impossible to move Johnny so they set up a table beside him, and across the table the bandaged arm would reach.

"Hello, Johnny," the embarrassed co-worker would say to him. Johnny lay absolutely still under the covers, only his bandaged arms showing; there was a tent over his legs, and weights had been attached to the bottom of the bed. His face was no longer bruised, except that there was adhesive tape over his nose.

Johnny would laugh and turn to an interne, "You don't want to give me his blood," he would say, and say the same about everyone. "It's

Ben Shahn

two per cent water and ninety-eight per cent booze. I'll be high for a week."

They would laugh at this. But there was no answer to it.

At the end of three weeks, Jimmie refused to talk about his visits to the hospital any longer. The local papers had once again mentioned Johnny but only in the remarks of a visiting doctor whom they had interviewed; Johnny was a "medical marvel," and the doctor declared that he had never known a case such as his to survive more than ten days. He and all the other doctors were gratified at their success in keeping their patient alive through the third week. How long do you expect to keep him alive? he was asked; but he only smiled and refused to answer.

They began to post bulletins up on the workshed every morning and night.

Jimmie had accompanied Johnny's wife to the hospital on those occasions when an emergency call brought them flying by taxi to his bed. But he had always survived the crisis.

AT THE beginning of the fourth week, she called him to take her to the hospital. She had asked him to go, afraid to go alone, frightened for some reason now to be with her husband. This time Johnny was lying with his eyes closed as they entered. She had brought a little dixie-cup of ice cream, which was the only thing the doctors permitted visitors to bring. On Johnny's stand was a picture of her and him, and hanging onto his neck was Billie, the youngest son, and onto hers, Steve, the oldest. They wore white sailor suits. This was his favorite picture and had been the first thing she had brought him. A huge bowl of red roses sent by the union stood against the wall, and the card which had been enclosed with it lay on the stand. It said: "Best wishes

for your speedy recovery. Members of Local 205, United Steelworkers of America." Beside the card was a box of cigars, also from the union.

They stood at his bed, looking down upon his closed eyes, afraid to speak. Then, his eyes still closed, his voice almost unrecognizable in its low key, came to them. "Helen," he said, "if you cry when I say this, I'll get mad." He paused. "I want you to get ready to forget me. Then I was thinking you should get married again."

Her fist flew to her mouth and she stopped a cry. She whispered, "What are you saying, Johnny?"

Without answering, Johnny went on, "I'm no good to you anymore. I feel I want to die now. I've been thinking about it, and I've made up my mind. Even if I got better, I'd be no good to you. Just an invalid. My back is broke; I'd just have to lay down all the rest of my life. There's only one thing—" He stopped.

"Johnny," she cried, keeping her voice low so no one could hear her, "don't talk like that, Johnny. You know you don't mean it."

"There's only one thing: if I do keep alive, I'll get disability all my life long. If I die, there'll only be the insurance."

"That's a crazy way to talk," Jimmie said.

As if he hadn't heard, Johnny went on: "All they're doing is torturing me. I don't want the doctors to touch me no more. When they come in the ward, I start yelling till they go away. They just torture me. I want them to let me die like I should. If I have to die, they should let me." After a moment, he added, "I don't want to live just to be alive. I want to be able to work, too." He still hadn't opened his eyes.

Then, as if asking her to understand this important point, he began again: "Anyhow, you see, I'd be no good to you. Not to myself either. You should watch the nurse feed me like a baby! Even if I got compensation for all that time—supposed I lived flat on my back for ten more years—I'd be on your hands. When I died, you'd be too old to marry again; you'd just be alone. . . . Maybe it would be hard at first, but you'd have the insurance money, and after a little while—you should mourn me only for a year—then you could get married again. This way, I'd always be around, good for nobody, no good for you anymore."

She stared at him; she didn't want to say, "But you're not going to die!"

"But Johnny," she argued, "I wouldn't mind. I swear to God, Johnny,

you've been a good husband to me, you took care of me and Billie and Stevie, I owe you *something,* Johnny. I wouldn't mind taking care of you. We can't only take the sweet; we got to—"

"But I *want* to live! Don't you see?" he broke in, and his eyes flew open and he looked at them from beneath his pain, from the center of the thoughts that turned in his head through all the long sleepless nights. Even now they felt his mind searching for some possibly overlooked solution. "I've thought it over and over," he said, earnestly. "That's why I didn't—" He stopped. "Over and over. Laying here. Day and night. 'How could I live?' I asked over and over. 'How could I live?' I gave myself every chance; I thought of you, of the kids, of myself; I thought of everything that would help me. But all I could see was—"

HE CLOSED his eyes again and a heavy weariness settled over him. When his voice came again it was hollow and drained of energy. "They torture me every day. They want to keep me alive just because I'm a freak. Everything's broken in my body; I can never be a real man again. They keep torturing me, they keep me alive just so they can brag how smart they are. But they only torture me. I should have been dead a long time ago."

"Stop talking like that!" his wife cried. "The doctors want you to live. They're not *mean!*"

"I don't want to hurt you, Helen," he said. "But I have to tell you anyhow even if it pains you, and even if it's one of the last things you remember about me, that I pained you. Even if that's the way I do it."

"It's *you,* Johnny," she cried. "It's you, not me!"

"This is what I want to tell you," he said. "Marry somebody. Marry Jimmie."

"What are you saying?" Jimmie cried.

"If you don't want him," he continued, "find someone else. But I think he'll make a good husband. He likes Billie and Steve and that's the most important thing. Sometimes guys pretend they like the other husband's kids but they really don't, and they take it out on the kids later. But Jimmie likes them; don't you Jimmie?"

"Of course," he replied. "But—"

"See?" Johnny said. His face had puckered with exhaustion and

his voice was like a shadow. "That's the most important thing. That's all that worried me."

She was weeping into her handkerchief. She lowered it and said to Jimmie, "I get mad at him even when he's sick! See how he is! Even when he's hurt like this! I can't help it!"

"Don't pay any attention to him," Jimmie whispered.

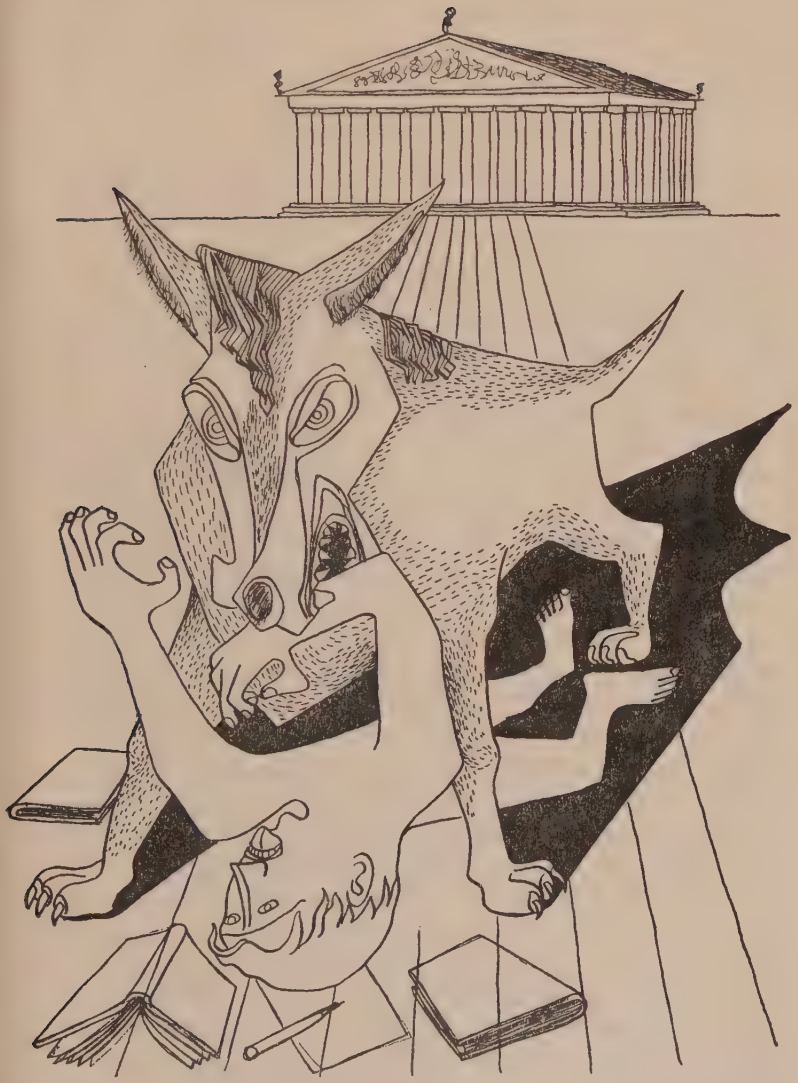
She kissed her husband and wiped away the tears that had collected on his closed lids. As she started to leave, he cried to her, "Goodbye, Helen, goodbye Jimmie!"

They were called back to the hospital at two in the morning. He had freed one of his broken arms, and, painfully working for hours with the scissors a nurse had left behind, he had cut off the bandages over his hips, cut the stitches and, still holding the scissors, had laid back in bed and closed his eyes.

Next morning in the mill the men gathered around the bulletin board. They noted the fact that he had lived twenty-three days, which was twenty-two and a half days longer than by rights he should have. It was longer than any of them would ever expect for themselves. It was, in fact, a record.


IN
GOLD
WE TRUST


Boston
Nov 24
Chaim Gross



Forrest Wilson

How True Is Fiction?

by CHARLES HUMBOLDT

WHEN people talk about a novel there is generally one question which lies buried beneath the differences and the adjectives: how true is it? Yet this is *the* question of which all others are facets. I will try to show why this is so and what it means for the writer—the young writer, especially—and for the reader, his critic.

Yes, for the reader, too, because the lack of an audience which makes stringent demands upon him cuts the writer off from the prime source of his creative life: the love of those with whom he must communicate, and his love for them. Yet, today, even progressive readers often exhibit intellectual laziness in their attitudes toward literature; they talk of not being able to get through books of obvious merit and say in effect: give me the conclusions, never mind the works. But a novel is not like an article to which one need bring chiefly one's ordinary power to analyze. It insists that one recreate for oneself not only the experience of the characters who are written about, but also at least in part the experience of the novelist in writing his novel. And the closer the reader can come to doing this, the closer he is to being able to tell how true the book is. He will then know when the writer is honest or at what point he has begun to fail or to lie.

The writer, on the other hand, must always remember that the things the critic, or reader, looks for in his novels are not just arbitrary and unfriendly tests of his ability; they are the things the writer should demand of himself. If they are absent, he does not merely risk the critic's disapproval. He has betrayed his own talent. In a healthy society the relation of critic to writer would be one of the warmest contact, for the writer would see in the critic a supplement to the writer's own conscience. The critic, on his part, would realize that in return for the writer's gift of imagination to him, he would have to broaden his own experience, extend his knowledge in every field, become worthy of his job.

Does the critic meet, or even have these standards today? In a recent survey of American criticism, *The Armed Vision,* by Stanley Edgar Hyman, there appears an interesting admission. Hyman, after listing the quirks and crotchets of Yvor Winters, says, "Nevertheless, he does evaluate, does compare, contrast, grade, rate and rank, at a time when most serious criticism only analyzes and interprets, and when the reader of a critical article has to go to the newspaper reviewer to find out whether the work is any good or not (and then is misinformed more often than not)."

Without wishing to disparage exegesis and the clarification of texts, one can understand the feelings of the young writer at this situation. He is expected to preserve his integrity in a world which constantly tempts him to abandon it. The crisis in publishing is so acute that the field for first (and even successive) volumes of poetry, experimental or progressive fiction, and works of cultural research becomes more and more restricted. To add insult to injury, the masters of criticism, occupied with Sir Philip Sidney and Coleridge's imagery, turn over literature-in-the-making to characters who compare Irwin Shaw to Tolstoy and Noel Coward to Moliere. Perhaps the serious critics expect a good man to make his way, no matter what. If so, they resemble the philistines who think genius is sweetest when it has just about survived starvation. In any case the young writer fends for himself in a literary milieu with no standards and little interest in proposing them, if only tentatively, for his sake. He is rarely able to challenge the widespread corruption of popular taste, and often surrenders and contributes to it himself. The contemporary novel, for instance, is a Davy Jones locker of murder and mystery, whiskey and white-hot passion, shooting, swordsmanship and psychopathology. Had the lamps of truth been lit in our criticism, we might have been spared some of these wrecks.

This word, truth, this idea, this target of all great writers in the past, has become almost a curiosity in reviewing, as if it were improper to ask to what end the writer has racked his memory, driven his senses, weighed words like grains of radium, devoured records and documents, grappled with experience like Jacob with his angel and risked the breaking of relationships immeasurably dear to him. The writer is complimented for being interesting, exciting and charming; he is urged to see the brighter side of things; he is ordered to defend

ancient values and ideals while the generals of the ruling class quietly steal away to more solid positions. But who warns him that his nest of trivial concerns, his bouquet of sensation, mystical symbolism and smart technique, will shrivel up in the blaze of truth?

How can we speak of truth in fiction? The contradiction implied in the phrase is at the very core of this art and gives it its special quality. In the novel, the ordinary incidents of everyday life, the bare facts, convey only the most superficial aspect of reality, just as the surface of an object reveals almost nothing to a scientist. Art, like science, is a form of knowing, but its method of projecting knowledge is quite different. Where the scientist exposes the unseen, from skin to protoplasm to molecule and atom, the writer moves outward from the things he has learned about human beings and their relationships to embody them in acts and scenes which may at first seem to have no resemblance to everyday reality. One often hears complaints from readers that people do not act like that. They might as easily say of a slice of apple under a microscope: apples don't look like that. The point is that the serious novel is above all concerned with reality, but the deeper it probes the further it presses beyond what the reader knows, shattering the status quo of his thinking and feeling about the world.

The novel is after the potentialities of humans, with their becoming, not just with their being, not just with what can be observed by the naked eye. How does it draw out those potentialities? By creating images which call upon the whole of man to respond to them, human beings so developed that they rouse in the reader his own sleeping faculties, so aware that they fire him with awareness. The novel, first a work in progress, then a finished product, is once more put in motion. It is something taking place in the reader.

The writer achieves this effect by operating on different levels of creative apprehension which must, however, merge with one another, just as they do in ordinary life. Though we, as analysts, may discuss them in succession, they are not separable for him. If they were so for him, or for his audience, his work would be sure to suffer from some major defect. Roughly, our levels are: sensuous reality, human relations and social meaning, or history. A lyric poet, a psychologist or a political thinker might attach quite varying importance to these

diverse aspects of the world, but for the novelist each is a *sine qua non.*

Let us take one example. Revolutionary and progressive literature has often, and sometimes justly, been reproached for its inadequate sensuous content, this being interpreted by unfriendly critics as sign of a disdain of form. These critics chose to ignore the fact that the social realists were searching for forms far larger and more exacting than the now sterile methods of naturalism and the petty achievements of symbolic writing. Nevertheless, in their pursuit of meaning, the *point* of the whole business, many of our young writers still neglect the sight, smell, hearing, taste and feel which are the only warrants that there was a thought or that a human being carried it out. They have not even stepped over the threshold of art.

The writer's job is to project human beings in action. Nothing, no sensation, idea or gesture must be lost to him. For if there is nothing to select *from,* how can one select, how can anything be more important than anything else? So even what is discarded by the writer plays its part in his work, like an overtone. Grasping this, we can see that form is not just a way to order about and chop up a lot of recalcitrant experience known as content; it is the manner in which the external world, content itself, enters the mind, altering as well as being altered by it. What is called form in art is the visible expression of this organic process which goes on, in greater or lesser degree, in every one of us and in nature as well.

The writer works to quicken and intensify the normal unfolding of content. To this end he concentrates the full force of his consciousness upon the life that surrounds him. He tracks down the light-footed perception, the sensation that was forgotten or despised, the impression that faded in the heat of the day. He is always alert to catch some sound of the past, to restore the sharp eyes of his childhood in the constant hunt for the precise shape and color of the immediate world. He must be shameless, pouncing on every act, seizing every desire that tries to burrow back into soil where memory cannot reach it.

Yet all this is not for the sake of detail per se; even authenticity is only a means. What the writer communicates is not just the appearance, the imitation of an object or action. He conveys the emotion, the joy which his developing consciousness has released and strengthened, for without this emotion, evoked by greater awareness, awareness itself would wither.

WE CAN now understand the social function of writing as craft, yes, even the social role of technique. The novelist, increasing his own sensibility, inevitably augments the vision of his characters, since he must create their experience. They, in turn, inspire the reader to fulfill his own potentialities, to realize his power to feel and think and act. They awaken in him lost memories, stir up passions dulled and distorted by routine, anxiety and suffering. They call him to life, to struggle—not to escape but to rediscover the bonds between man and man which are buried under the trash pile of capitalist commodity relations.

Now for this task, they, the characters, have, according to the lights of crass common sense, nothing but words. They themselves are words and groups of words. For the writer, their creator, language is a womb in which experience ripens and is reshaped. Yet it is also—and this is what gives words their enormous energy—the child of all human experience, past and present. The writer's language—and by extension, his form—is both a well and a spring. It is expression and communication. It is individual and social. This double character of words leads us directly to the question of style, what the writer aims at when he wrestles to master his stubborn and runaway pack. He has to convey the change which history has wrought in his consciousness to an audience which may at first resist that change, though it already lies dormant or stirring in them. It is this aspect of his art which has led enthusiasts to describe the writer as a revolutionary.

Well, there are revolts and revolts. The uprisings of bourgeois intellectuals against the conditions of capitalist society are often conducted in the name of holy individualism. Despite their subjective ardor, these palace revolutions usually end up in the firm hands of the "insensitive" and "disgusting" bourgeoisie. The shiny coin of inner freedom bears the stamp of objective subservience to the very philistines whose currency it was to replace. Similarly, the "revolution of the word" and like attempts to make of style a thing-in-and-for-itself must be seen as efforts to find in art a refuge from problems which words alone cannot solve.

Naturalism, for instance, has degenerated into complete pseudo-objectivity, with details lifted out of any frame of meaning and revered as fetishes (the artist admiring his own sensitivity). On the other hand, chiefly in current poetry, words are used to evoke emotions that

have no subject other than the word (with its innumerable and uncontrolled connotations, implications, ambiguities) and no object other than the emotion itself. Here the art work is no longer a relation between human beings; it remains a fixed and finished thing, a luxury product of limited use. The artist thinks he has escaped the humiliating circumstances of the market, but he has merely exchanged mass production for handiwork.

The Marxist critic is invariably accused of wanting to imprison imagination. The daring variety of private experience and the sublime omniscience of the neutral eye are thrown at him like pearls before a crusty old porker. He is supposed to be interested only in colorless communication and to regard the individuality and expressive power of the writer as secondary qualities. In other words he disapproves of almost the whole evolution of literature—particularly from the early Renaissance on—excepting perhaps primitive ritual drama and the duller morality plays.

This is nonsense, of course. What the Marxist reader *does* look for is the social function which the artist's individuality serves. He wants to know what the glorious images are *for,* if they are for anything at all. He believes that sense perception cannot be irresponsible; the debt it owes to social existence, to the forces of production and to artistic activity, past and present, should be rendered to mankind. For the writer this means to understand what is positive in the tradition of language and to recognize and weed out what is rotten and dead. It means to write without affectation and to be willing to surrender images of which one is proud, if there is no place for them in a given context. It means, finally, for the novelist, to subordinate his hard-won sensibility to the larger configuration of human relations, that is, to action.

II

THE young writer tries to thread a needle. With thumb and forefinger of one hand he holds a character, thin and inflexible, a tiny hole in the head for the entrance of events. In his other hand he pinches the string of adventures that will run through his novel. If he could only put the thread through the eye of the needle, things would really get underway.

But this breathless suspension in the writer's mind is just what pre-

vents him from realizing his aim. Actually his people are already in motion before they come on the stage of his novel, and he must catch them in the midst of living. The writer's problem is only secondarily to make them good or bad, kind or vicious, weak or strong. He must show what they do in a given social setting, and that depends on what has happened to them and what they have done in the past in a given social setting. The conception of character penetrates and is bound to involve the method of presenting and dramatizing it, and the writer, thinking of how he will dramatize, is driven back upon the history of his subjects. Failure to work out this history, which both determines and is in turn affected by character, results in static presentations, people not in motion, but going through motions.

Similarly, character cannot be understood in isolation; it is one term of a tie with others. A dramatic conflict is not the clash of two iron bars, but a subtle or violent modification of human beings by one another. A novel that concerns itself (as so much contemporary, even progressive-minded fiction unfortunately does) merely with loneliness, irretrievable moments, hopeless relationships or accounts of brutality, is untrue to life, which provides us with hundreds of examples of the buoyancy and capacity of all kinds of people to change, grow, learn.

In every vital conflict the individuals and the relationships between them are qualified. The typical character is the living product of the tension between his individuality and his natural and human environment. He is acted upon and he acts. Most often the writer will want to show how a situation evokes different responses in different individuals. But sometimes he may go deeper if he shows a situation so large, so close to the major social issues of his time, that it forces some of his people to act almost (though never absolutely) alike, changing them in a totally unexpected manner. However, the writer can do this only when he has mastered variety in portrayal, and can assure us that the inconsistencies of individuals are consistent with their mobile characters.

If the beginning writer lacks this mastery, it not usually for lack of talent. What hinders him is the need for a stock of experience: memories, knowledge of different occupations, religions, milieus and social levels, as well as their effect on the psychology of individuals; the way feelings are manifested in behavior; the rhythms and range of dialogue from bawdy humor to rage and fear. A notebook is invaluable; into it go full-fledged ideas, phrases, queer words, sounds, street cries, curses,

dreams, the way an arm is raised, the cat fighting himself in a puddle.

A glance at some works on acting, like that of Stanislavsky, might prod the conscience of the novelist who thinks he can get by with the schematic representation of action or cursory attention to the background of his characters. Lastly, there is the writer's general culture, his understanding of the nature of art and science, and his willingness to absorb new, liberating ideas and to fight for them. The writer's cast of mind is what draws his persons together and gives them style. It has the effect of glow or dominant tone in painting. A petty conception can only produce small, dispersed individuals, unique but insignificant. But if the writer is absorbed in intellectual struggle, his people and his images will reflect the grandeur and unity of his life.

THE first great literary critic, Aristotle, wrote: "The end for which we live is some form of activity, not the realization of a moral quality. Men are better or worse according to their moral bent; but they become happy or miserable in their actual deeds." For Aristotle—and this is what the quotation implies—the roots of ethics are in politics. The writer who concerns himself with the mental or moral travail of his characters but neglects the representation of their conscious acts, deprives them of all meaning. No matter how wild or noble their inner life, if it is not liberated in action it does nothing but reinforce the conviction that there is no freedom possible, and that man is the victim or beggar of his environment. Conservatives like W. H. Auden may complain that the literature of the last thirty years has denied free will and inner responsibility, but they still shy away from the question: free will for what, inner responsibility to whom? Such free will is like a convict who wants to stay in jail when his term ends, so that he won't have to face outside complications.

The social causes of the failure to make action the crux of the novel must be dealt with, but it is just as important to observe its esthetic consequence. The writer who is unable to cope with social existence must resort either to banal, juicy slice-of-life naturalism or to symbolism. The former trend is running out in a thin trickle of "daring themes," and in the "mood" short story of the *New Yorker* and the little magazines. This will probably give way to symbolism of the naive type, like Steinbeck's wayward bus, and the grimmer Camus and religious varieties.

In his study of Ibsen, Plekhanov points out that man employs symbolism when the meaning of a particular reality escapes him or when he refuses to accept the conclusion to which his experience must lead him. Lacking faith in man's ability to shape the future, the bourgeois writer tries to solve all in a flash of blinding light, a revelation untouched by hands, unsoiled by sweat. Such symbols do not produce vivid types, universal figures arising naturally out of human experience, but "ideals," pompous concepts, pseudo-poetry that soars above the complexities of social struggle like a balloon cut loose from its moorings. Symbolism is rarely obscure because of its profundity, but in that it reflects the vaccillation of the writer who cannot or will not cut through the jungle of the present with revolutionary insight and decision. The author's confusion is matched by his readers' who interpret his abstractions according to their private or class interests. The symbolic novel emerges shapeless from the battle royal of explanations.

It is true that progressive and revolutionary writers sometimes have recourse to symbolism; its use generally denotes hesitation before an unsolved social problem or a gap between ideological conviction and full emotional assent. The symbolism of Sean O'Casey's *Red Roses for Me* stems, I believe, from his failure to find in contemporary Irish life —provincial, priest-ridden and lacking a strong working-class movement—enough fuel for the proletarian fire in his heart. Since he will not depict as actual a force which does not exist for him at the moment, he has to portray its power in ideal terms, as "the future." It would be fatuous to question merely on principle O'Casey's sour view of Eire, but its consequence is evident if one compares this play with, say *The Ploughs and the Stars,* where the meaning, inspired by a national revolution, is rooted in human action rather than animated metaphors.

In Norman Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead,* Sergeant Croft's rebuff at the "hands" of hornets represents a search for some element, even if only men's human weakness, which would baffle the designs of the fascist oppressors. The defect of the symbol is revealed when it is subjected to the test of history. We know that fascism can be, and has been, beaten only through the vast conscious effort of the organized working class and its progressive allies. It will never meet its end simply through the refusal of men to be pushed or to endure hardship thrust upon them. Since too much meaning is made to hang upon the symbolic defeat of Croft, the ideological weakness of the image has

Eugene Karlin

misled many readers to speak of Mailer's book as a novel of despair: the hornets didn't work, so there's no hope left. The ailing symbol threatens to destroy its host.

Here the reader's error complements the writer's; he, also, makes too much of the symbol and when it fails him he wants to scrap the book along with it. (There is another type of reader who spies symbols everywhere, even in actions which are explainable by common sense. Thus, the handling of Lieutenant Hearn is interpreted as a sign of Mailer's defeatism, when it is obvious that Hearn's fatal wavering is due to his class-moulded character and not to any intention to display him as the futile standard-bearer of the progressive spirit. After all, the reader must be able to endure some tragic strain.) However, the reader's mistakes do not wholly absolve the writer of his. In creating symbols as ambiguous as the Mountain—which can represent both the death drive of Croft and man's creative urge, his desire to conquer the elements—the writer risks negating his own purpose.

The reason is simple. Action is, by its very nature, dialectical. It expresses the qualitative translation of thoughts and emotions into a new, visible form. It is therefore equipped to reflect the contradictory impulses of human beings. (An extreme example is the ease with which we accept a Dostoyevsky character's doing the exact opposite of what he'd intended to do.) But the symbol is static. If an ambiguity exists in the writer's mind, if the symbol, consciously or willy nilly, stands for two opposite ideas, the reader will accept not both but one of them. He must do so because, while he can be moved by a clash of thought and will in real life, the mere juxtaposition of antithetical abstract ideas forces him to suspend his feelings about them. Until he makes his choice he feels little or nothing. When he has made it he will have to disappoint the writer, who offers two meanings but gets one returned to him. Thus, as with *The Naked and the Dead,* the emblematic lessons fade in tremendous scenes before the greater meanings that rise out of the actions of living people, and art regains the place usurped by heraldry.

III

THE greater meanings are social, or, as Henry James put it, "the novel is history" and the novelist's evidence is far from being purely literary.

Let me give an example from real life. Recently a public welfare

director said laughingly at a meeting of social workers: "Well, I see our case load's gone down a little." Whereupon he showed them a newspaper account of the burning to death of a child whose parents were on the relief rolls. It would be easy to depict this man as a monster, implying that as long as there are human beings, there will be such creatures among them. This is what passes for philosophy, finding the universal in the particular. But you cannot jump so lightly from example to conclusion. A thousand such special cases may add up to one platitude: "Life is like that."

Or the novelist may feel this conception is too simple. He will "deepen" the business by subjecting his director to a misfortune so overwhelming that the ugliness of his former attitude will be revealed to him. *His* child must contract pneumonia, and in this way the "good" in him will be squeezed out of him like toothpaste from a tube. This also passes for philosophy, illustrating the complexity of life. The example is crude, yet the banalities which it parodies are projected more or less subtly in countless contemporary novels. They proceed from an inability to see or to depict how individual psychology is modified or recreated by social existence.

How can we understand this director if the writer himself does not comprehend the class society which suckled him, and does not smell the amorality which capitalism spreads like the fumes of Donora? If he does not study the relief system of New York and see how it is designed to justify poverty and exploitation by veiling one man's humanity from another? If he cannot tell that here too cold cash, secured or dispensed, supplants the smile, the handshake and the embrace? For it is in the *details of history,* in the pursuit of causes that the drama and depth consist, not in profound generalizations about humanity that only betray the writer's laziness or vanity. Moreover, these details serve to disclose the common ground upon which men stand, the social tie that binds them. They do this even when, as in the case of the director, they show only why certain men are alienated from one another through crime, heartlessness or oppression.

Once the writer has grasped the influence of environment on the individual, he is able to take on a further task: the depiction of individuals who can in turn impose conditions upon society and who are equipped to alter it. Equipped with natural gifts *and with intellectual awareness,* so that what they want of life is not simply the object of egoistic desire but also the reflection of their class outlook, as well as of

their weakness or strength. This awareness, or heightened consciousness, in no way eliminates errors and accidents, but it does crystallize the manner in which these take their place within the frame of historical necessity.

In avoiding the portrayal of intellectual stature in his characters, the young writer risks opening a wide gap between what he thinks he is revealing and what his hero can express. A passive, insignificant person can neither bear nor deny the truth; he can only be mired in it. The disparity between the writer's knowledge and his character's emptiness is never resolved by forced symbolism, as in David Alman's *The Well of Compassion,* or by insincere conversion, as in Len Zinberg's *Hold with the Hares.* An unhappy, neurotic "artist" cannot represent the Negro people, and a chronic heel cannot become a decent human being just for the sake of a redeeming ending. A major character is not a "bundle of nerves"; he must be conscious of the principle that moves him. When that principle is related to his individual psychology and to the typical ideas or illusions of his time and class, the character has become as universal as he will ever be.

The principle is then more than an abstract ethical formulation; it is *lived* from top to bottom. It expresses *this man alone,* and at the same time it fans out as a basic, legitimate generalization: it declares *his place in the system of production.* The boss cannot think like the miner, the salesman like the seaman. In the novel each major character acts as his class must act in its moments of crisis (the great scenes of fiction), and thinks as his class must think when trying to preserve itself, or when preparing its coming to power. His humanity does not stand apart, but is constantly renewed in social struggle.

Conversely, whenever the writer fails to understand the role of the class from which his characters spring, one can expect distortion in his art. For example, Faulkner's faith in the Southern ruling class as the deliverer of the Negro people results in the ludicrous adventures of *Intruder in the Dust,* in which Mark Twain is stood on his head. Here Aunt Polly becomes a gentlewoman who digs up a grave at midnight. Jim turns into an "independent" Negro whose cute, sassy ways Faulkner loves as a hunter loves his best hound-dog. What might have been a heroic figure is diminished through condescension. The personal intrusion of Faulkner in the long, reactionary and out-of-character speech

of Lawyer Gavin is a major offense. If it had been committed by a progressive writer he would have been hooted off the boards by the sensitive critics. The principal character, a seventeen-year-old boy, also assumes an inconsistent political consciousness for the sake of Faulkner's hopeless thesis. Like Faulkner, none of these people has the least idea why things happen as they do, and so the frenzied apologetics of the author take the place of genuine dramatic learning.

HERE it is obvious that we have gone far beyond studying effects to look for causes and to create human beings who look for them as well. Now, to show causes in action is an artistic problem of the highest order. It is one which artists are once again pressed to solve, since there is now a body of revolutionary thought, Marxism, sufficiently widespread and in practice, to make this demand upon them. Formerly, a writer might claim that he wanted never to judge, only to reflect what he saw and heard. Today, this is simply an alibi. The writer is a man like anyone else; why should he alone have no right to take sides against an old decayed society and to welcome a new one?

Actually, the presence of fully developed philosophies in the novel is a special phenomenon of our time, corresponding to the sharp politico-ideological struggle going on in the world. The characters of contemporary bourgeois fiction almost invariably express the writer's belief that reality is absurd, that life is inherently tragic and that history is saturated with irony. The writer in turn complains that there is no social base for the modern artist, no values which he can accept wholeheartedly. Fleeing society, he protests that it has abandoned him.

We know, however, that there is a social base for the writer: the working class whose historic mission is to abolish all classes, all exploitation, and to raise the creative level of every human being. The conscious philosophy of that class is Marxism. Its influence on the novelist can only be for the good, since it returns him always to action, to will-power and to the material limits within which that will must operate. Being a science of history, it affirms that men and women can influence their destiny. The enemy of current irrationalism, Marxism underlines the importance of the intellect in art. Its tragedies and triumphs are never mysterious, but are determined by elements which are comprehensible to every reader or participant. In art, as in history,

it reduces the dimension of chance by increasing the stature of man.

For the social realist, the highest expression of a human being is an act joined to all the emotional and intellectual power within his grasp. The magnitude of an individual, his rank as a character depends upon the degree to which he is able, through such acts, to alter the world about him. If the novelist's hero seems unreal, it is only because we have been persuaded to forget our potentialities. But is it so fantastic to believe that the world's people, led by the working class, will finally erase the causes of suffering and build a society that embodies the best in the human mind? The truth in fiction stretches toward a tangible future.

AN ANNOUNCEMENT

In observance of Negro History Week, our February issue will include a number of outstanding features on the Negro people—articles, stories, poetry, art, criticism.

We ask our readers to help in our special effort to extend the circulation of that number, to reach additional individuals and groups, to enlist new recruits in the struggle for equal rights. You can do that by ordering extra copies, by introducing *M&M* to your friends and organizations.—*The Editors.*

THE SNOW

by MAO TSE-TUNG

All the scenery in the north
Is enclosed in a thousand li of ice,
And ten thousand li of whirling snow.
Behold both sides of the Great Wall—
There is only a vast confusion left.
On the upper and lower reaches of the Yellow River
You can no longer see the flowing water.
The mountains are dancing silver serpents,
The hills on the plains are shining elephants.
I desire to compare our height with the skies.

In clear weather
The earth is so charming,
Like a red-faced girl clothed in white.
Such is the charm of these rivers and mountains,
Calling innumerable heroes to vie with each other in pursuing her.
The emperors Shih Huang and Wu Ti were barely cultured,
The emperors Tai Tsung and Tai Tsu were lacking in feeling,
Genghis Khan knew only how to bend his bow at the eagles.
These all belong to the past—only today are there men of feeling!

Mao Tse-tung is Chairman of the Communist Party of China. "The Snow" was written in November, 1945, and is taken from a collection of his poetry entitled *Wind Sand Poems.* It is reprinted here, with permission, from *The White Pony,* an anthology of Chinese poetry edited by Robert Payne and published by John Day.

AFRICA: Operation Jackpot

by ALPHAEUS HUNTON

SURVEYING the vast untapped resources of colonial imperialism's stronghold, *Fortune* magazine declared that Africa "is the jackpot of World War II, the greatest economic question mark of the Peace." Today the whole capitalist world, seeking a way out of its crisis, looks to Africa with avid interest and wonders whether it can be made to pay off.

The leader of that world, the United States, bloated as its monopolists are and faced with the constrictions arising from the successes of people's movements in many parts of the world, desperately hopes that Africa will stave off disaster. The Secretary of Commerce, Charles Sawyer, addressing himself to the proposition that "Private Enterprise Can Do the World's Job," points out that "nothing is more important than the encouragement of foreign economic development," that this means "stimulating the flow of private investment abroad."

In U.S. ruling circles, Africa spells strategic military bases (as, for example, in the matter of the disposition of the former Italian colonies); strategic raw materials such as manganese, rubber and uranium; and the possibility of huge capital investments at high rates of profit. Field Marshal Montgomery shuttles back and forth between Washington, London, Paris and Africa developing and co-ordinating a master-plan of American-Western European military operations in Africa for World War III. And our Marshall Plan agents abroad are putting the squeeze on Britain and other European imperialist powers to pay off with the colonial raw materials they crave.

From across the Atlantic we hear a chorus of varied voices proclaiming that Britain's and Western Europe's economic salvation lies, above all else, in the rapid, intensive and systematic development of Africa's resources. Along this path, they declare, lies the only possi-

bility of their escape from American dollar domination. This is the general refrain of such divers personalities as Bevin and Smuts, Churchill's man Sir Oliver Stanley and the erstwhile flaming Fabian, Creech-Jones, and the two brother-fascist Oswalds, Mosley of England and Pirow of South Africa.

On this side of the Atlantic there are other eager voices talking about the "development" of Africa—but not for Europe's benefit. Big business' slick magazines take note of the opportunity for "American capital and know-how" to "do a job" there. The New York *Times* (March 15, 1948) observes that "the 'dark' continent is now one of the few places in the world from which this country buys more than it sells. Even though Africa's resources have hardly been scratched, the continent now provides a large variety of products that this nation needs."

Before considering the present extent to which American capital is exploiting its new outlet in Africa, let us see how the U.S.A. is behind the squeeze which Britain and the other European powers are putting on their African colonies.

Lord Trefgarne, chairman of the half billion dollar state-sponsored British Colonial Development Corporation, speaking to a group of Liverpool business men this year, pointed out:

> "The United Kingdom has an annual dollar deficit of £500 million—that is the background against which the productivity of colonial territories must be viewed. If the colonies could raise their overall productivity during the next ten years by £200 million per annum, that indeed would be a mercy twice blessed. . . . The reason why we look to the colonies is that their products—food and raw materials—are more acceptable to the United States than manufactured goods. The total value of imports of manufactured goods into the United States in 1947 from all sources amounted to some £250 million. The total imports of food and raw materials were more than four times as great. . . . Thanks to tin, rubber and cocoa, the colonial territories overall are playing a good part in the dollar sterling balance. . . . Obviously, therefore, it is sound policy to aim at greatly increased dollar exports of colonial products."

In 1947 U.S. imports of coffee alone amounted to more than three times the value of all British manufactured imports. In the same year the U.S. imported $152,000,000 worth of cocoa, largely from British

West Africa, $316,000,000 worth of rubber, and $516,000,000 in metals and ores exclusive of tin.

The American demand for these and other raw materials from Europe's colonies and the terms for their delivery were written into the E.R.P. Our State Department, without mincing words, stated that the Marshall Plan countries, "in partial return" for assistance received, would be expected to provide this country with certain required raw materials—tin, industrial diamonds, rubber, quinine, manganese, chromium, copper, lead, zinc and others—from "within their own territory or that of their colonies, territories, or dependencies . . . under an aggressive plan of exploration, development and expansion of productive facilities."

Realizing that the European countries were broke and could not finance an "aggressive plan" of developing their colonial resources, our government thoughtfully proposed that U.S. loans could be secured for purchasing "equipment and services" (from the U.S., of course) for stepping up the production of the raw materials desired by the U.S.; and that if such loans could not be paid off in dollars when due, they could be repaid in the form of still more raw material exports to the U.S., as required.

Such, in brief, are the colonial implications of the Marshall Plan which certain Negro mis-leaders, including Walter White, speaking for the N.A.A.C.P., have endorsed as part of their general support of America's bipartisan foreign policy.

To prevent their colonies from falling under the complete economic control of the U.S., a very probable result under the provisions described above, the European imperialists have no recourse except to try to guarantee that their colonies produce a considerable surplus over and above what is drained off to the U.S., in other words, they feel impelled to double or triple the exploitation of colonial workers.

One member of the British cabinet, John Strachey, put the issue this way:

> "Our national position is really too grave to warrant any indulgence in our particular opinions on the methods of overseas development. By one means or another, by hook or by crook, the development of primary production of all sorts in the colonial territories and dependent areas in the Commonwealth in far more abundant quantities than exist today is, it is hardly too much to say, a life and death matter for the economy of this country."

THIS channel—through the European colonial powers via the Marshall Plan—is one method of U.S. economic penetration into Africa. American investment in powerful British, French and Belgian monopolies operating in that continent is another. But what is perhaps causing the most worry to the European imperialists is the rapid rate at which American big business, during and since World War II, has *directly* invaded what was always hitherto considered their own private backyard.

The disruption of commerce between Africa and Europe early in the war gave Wall Street its first crack at what previously had been virtually a closed market. From 1939-1940 to 1940-1941, U.S. imports from Africa jumped 120 per cent and U.S. exports to that continent 178 per cent. Numerous official commercial missions were flown from Washington to North, Central, and South Africa to return with signed agreements for the exchange of strategic metals and ores and other African resources for American commodities.

As a result of the State Department's insistence upon the principle of "equality of opportunity," these wartime trade channels with Africa have been kept open. In the postwar period American business enterprise has made considerable advances in South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia and, above all, Liberia. American business operates in Africa in the accustomed manner. It pays the same starvation wages (18 cents a day for workers on Firestone's rubber plantations in Liberia, for example), and employs the same ruthless lash-and-gun methods of strike-breaking that the European bosses in Africa use.

Let us consider first a few examples of American economic penetration in some of the strictly colonial territories of Africa.

From the Belgian Congo, before the war, the U.S. got virtually nothing but palm oil; today it takes about a third of the colony's total exports and supplies the same proportion of the colony's imports, chiefly cotton fabrics formerly supplied by Japan. For all practical purposes, the great Belgian mining monopoly, Union Minière du Haut Katanga (Société Generale), has become a subsidiary of the U.S. government, at least so far as its production of uranium ore is concerned. A U.S.-Belgian agreement gives this country a monopoly over all such ore mined in the Congo, the world's largest known source of fissionable matter. When a new uranium-bearing mineral was recently unearthed in the Congo, it was sent not to Belgium but to the United States for definitive analysis.

Portugal's colonies in Africa have always been more or less under the wing of the British. At present the U.S. is rivalling Britain for supremacy over that part of the foreign trade in Angola not directly absorbed by Portugal. And American business interests earlier this year negotiated with Portugal's fascist dictator, Salazar, for concessions to exploit uranium ore deposits recently discovered in Mozambique, the island off South Africa's eastern coast.

From Britain's African colonies, with their over sixty million inhabitants, the United States gets numerous agricultural and mineral exports. U.S. exports to these colonies, though dropping from their wartime high, have remained well above pre-war levels. Southern Rhodesia last year bought more from the U.S. than from either Britain or South Africa.

THE heaviest concentration of American capital investment in Britain's African colonies is found in Northern Rhodesia where approximately $100,000,000 worth of mineral ores is produced annually by African workers paid 16 to 20 cents a day. The Vanadium Corporation of America owns 100 per cent of the outstanding stock of Rhodesian Vanadium Corporation. Two great international mining syndicates, the Newmont Mining Corporation (14 Wall Street) and the American Metal Co., Inc., have an interlocking interest in Northern Rhodesia's great copper mining industry. The Newmont Corporation conducts operations also in other sections of the continent, including South West Africa, the former German colony which the South African government has persistently refused to bring under U.N. trusteeship. The American Metal Company's controlling interest in Rhodesian Anglo-American, Ltd., gives American capital one of its links with the DeBeers syndicate, Imperial Chemicals, and the I. G. Farben cartel.

In the so-called sovereign states of Africa, such as Ethiopia and Egypt, American capital penetration through such giants as Westinghouse and Sinclair Oil now threatens the predominance of Britain.

The largest amount of American capital investment in Africa to date is concentrated in the Union of South Africa. The main economic fact about South Africa is that its whole economy, based on the mining of gold, is completely dependent upon the United States to which it sells most of its production. Rockefeller oil interests, General Motors, Ford and Firestone have been established there for some time. They are now expanding their operations and several other American industrial

giants such as Goodyear, Studebaker and Chrysler are entering the South African scene. General Electric has its South African subsidiary and so do American Cyanide and other U. S. corporations.

Up to two years ago, the purchase of shares was the only access Americans could get to South Africa's billion dollar gold-mining industry. But when capital was needed in 1946 to develop the newly-discovered gold fields in the Orange Free State Province, Wall Street finally crashed the gate. A syndicate, the American Anglo-Transvaal Corp., entered the field. Within about a year it had annexed a British-South African mining company, acquiring controlling interest in mining areas throughout South Africa and in about a hundred industrial companies.

Thousands of tons of manganese and chrome ore are among the strategic raw materials shipped monthly from South Africa to the United States. In 1930 U. S. exports to South Africa were valued at $30,500,000, representing about twenty-nine per cent of the British exports to the same country. During the one month of November, 1946, U. S. exports to South Africa reached the figure of $34,000,000, more than for the entire year of 1930. The South African government found it necessary to impose drastic restrictions on American imports recently in order to safeguard its dwindling gold reserve.

LIBERIA is the main focal point of current American imperialist penetration in Africa. This West African republic, founded by ex-slaves from America, has always been regarded as within the U. S. orbit. But only since World War II has our government taken the bold step of claiming the port of Monrovia, capital of Liberia, as the site of a permanent military, naval and air base for its exclusive use. Only in this same period has American capital conceived the bold plan of exploiting not simply rubber or some other product but *all* the resources—the whole economy—of Liberia. These military and monopolistic innovations reflect the scope and appetite of modern American imperialism.

The important thing to be noted here is the remarkable way in which Wall Street's profit interests and Washington's strategic interests in Liberia dove-tailed with one another. The improvement and modernization of the port facilities of Monrovia was just as essential for economic as for military objectives; Liberia itself naturally could not afford to undertake it. Where was the money for this port-development to come from?

The key man in providing the answer was Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., who from directorships with U. S. Steel, General Motors, General Electric and Metropolitan Life attained the post of Lend-Lease Administrator (1941-1943) and subsequently that of Secretary of State. It was Stettinius as Administrator of Lend-Lease who approved the arrangements whereby lend-lease funds, amounting to some $20,000,000, were allocated to the U. S. Navy for the Monrovia harbor development job. It was Stettinius as Secretary of State who endorsed the sending of government economic and geological missions to make extensive surveys of Liberia's resources. It is the same Stettinius as founder and chief of the Stettinius Associates-Liberia Company who, along with his business colleagues, plans now to cash in on Liberia's resources.

Before looking at the Liberia Company plans, it is important to note the terms of the U. S.-Liberia agreement (1943) whereby the U. S. acquired a military base at Monrovia. Article 7 of the agreement reads:

> "The Government of the Republic of Liberia, upon request, will grant to the Government of the United States of America the right to establish, use, maintain, improve, supplement, guard, control, in part or their entirety, at the expense of the Government of the United States of America, such naval, air and military facilities and installations at the site of the port, and in the general vicinity thereof, as may be desired by the Government of the United States of America for the protection of the strategic interests of the United States of America in the South Atlantic."

It requires no expert in international law to see in the above article an instrument granting arbitrary unilateral power to one state to occupy and control the territory (vaguely defined as to area) of another state with no limit whatsoever upon the duration of such occupation and control. It is not surprising that Liberians outside the official ruling circles have voiced indignant protests against this encroachment upon their country's sovereignty.

Immediate U. S. plans call for the establishment of a submarine base at the port of Monrovia and readying it for quick convertibility into a major naval base. Africa, too, is to have its Hong Kongs and Singapores—under U. S. control.

American economic control in Liberia, unlike the military control, at

Louise Krueger

least has a terminal date: Firestone's lease for rubber cultivation, covering one million acres of Liberian land, runs until the year 2025! Recently Liberia Company has come upon the scene and its rights hold until 2027.

On the Board of Directors of Liberia Company, headed by Stettinius, are Phillip D. Reed, Chairman of the Board of General Electric; Joseph C. Grew, former Ambassador to Japan; Admiral William F. Halsey; James D. Mooney, President of Willys-Overland Motors; a vice-president of Metropolitan Life; the president of Culpepper Steel; and the president of a textile company. In addition to the twenty-one white directors, there are also, for obvious reasons, four Liberian officials, designated by the President of Liberia, and two Negro Americans, Channing H. Tobias, director of the Phelps-Stokes Fund, and Claude A. Barnett, president of the Associated Negro Press.

The aim of this company is to produce and export the maximum quantity of raw materials such as cocoa, iron ore, lumber, minerals, that can be profitably marketed. The stated objective is to raise the value of Liberia's exports from $13,000,000, the 1947 figure, to $100,000,000 annually within twenty years.

THE terms of the agreement between the government of Liberia and the Liberia Company are typical of all corporate imperialist ventures. They seek to guarantee, in other words, high profits from unmitigated labor exploitation. There is one unique feature: If a dispute should arise between the company and the Liberian government over details of the agreement and it is impossible for arbitrators appointed by both sides to settle things or decide on a third arbitrator, it is provided that this third and final arbitrator shall be appointed by —can you guess?—the president of Columbia University!

In connection with this Liberia Company, reference must be made to a letter signed and given general circulation by the two American Negro members of the company's board of directors, Messrs. Tobias and Barnett. The letter speaks in glowing terms of the new day that Stettinius' company is bringing to Liberia. It speaks of the business venture as though it were a philanthropic undertaking. The main point of the letter is to request those who read it to bring pressure on the United States government to extend Marshall Plan aid to Liberia.

The writers say:

> "The United States is pouring billions of dollars out to help nations all over the world, trying to stem the tide of Communism and to build a bulwark for defense. Not one cent of E.R.P. money, however, is now going to the little black Republic of Liberia, though she has proven herself to be one of the best friends our country has."

Such E.R.P. aid, the writers say, "will greatly expedite efforts to get progress in Liberia into high gear." What they are requesting is that this government intervene still further in paving the way for the Liberia Company's operations in the African republic.

Similar proposals have come from other sources. The Boston *Herald* for example wants "Congress to earmark five per cent of all future appropriations of the Marshall Plan for the development of Africa." Why? So that Africa can become "the guinea pig ground for a world experiment of exploitation. . . . The native population . . . can be counted on to supply all the unskilled labor necessary. With the use of modern equipment and machinery and all this low-cost labor at hand, production could reach staggering totals." Philanthropy!

What are the long-range implications of these European and American "development schemes" in relation to the liberation struggles of the African people? Some individuals, like Stettinius, may rather naively leave the African people out of their calculations of the profits to be harvested from the African "jackpot." But British Colonial officials, with longer experience, are not blind to the fact that making the people of Africa "co-operate" is going to be no easy task.

To a gathering of African notables called together by the Colonial Office in London last October, Colonial Secretary Arthur Creech-Jones gave the ominous warning: "The spirit of nationalism awakening in most territories is . . . too often destructive and violent, indifferent to social and economic aspirations. . . . Now is perhaps a dangerous time, when subversive and irresponsible cliques can exploit this awakening and tune it to unhappy purposes." What Creech-Jones and his diplomatic colleagues hint at in their artful double-talk, others are expressing openly and boldly. Sir Oswald Mosley, for example, says: "Deliberately I postulate a new principle of trusteeship in Africa. The trusteeship is on behalf of White civilization. The duty is not to preserve jungles for natives, but to develop rich lands for Europeans."

But the new inspiration and drive which World War II gave to the liberation movements of the African peoples has meant the sharpening of their struggles against imperialist oppression. A full-scale military campaign and the slaughter of 90,000 Malagasy patriots—some executed by being tossed from airplanes down onto their villages—were required to crush the people's fight for independence in Madagascar. British naval vessels had to be rushed to the Gold Coast, West Africa, last February when the population there vented its rage against the price-gouging practiced by the United Africa (Lever Brothers) Company stores, and against the callous police murder of African ex-servicemen petitioning for their rights.

British, French and Belgian African territories have experienced militant and wide-spread strikes since the end of the war. African trade unions, many of them affiliated with the World Federation of Trade Unions, are developing mass strength and genuine labor consciousness; their strike action is the visible vanguard expression of the demand for a new life of freedom by African peasants and wage-earners alike. The election in November, 1948, of a Communist to the South African parliament is evidence, too, of the same demand.

It was in Rhodesian copper mines owned by the American Metal Co. that seventeen African strikers were killed recently. American investors in South Africa's gold mines were a party to the bloody business in 1946 when 300,000 striking black workers, whose wages have been fixed for decades at a constant level of about 46 cents a day by agreement among the mine operators, were driven back down into the mine pits by bayonets and gun-fire. And it was American investments once more that were being protected when authorities in French Morocco last March ordered troops, armored cars and tanks into action against strikers and their families in mining centers of that colony.

It is in the worldwide effort of European imperialism to maintain its power and of U. S. imperialism to expand its power that the real threat to world peace lies. The people of Africa have fought and will continue to fight for freedom from their overlords, whether European or American, as the people of Asia have done and are doing. How about the people of America? How long will it be before they recognize their common cause with the people of Africa against the monopolists and brass hats of America?

right face

ART

"One of our manufacturers has just started a series of reproductions of famous paintings on shower curtains. There is one that shows the ballet girls that Degas did so well. This is entirely hand-painted in pastel and you can hardly tell it from the original."—Kenneth Edgar, of the Firestone Plastics Company, interviewed on WMCA.

BELLES LETTRES

"Jack Lait has pounded out 1,500 short stories, besides 17 books, eight plays and millions of words of news. 'Fiction,' he rasps, 'is a cinch, automatic. I just set the screw in my head for 2,800 words, and out it comes. Not only do I not rewrite, I don't read 'em.'"—Time *magazine on the editor of the New York* Daily Mirror.

THEATRE

"If Sartre is now willing to testify that Red Gloves *is a 'vulgar, common melodrama with an anti-Communist bias' then it is so because that is the way he wrote it."*—Jed Harris, director of the U.S. production of the play, defends its integrity in the New York *Times.*

REPORTAGE

"Wendy: 'You went through the war in England and you did a wonderful job. Won't you tell people how it was to go through all that horror and be a glamour girl at the same time?'

"Constance: '. . . It was very difficult at first.'"—Wendy Barrie interviews actress Constance Carpenter over WABD-TV.

EDUCATION

"Another reason why the college wants no left wingers on the staff is that 'objectivity is nonsense and undesirable,' he said. 'We want to develop a new kind of political leader here and left wingers always want to be objective. We want Americanism taught here, not objectivity.'"—Dr. Frederick Schweitzer, president of Bloomfield College (N. J.), explains things to the New York *Star.*

REMEMBERING
Genevieve Taggard

by ALFRED KREYMBORG

"I hope I have written poetry that relates to general experience and the realities of our time."—G.T.

WHEN death removes another friend from our circle, one is not only torn from what one was doing but halted by a blow which, in the case of Genevieve Taggard, arrived unexpectedly. I had not seen her for some time, yet at our last meeting she was radiant with energy and characteristic warmth, and with news of the world in her eyes, a new world. The shock of the first news of her death made that world recede until one had time to reflect that Jed, as we called her, was still alive and would always be and that if this new world was ever realized it would owe a good deal to her poetry, and to her labors in class rooms and on adult platforms. An obituary notice in the *Herald Tribune* had given her two columns under a sub-headline hailing her as "a Leftist." She was thus introduced to readers most of whom had probably never heard of Genevieve Taggard. One surmised that the use of the term leftist was not entirely unintentional. Yet the actual text was fair and comprehensive.

However, I still wondered how that strong body could possibly crumble. Later, I learned from another source, an intimate friend, that before Jed bowed to her doctor's orders to go straight to the hospital she had called on him. He was a former colleague who had shared with her some valiant years at a college once noted for its progressive policy. The first thing she said was: "I'm not sick at all—*they* destroyed me." Miss Taggard had been immensely popular with student-body and faculty alike, yet one knew these days how things can begin to crawl in the dark and choke off radical or liberal education. It was happening everywhere in our free America. I was not surprised to hear, therefore, that a fellow-poet, formerly of the Left but now turned

Red-baiter, had begun the cunning process of undermining Jed's standing in the college. She was finally forced to resign, after a nervous breakdown.

The country girl had arrived from her birthplace, Waitsburg, Washington, and here in our metropolis sold her first poem to *Harper's Magazine.* The Harper house also deserves credit for having published her first book of poems, *For Eager Lovers* (1922), and for practically all the volumes issued thereafter. Earlier volumes were finally gathered, with revisions and emendations, in *Collected Poems* (1918-1938). And this was followed by *Long View* (1942) and an exquisite book of youthful memories, *Hawaiian Hilltop* (1947). Meanwhile Genevieve Taggard had issued several other interesting items: the anthology *May Days,* a collection of verse from the *Masses* and the *Liberator,* and a biographical, critical study, *The Life and Mind of Emily Dickinson.* It was natural for one country girl and rebel to understand another, far removed though they were from each other's age and society. While Emily stayed at home and let the world come to her door, Genevieve roamed her native land and countries overseas in search of a world she hoped to make her own through the singing images of her life and mind. Oddly enough, in a dedication preceding her prose text, the critic addressed her subject:

> Emily!
> The book is bound
> The pages cut.
> Index says: *Emily.*
> Where are you found . . . ?
>
> Go to her verse,
> To the great verse.
> Here is nothing of hers . . .
> Do not for a moment stir.
> She will come near, confidently nearer,
> Even as I write this, she is here.

And Genevieve Taggard is certainly here as well.

Before we turn to her verse in detail, further records require examination to trace a life in action elsewhere. Jed not only contributed to *Harper's* and other fairly conservative magazines, but to the *Liberator* and *New Masses.* Her progressive character likewise drew her to groups like the Teachers Union and the League of American

Writers, for whom she started a school for young writers. At the age of thirty-seven, she received a Guggenheim fellowship for creative work abroad (1931-32). Where did she land, in Paris? No, she left the City of Light to restless or lonely expatriates, Hemingway among them, and sailed for Mallorca, an isle that was being invaded by Mussolini and his black shirts as a stepping stone to Spain.

Genevieve Taggard wrote a perfect lyric in Mallorca: *Lark* is the title, her most popular song so far and one that was graced with choral settings by several American composers. Yet this is not the lyric to be quoted here. A ballad, *Definition of Song,* composed in New York three years later, summarizes her art more definitely. At a time when most members of her generation were "sicklied o'er" with disillusion, despair and degeneration, this impassioned ballad was like light clearing the densest clouds. It might be called the story of this poet's life now and hereafter:

Singing is best, it gives right joy to speech.
Six years I squandered, studying to teach,
Expounding language. Singing it is better,
Teaching the joy of the song, not teaching the letter.

And of all forms of song surely the least
Is solo. Only lark in the east
Can say—what no other lone singer can say—
The glory, the glory of the arriving ray.

Singing is the work of many voices.
Only so when choral mass rejoices
Is the lock sprung on human isolation
And all the many welded into one.

Body sings best when feet beat out the time.
Translated song, order of bold rhyme,—
Swing the great stanza on the pavement,—use
The public street for publishing good news.

Deepest of all, essential to the song
Is common good, grave motive of the throng;
Well-spring of affirmation in accord
Beneath the chanting utterance, the word.

Song is not static—joy becomes a dance.
In step, vast unison, in step advance.
This is the life of song: that it mean and move,
And state the massive power of our love.

With due respect to poets whose names were infinitely better known during her lifetime, I can think of no man or woman who could have composed these lines but Genevieve Taggard. T. S. Eliot, master of our poetic sphere since *The Wasteland* of 1922, and all the adoring coteries that feathered their nests with his plumes, could not have reached the glowing tone and forthright confidence such lines reveal along a marching road. And yet Jed's energy was obscured by a genius whose art reflected only one side of the earth: the side that was running down and not the side that was actually there as well, laden with struggling millions of creatures overwhelmed by economic devastation —with the exception of one nation, the Soviet Union.

The American-British or British-American star was blind to such present or future concerns, and embraced not only the past through the original style of his verse but cast his lot with royalism and a church he had once satirized as a hippopotamus. Nothing could have been more significant than the Nobel Award he received the other day. It merely confirmed the state of a decadent world that conformed with the old, not with the new. Even now we have another expression of the belief in "the futility of living," as the prophet Sartre announced in his clever fashion—the latest Parisian style that threatens to engulf our juvenile States again.

Genevieve Taggard found nothing futile whatever, neither the pain she suffered in bearing a child, nor the driving passion that brought forth verses that grew to one lasting song. Song it is most of all that comes to light and to sound in haunting cadences and poems, poems varied by themes and further themes from pure adolescence to maturity, and even on the threshold of what men call "old age," and then in the shadows of quiet death. When she was moved by political themes, or by horrors economic everywhere, the poet kept her hand on the pilot's wheel regardless of storms that threatened. The singing heart, chanting in unison with hearts unknown, simply produced another love poem. Here is one composed in the pregnant year, 1941: *Love-in-the-World*:

"It looks on tempests and is never shaken."
A tempest shakes the world and in this tempest
Love lives; love strives; and works without stint for peace,
Not fearing peace; and with the whole world striving
Beyond this storm for a peace made real already,
Not fearing tempests, so do lovers live.

Leafing over *Collected Poems* and *Long View,* powerful images come straight from the circle of life, or whatever you wish to call creative fire modelled with intrinsic form. Here is neither death nor nostalgia, or any endeavor to escape time or later time. What daring music is here, what dancing, what merriment, especially for the young and children too! And natural pools and breezes and the quiet eyes of stars or of a single star that unites all peoples in brotherhood, as a solo begins in which the whole crowd joins regardless of different skins or classes or former enslavement. Old China, now in decay, becomes young China. Even titles give themselves away in advance of the poems they head: I quote some line or passage along the way:

Morning Rising: "My definitions are passionate."
At Last the Women are Moving: "Housewives who know why they abhorred war."

To an American Workman Dying of Starvation:
Swell guy, you got to die.
Did you have fun?
I guess we know you worked.
I guess we saw you.
It got you just the same.
Say it with flowers.
So long. We got the breaks. But we'll be seeing you.
There's a little we got to attend to up here first.

Autumn Song for Anti-Fascists: "Grief in the world strides like a giant."
U.S.S.R. 1917-1937: "See, on this planet one large spot is changed."

To Arm You for This Time: "Energy calls forth energy."

Long View: "Never heard happier laughter. It sounded just like our own, American, sweet and easy."

To the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade: "Say of them/ They knew no Spanish/at first, and nothing of the arts of war/ at first."

To an Unfoiled American Revolutionaire:

"Nothing shakes this—the world that makes this man
While he with many makes the world. Believe me."

And finally one of her own spirituals in honor of Marian Anderson:

Our sister sang on the Lincoln steps. Proud day.
We came to hear our sister sing. Proud day.
Voice out of depths, poise with memory,
What goodness, what splendor lay long under foot!
Our sister with a lasso of sorrow and triumph
Caught America, made it listen. Proud day.

The peaceful Lincoln sat so still. Proud day.
Waiting the Republic to be born again. Proud day.
Never, never forget how the dark people rewarded us
Giving out of their want and their little freedom
This blazing star. This blazing star.
Something spoke in my patriot heart. Proud day.

Now what are we to conclude from this evidence or further evidence readers may find for themselves? And in poems for children and adults who have forgotten how to laugh? First of all, that here is one of the finest and boldest lyrists our nation has bred. Secondly, that even in her profoundest or subtlest moods, she is always clear and is therefore easy to read. Thirdly, that she never writes down but is ever on the level with beings like herself, and tries to raise that level higher, higher. And lastly, that the grave which gathered her in was a jubilant fellow, honored to hold her there in memory. Memories like hers may be found elsewhere in our past: larger and smaller stars casting shadows all over American earth; men and women who fought for freedom, equality, the pursuit of happiness, the right to live for oneself as well as the nation, and the right to work in peace and harmony. And poets like Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman, Lindsay, Sandburg, Robinson, Frost —there are others as well and others to come. And now I propose to let Genevieve Taggard's spirit remind us of lines she composed ten

years ago and to let them serve as her own epitaph. The poem has no title.

Listen to the voice in the cloud
Listen to the loud
And suddenly ended
Outcry
It is my
Voice in the high
Moon-running ruin of the sky.

Listen, in cities the rush
Of people on pavements, and hush,
Tip-toe, the step of the spy.

Listen we pour the new span,
We perfect the arc. Listen
To the voice in the cloud
Listen to the loud
Voice my warning voice and hark,
In the dark, the cry.

TO GENEVIEVE TAGGARD

by EVE MERRIAM

The givers of life live most.

I think of you walking on a March day,
Or in November at season's change,
The sky noon like your eyes,
The wind blowing forward, your voice
Your voice orchestrating all the sounds of grief
Into love.

Reading your poems now
I lie to say I am not lonely for you.
So many of us,
We turn to each other shivering for comfort, cloak.
Turn, wintered, withered away
From the juice of joy, the laughter of your lines,
Your dancer's solid ease,
Your majesty of womankind.

Return to your lines
Massed against the cold; coated, warm.

The dead iron bell swings,
The frozen clapper lifts
Needfully
Into tomorrow morning.

A Thousand Nights in a Barroom

A Novelette by IRA WALLACH

(DISTILLED FROM A BLEND OF FINE NOVELS. BOTTLED UNDER GOVERNMENT SUPERVISION. 90.8 PROOF.)

MARK looked distastefully at the empty glass on his night table, yawned, reflected that his mouth tasted foul. Reluctantly he swung his body over the side of the bed. He put his head in his hands and sat that way for a moment. Then he reached out for the bottle. The clear amber liquid glistened on the bottom of the glass. Last night's Martini olive, shrivelled and wan the moment before, was once more fresh.

Mark drank quickly, shuddered. His mouth tasted better as he chewed the olive.

Now that breakfast was over, he drove his mind to thoughts of the day ahead. He was tired of the advertising agency because it always faced him with things he had faced yesterday and would face tomorrow. He had as little ahead of him as he had left behind. A hell of a note, thought Mark.

He took another drink.

The day passed. Days always did somehow. George was the usual George, and Mark was able to stomach him at lunch and even talk to him over a brandy. And Bonnie, of course, was simply Bonnie, with her provocative body. But Mark refused to be provoked. Certainly not from nine to five.

Yet by four o'clock Mark was desperate. He put his head into George's office, mumbled an excuse and left.

Once in the St. Thomas Aquinas Cocktail Lounge, Mark felt better. The soft lights soothed his burning eyes. He leaned on his usual spot

at the end of the bar and he smiled at Luther, the bartender, who worked in an advertising agency in his spare time. The Manhattan which Luther mixed had a warm and friendly color. Mark sipped it. Then he saw the cherry in the Manhattan, and the cherry reminded him of the olive in his Martini. This was always the way it went. Something in the afternoon always reminded him of the morning. Something of his unpredictable tomorrows was always inherent in his horribly predictable yesterdays. This was the pattern. Mark grunted.

He got a lift out of seeing Tom when Tom came in. Tom was always Tom. He was like Bonnie in that respect, because Bonnie was always Bonnie, even when so many other people were so different from themselves. Take Tom's damned boyish look, that look of almost betrayed innocence. Tom worked in an advertising agency. He dressed like a college boy but he had something more, and Mark resented that something more.

"Hello, Mark," Tom said. His voice was portentous and the words had more meaning than their sense implied. "Hello, Mark." Just like that. Nothing more. Yet you knew by the sound of that voice that something was going on behind the crew haircut and the college clothes.

Mark muttered hello. He was glad to see Tom, but he was damned if he'd let Tom see how damn glad he was.

Tom ordered gin. "Dutch gin," he amended, "with bitters and a drop of lemon."

Luther placed the drink before him. Tom stared at the smooth white liquor, stained slightly by the off-color bitters. It reminded him somehow of his life, now that the war was over.

Tom ordered another gin. "Seen Betty?" he asked.

Seen Betty! Tom knew what lay behind that casual question, but he refused to dodge it. He was tired of dodging. "Yes, Tom. I saw Betty last night."

"And?"

Mark ordered an Old-Fashioned. The lemon and orange in the Old-Fashioned drew his attention to the cherry. It reminded him of the olive in his Martini. Somehow those things always caught up with a man.

"Same as always, Tom," he said after he took a few sips of the drink. "A strange and simple kind of torture.

Maybe I like torture. I don't know."

"Strange girl."

"Strange. Bad, not good. Not intelligent. Just Betty. No sense in it, Tom."

Tom sighed as Luther brought more Dutch gin. "That's right. But it doesn't help. Listen, Mark." He turned suddenly and met Mark face to face. It was a tense moment. "Mark, last Christmas, you know, Betty and I, after the others were gone, maybe you remember, and the garage was empty anyway, and—"

Mark put his hand on Tom's arm. "Never mind, Tom. I know. I've always known. Did you ever get over it?"

Tom smiled wryly, and ordered a rye smilingly. "Thought I did. But does a man ever know? Ever? Did you?"

"Did I what?"

"Last night, I mean. Did you get over it?"

Mark laughed, without mirth. "I don't know. A man never knows."

Silence. Luther brought the drinks. Then, in a voice out of yesterday, or possibly the day before yesterday when they were both in that little Adirondack town, Tom asked, "Mark, what is it you want, anyway?"

Mark looked down. "Pretzels," he murmured.

Tom sighed. "They're at the other end of the bar."

Mark nodded slowly. "I know. Whatever I want is at the other end of the bar. But I want them here. I want them now. I've always wanted pretzels with my drink, but somehow I never get them."

A FAINT rustle disturbed their melancholy. Both knew, without looking up, that Betty had come. She had insinuated herself between them and was sitting, her hair set differently now, with an Alexander in front of her. Betty worked in an advertising agency. Somewhere, sometime, she and Luther had known each other better.

"Hello, lovers," Betty said.

Tom put his glass down. His voice was strained. "Don't joke, Betty! For God's sake, stop this incessant joking!"

"Tom's right," Mark said. "It's bad enough as it is."

"Sorry, boys." Betty really was sorry. Her eyes dimmed, and if she hadn't been Betty, but someone else, she might have cried.

"Mark wants pretzels," Tom explained, "and he can't get them."

"There are some at the end of the bar," Betty suggested.

"They're always at the end of the bar, Betty." Mark's voice was flat. "Always somewhere out of my reach. Always just beyond the end of my fingertips. Always a day ahead of me or a day behind me. That's what makes me so sick."

Tom tossed off a jigger of gin and looked the other way. When he finally spoke, it was as though he were addressing someone else, someone who was not there but who was on his way. "Maybe, Mark, maybe if you asked Luther, maybe Luther would get the pretzels for you."

Mark swallowed his rye in one gulp, and slammed the jigger down so hard it almost broke. When he turned to Tom, his face was livid. "Goddam it!" he shouted. "Stop hounding me! You know damn well I've got a good reason for not asking Luther." He turned to Betty. "You know, too. Both of you know." His voice calmed a little as he went on. "I'm mixed up enough in other people's lives as it is. I'm not going to drag Luther into this. I don't want my life involved with Luther's. Our roots will tangle," he added, bitterly. "You can both understand that, can't you?" His voice pleaded for that understanding.

Betty and Tom nodded without speaking. Then they ordered more drinks.

A moment later Betty smiled at Mark the way she used to smile when Mark came to her apartment with his yesterday thoughts. "You're really a good man, Mark," she whispered. "Really good. But it's not really the way you put it, Mark. About Luther, I mean. It's really that you don't want to involve Luther. Not the other way around. I understand, Mark. And you are good." She looked away. "At times I almost feel ashamed before your goodness." She ordered a dry Martini.

As she drank, she listened to Mark's silence because she knew his silence was all the answer she needed. Mark was good. Better than herself, she reflected. Better than Tom, or Luther, or Lillian, or George. Perhaps in all the world no man lived than whom Mark was not better. And yet—and yet Mark was not enough for Betty. Mark, too, failed to answer the questions that Betty had failed to ask. Perhaps she needed evil, not good. Something in her cried for evil, fed on it, took it to her heart.

She ordered a boilermaker. Tom had one, too. While he sipped it, he stared at the teeth marks in Betty's neck. Mine, he wondered? No. Not his. He had both his incisors.

One of the incisors was missing in the teeth marks on Betty's neck. Mark was also missing an incisor. Tom smiled cynically to himself. "That's that," he muttered.

THREE men from an advertising agency came in and sat at a booth. They made a lot of noise. Mark found it distasteful. He was about to say something when he noticed that Tom was staring at the teeth marks in Betty's neck.

Rage came suddenly. He wheeled, faced Tom again. "Goddam you, Tom! Stop staring!" he demanded.

"Take it easy, Mark." Tom spoke quietly.

"I won't take it easy. It's that Christmas business all over, and I tell you—" he paused for a drink—"I tell you I can't stand it!" He smashed his empty glass against the floor. It almost broke. Then he turned to Tom, and without warning struck out. He heard his own voice making hoarse, unintelligible sounds as he swung.

He missed.

Tom said nothing. He ordered a drink, tossed it off and murmured, "I'm going to the St. Simon Stylites Cocktail Lounge." He turned at the door. "Come later, Mark. We'll forget all this."

"Sorry," Mark whispered, his voice bubbling in his rum cola.

Betty lit a cigarette. "You shouldn't have, Mark."

"I know." Mark was miserable.

"Maybe you need those pretzels."

"I do. I need them like I've never needed anything before."

"Mark."

He looked at her. She appeared different now, a fresh Betty, a Betty from a different advertising agency.

"Mark, get the pretzels. You can do it. I know you can." Betty paused. She saw that Mark was fighting with the idea, and she suddenly felt shy in the presence of his inner struggle. Her being there was indecent, as though she had burst upon a man in his nakedness. She moved quietly toward the door and out into the night.

Mark ordered a whiskey collins. He was running from an idea that was half-formed, tantalizing and somehow important. It had to do with Tom.

"Luther, another Scotch, please."

Luther brought the Scotch. A few sips of the smoky liquor cleared

Mark's head. He remembered. He had swung at Tom, at the crew haircut, the college clothes and the terrible maturity that lurked behind both. And over what? Teeth marks. It wasn't civilized, but Mark was tired of being civilized. He had wanted to leap at Tom, beat his fists into Tom's face, draw blood, smash bones, hear Tom groan, see him writhe on the floor in agony, because agony was real and a man could put his hand on it, and touch it, and hold it up to the light and say, "I know this. This is agony."

Luther, sullen, moody, polished glasses.

Mark finished the rye and soda. Tom was gone and Betty was gone, and both were gone for a reason. They had left him with himself and with a poor parody of him desires. Desires that meant yesterday as they meant today and would mean tomorrow. Shakespeare, he thought, understood such things. It would be good to wrap oneself in Shakespeare. He caught Luther's eye. "Shakespeare is dead, Luther," he said.

Luther clucked his tongue. "Too bad," he said.

Luther had his own way of making things clear. Other people would embellish their sorrow, advertise it, use it as a bauble on the gaudy shield of their personality, but Luther went to the core of things and stated them simply and directly. "Too bad." Mark would remember that.

MARK ordered a gin. The clear clean liquid helped him remember. He put the jigger down. His hand was trembling. Pretzels. That was it. He was going on his own this time, and he was leaving behind things he wasn't sure he wanted to forget. Betty, for instance, and the stupid way she would nibble at his ear lobe, like a doe rabbit in a field of celery. Stupidity, thought Mark with a pang, can be sweet. And Tom, for all his bravado, his childish make-believe, Tom was a good man. Maybe the best man Mark ever knew.

Never mind. Mark understood that the next five minutes would pass judgment on his manhood. He would do this by himself, without Betty's flesh bunching up in the gap left by his missing incisor, without Tom to say something silly and cheerful and terribly important.

Pretzels.

He stepped back and straightened his tie. He was trembling. In the distance he could see the pretzels at the other end of the bar. He started off.

Suddenly he was exultant. He was standing in a breeze that was somehow different from the breezes he had known. The bone and the body were challenging the dream.

Taking the dream by the neck.

Shaking reality into the dream.

He remembered getting halfway down the bar. Then voices. Friends, from an advertising agency. He stopped and had a few drinks with them, but even while he drank, he thought, "You don't know me." He said it aloud.

Lillian, a thin girl with a fine high bust, smiled. "Perhaps I don't, Mark. I was never sure."

Somehow Mark felt like weeping. Lillian, perhaps, understood. She always understood more than people realized. Strange, for such a stupid girl. But her stupidity had a quality of its own, almost like intelligence.

Mark left the group behind. The pretzel bowl grew larger. He paused for breath, leaned on the bar and ordered a drink. Then he heard another glass clink against his own. He turned. Betty was smiling and saying, "Like old times, isn't it, Mark?"

Mark couldn't answer. He knew that if he stopped for one moment, one word, he would stop forever. Betty faded away. Mark knew he would never see Betty again.

The rest was either difficult or easy, according to the way you see life. He stood by the pretzel bowl. He was eating pretzels.

Luther shook a gin fizz for Mark, and Mark waited patiently, neither happy nor sad, neither alive nor dead. Now Betty was gone, and Tom, and that Christmas with the silly little gifts and the twelve fifths of Scotch and the dog that had eaten the steak, and Lillian, and George, and the crowd from the advertising agency—all somewhere in a limbo that Mark had created for them in that terrible journey from bar's end to pretzel bowl. Perhaps Mark was happy, but that was unimportant now.

The pretzel crunched in his mouth. He lifted the gin fizz. Outside the snow fell, and each flake marked a spot in yesterday.

"Yesterday?" Mark asked of no one or nothing.

No one, or nothing, answered. "Today, Mark. Today, or possibly tomorrow."

(THIS NOVELETTE MAY NOT BE REFILLED UNDER PENALTY OF THE LAW.)

letter from abroad

Tel Aviv

THE older generation of Jewish writers in Israel has often been accused of being alien to the life and problems of the young country, of being unable to revive and express them in literature. Visitors from abroad have often wondered at the inactive, somewhat forlorn position of these writers who, showing promise, somehow did not catch the imagination of their contemporaries.

This cannot be said of the young Hebrew literature of Israel. Its creators have been tillers of the soil and soldiers, political prisoners and parachutists, partisans and refugees. It sprang up in a time of unusual and terrible experiences, which forced the pen into the hands of many a man or woman who would never have taken it up otherwise, and who—you know it—will never write a book again. But some—and that you know too—will continue.

The people their literature depicts are mostly people in battle, be it battle with gun in hand, or the hard everyday struggle in building a new country. It shows, therefore, a marked ideologic streak; often one feels a book to have been written in direct answer to an intellectual problem.

Dominant among the problems tackled by the young writers is that of the communal agricultural settlement—the kibbutz. As a social institution, the kibbutz, despite certain negative features, is on the whole a positive and progressive factor in our life. (The reactionary Revisionist Party, whose offspring is the Irgun Zvai Leumi, now called the Freedom Movement, has been bitterly opposed to the *kibbutzim,* though in recent years it has found it expedient to soft-pedal its hostility.) Though the Israeli town has not yet inspired an impressive modern social literature, the kibbutz has given rise to quite a group of young writers.

The first Hebrew best-seller, soon sold out and reprinted, was

Circles by D. Malz, which depicts the life of the kibbutz in a less idealistic light than was customary. Malz, however, loses himself in petty criticism, blaming his environment for things which are the fault not of the commune but of life itself. Nevertheless, his book initiated a series of stories dealing with kibbutz life, which, in renouncing idealization, in revealing the hardship of daily life, the conflict between man and community, differ positively from the trend of rose-painting that marked kibbutz literature of earlier days. Stories of Igal Mossenson, of S. Izhar and others belong to this category.

Has this young literature succeeded in giving expression to the new type of native-born Israeli youth—those affectionately called *sabras,* a word derived from the Hebrew name for the tough and thorny cactus, rooted in desert soil? There has been much controversy about this, as the type, generally, has found either its too ardent defenders or its too righteous accusers.

A recent book by M. Shamir, *His Path Led Through the Fields* —later successfully dramatized—aroused a sharp discussion. It depicts against the background of communal life, the drama of two young people: a refugee girl who, disillusioned and knowing, fights her way back into normal life; and a boy, born and raised in the commune, who leaves her with a somewhat easy regret when he is called into military service. Although he loves her and suffers, knowing her to be pregnant and distressed, he somehow has more courage to fling himself into danger than acknowledge and fulfill his responsibility to a life too prosaic, too burdened and bound.

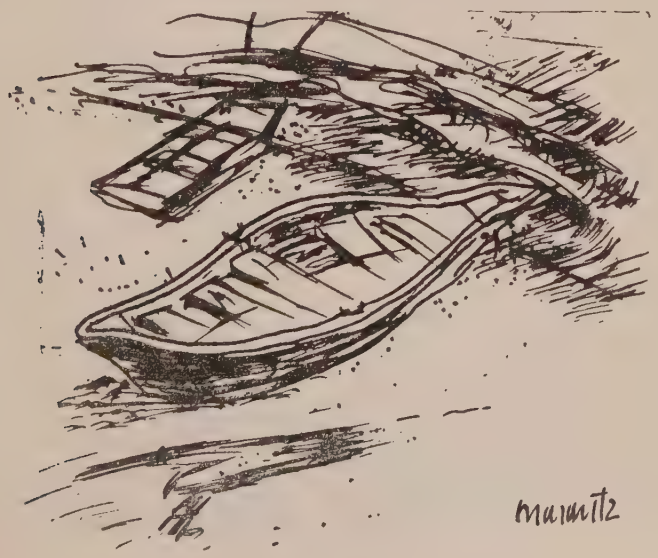
The book, written by a talented young writer, member of a kibbutz, was praised by many for its realistic description of his material and types. They liked Uri, the boy, for his healthy if reckless response to life. It is such boys, they said, who go to the front unhesitatingly, who bear the most hardship and danger. But certain acute critics pointed to the glorification of the simple in the novel. They warned against the spiritual poverty and "neo-barbarism" that remained after idealization had faded and the old tradition had been left behind without being replaced by new human ideals. We can agree with the left-wing critic, Margot Klausner, that Uri may be accepted as the hero of a drama, but never as *the* hero of young Israel.

More profound and truthful, without the simplification of Shamir, is the novel of S. Izhar, heavy-styled but daring. *The Forest on the Hill*

describes a lonely settlement during a night attack. More than others, perhaps, Izhar has understood those young people who are suspicious of words, who hate more than anything the glib phrases, the ready-made answers cut from the leading editorials. They fear danger and being sent to face it alone. Yet they face it, having rejected the way of safety when it was open. They have a secret feeling of being stronger than their opponent, but this feeling is not derived from newspaper talk. It is the feeling of having no choice and no retreat save that lonely house in the forest on the hill. Much of the strength of the Israeli fighter lies in this feeling, the feeling of no choice and no retreat.

In the new Hebrew literature there is much of the young and the immature. If the older generation has not found its way into the present, the younger one has been too eager to sever its links with the past, and therefore often appears rootless and shallow. It has originality, but that is often tinged with a provincial and boasting effort to shut itself off from other cultures. It is bold in form but limited in its range of problems. It has created its reader, its writer, its style; it still struggles with its subject, its outlook and vision. But it is alive and growing.

—Ruth Livnith



books in review

Mann's "Faustus"

DOCTOR FAUSTUS, by Thomas Mann. *Knopf. $3.50.*

An old German proverb runs: "He that will eat the kernel must crack the nut." This saying, uttered on several occasions in Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus,* applies to the book itself. Long, wordy and difficult of access, written at times in a stilted and tortuous style, wrapped around with layer upon layer of hard shell, *Doctor Faustus* is nevertheless one of the most significant and rewarding cultural documents of our time. I call it purposely a cultural document. For as the author himself is at pains to point out, it is perhaps not a novel at all. It is rather a *summum* of Thomas Mann's views on culture in general and German culture in particular.

It is mainly about music, but it encompasses all the arts in its scope. It is German in the honorable tradition of Duerer, Goethe, Beethoven, Kant, Hegel and Brahms—and German too in the tradition of Hölderlin, Schumann, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Wagner, and Hugo Wolf. Yet its significance lies in the fact that it transcends its national frame of reference; and using the genre of the novel only as the loosest kind of framework, it poses the central problem of bourgeois culture in our period of declining capitalism.

The answer to that problem is implicit in this work of complex and intertwined texture. It is nowhere given in so many words, but it is there. It is perhaps most cogently expressed in the words of the book's protagonist, the musician Adrian Leverkühn:

> "The whole temper of art, believe me, will change, and withal into the blither and more modest; it is inevitable, and it is a good thing. Much melancholy ambition will fall away from her, and a new innocence, yes, harmlessness will be hers. The future will see in her, she herself will once more see in herself, the servant of a community which will comprise far more than 'education' and will not have culture but will perhaps be a culture. We can only with difficulty imagine such a thing; and yet it will be, and be the natural thing: an art without anguish, psychologically healthy, not solemn, unsadly confiding, an art *per du* with humanity...."

Culture must again become one with the people. What Mann says of music is valid for all the sister arts, for all culture: "Music demanded with growing consciousness to step out of her dignified isolation, to find common ground without becoming common, and to speak a language which even the musically untaught could understand."

Now past seventy and rich with the wisdom of experience, Thomas Mann gropes his way toward the culture of the future. This outstanding representative of bourgeois literary culture of the Western World looks beyond the "desperate dance in which our fortunes are caught up" and sees the future in terms of a people's culture. This is so striking a phenomenon that I feel it goes far beyond the strictly literary confines—the literary merits or demerits—of *Doctor Faustus.*

It marks, in my opinion, a *qualitative* change in the world outlook of Thomas Mann. I find in it not only a remorseless critique of bourgeois sickness and decay, not only an unsparing analysis of the "death-wish" in bourgeois culture—which has turned its back on its many earlier achievements of a high order, but also an immense promise for the future.

Doctor Faustus is the story of Adrian Leverkühn, a German musician born in 1885. Originally a student of theology, the sensitive but sickly youth early turns to music where he shows unusual precocity. In 1906 he enters into a pact with the Devil—a modern version of the Faust legend which is so deeply rooted in German lore. In return for selling himself to the Evil One, he is vouchsafed musical genius; and for a period of twenty-four years thereafter, he composes works that win him world renown. But genius goes hand in hand with disease. He sleeps with a prostitute knowing that she has syphilis, and contracts the disease.

As musical mastery unfolds, he retires more and more within himself and lives the life of a semi-recluse. Then in 1930, the ever-lurking malady affects his brain. For the next ten years he lives in a twilight-zone of madness lit up by fitful gleams of sanity. His musical creativity is at an end. He is like a ghost, a wreck of a man, finally flitting helplessly back into the protective bosom of his aged peasant-mother. When Leverkühn dies in August, 1940, he is followed to his grave by a tiny handful of friends. And he is buried as "Germany, the hectic on her cheek, was reeling at the height of her dissolute triumphs, about to gain the whole world by virtue of the one pact she was minded to keep, which she had signed with her blood."

The parallelism is obvious, but

no less significant for its obviousness. The story of a man intertwines with the story—or perhaps one should say the anatomy—of a nation.

Who is Adrian Leverkühn? He is Robert Schumann; he is Richard Wagner; he is Hugo Wolf; he is Richard Strauss. He is a composite, a sick musical genius embodying all the elements of German music in the past seventy-five years. Even more, he is German culture — Germany itself, with its search for absolutes; its mingling of the rational and the demonic; its antinomies of recklessness and reason, sinfulness and saintliness, sensuality and spirituality, genius-giving disease and plodding healthiness, its "glowing moulds" of austere order and diabolical disorder. And above all, he is Germany in the crashing thunder of a finale of doom, in its final descent under Nazism from horror to horror into the bottom of the abyss.

Doctor Faustus is told in narrative form by one Serenus Zeitblom, Ph.D., a lifelong friend of Leverkühn. This small-town German philologist is pedantic and sententious, but at bottom he is honest and deeply loyal. His devotion to Leverkühn—and to Germany—is symbolically compounded of "tenderness and terror." And he is overcome with a sense of guilt at the spectacle of Nazi Germany, a "land self-maddened, psychologically burnt-out." Yet this "moderate man and son of culture" speaks as if prophetically when he compares the Germany of World War I and World War II. He wonders in retrospect why "bourgeois imperialism" in 1918 prevented Germany from making common cause with the young Soviet Republic. And he continues:

> "But when I recall the grotesque anecdote about the two saviours of European civilization, the German and the Italian, both of them in the pay of finance capital, walking together through the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, where they certainly did not belong, and one of them saying to the other that all these 'glorious treasures' would have been destroyed by Bolshevism if heaven had not prevented it by raising them up—when I recall all this, then my notions about classes and masses take on another color, and the dictatorship of the proletariat begins to seem to me, a German burgher, an ideal situation compared with the now possible one of the dictatorship of the scum of the earth. Bolshevism to my knowledge has never destroyed any works of art. That was far more within the sphere of activity of those who assert that they are protecting us from it."

To quote these words is to suggest the progressive change in the world outlook of the "unpolitical" Mann who in 1918 published a volume of reflections called *Betrachtungen eines Unpoliti-*

schen. The humanist no longer shuns politics.

The Zeitblom-narrator device gives Mann unusual scope and flexibility in unfolding his story. Sequence and chronology are not all-important; hence they are not observed. The result is that *Doctor Faustus* develops on many levels: there is room in it for long theological discussions among students at Halle University; touching word-pictures of country life in Thuringia and Bavaria; a fascinating portrait of the "housebroke Bohemia" that was Munich in the first decades of the twentieth century; lengthy excursions into philosophy and ethics; expert digressions into the art of musical composition; a multiplicity of episodes, some fleeting and some extensive, of the hopes and fears, loves and intrigues, ambitions and failures, idylls and scandals of representative German men and women.

And central to the theme of the entire book is the amazing conversation between Adrian Leverkühn and the Devil (Chapter XXV), which inevitably reminds one of Ivan Karamazov's dialogue with the Devil in Dostoyevsky's *Brothers Karamazov.*

Moreover, this narrator device enables Mann to introduce and withdraw his characters at will, without too much concern for the exigencies of plot in its narrowest and most obvious sense. So we get

a crowded gallery of figures from various social classes and walks of life. And there is something else: Mann introduces a number of imaginary musical compositions by Leverkühn that are exhaustively described in the text.

Without entering into the details of his musical analyses, one cannot refrain from expressing admiration tinged with amazement at the profound musical knowledge of Thomas Mann. At this point, too, it is in order to pay tribute to Mrs. Helen Lowe-Porter, who has translated into English this extremely difficult book with proficiency and loving care.

I said at the outset that *Doctor Faustus* is a kind of summation of Thomas Mann's world outlook. Here you will find the same themes that have preoccupied him throughout his fifty years of literary activity: genius and disease, the intimate connections between music and literature, the role of the artist in modern life and the sense of decay in bourgeois—specifically, German bourgeois—culture. These themes are interwoven into the fabric of Mann's many books: in the short stories, "Death in Venice," "Tonio Kröger" and "Tristan"; in the massive novels, *Buddenbrooks* and *The Magic Mountain;* in the essays on Goethe, Wagner, Schopenhauer, Freud, Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy and Masereel. In *Doctor Faustus* they reach their apogee — and their resolution. Or at least the beginnings of a resolution.

Significantly, the two major works, *The Magic Mountain* and *Doctor Faustus,* close with sentences that strike a similar note —like a musical chord that is repeated later in life, but in a variant and with richer and fuller overtones. At the close of *The Magic Mountain,* the author, contemplating the frenzied "life on the plain" into which his hero, Hans Castorp, is plunged from his life on the mountain, asks: "May it be that Love one day shall mount?" At the end of *Doctor Faustus,* the narrator, Zeitblom, asks: "When, out of uttermost helplessness . . . will the light of hope dawn?"

In this book lies the answer to these queries. In it, Mann has indicated the answer to his own unresolved contradictions. It is seen dimly and with great difficulty; but it is there. Above the crumbling edifice of bourgeois society, of which he is one of the best products and which he has described with the skill and power of a great creative writer, there will arise a new society. Man will no longer be the "lord of counterpositions." He will develop a culture with human content, a people's culture.

In his *Doctor Faustus,* Mann points to the goal, even though like a Moses he may not be fated to enter the Promised Land.

JOSEPH M. BERNSTEIN

China: Turning Point

TOMORROW'S CHINA, by Anna Louise Strong. *Committee for a Democratic Far Eastern Policy. Cloth, $2.00; paper, $.65.*

"WHEN the Kuomintang fares well, the Americans let the fighting proceed. When the Kuomintang fails, the Americans begin to mediate." So commented the Shanghai newspaper *Chou Pao,* Miss Strong informs us. A judicious comment, surely, but a mighty cautious one. It would have been more accurate to say that when Chiang Kai-shek's regime was faring well the Americans *saw to it* that the fighting proceeded—saw to it with guns and bullets, planes and bombs, gold and goods of all kinds, an American fleet and several thousand American officers running a score or so of training schools for the armies of Chinese reaction.

Perhaps the lady who spoke at the Tsitsihar banquet given in Miss Strong's honor put it more forcefully. She rose to speak, but instead of addressing her remarks to the guests at large she pointedly stood facing Miss Strong. She spoke in peasant language which the interpreter regarded as too impolite to translate. Miss Strong writes that what the Chinese lady said to her was this: "All the years of my life, American people and Chinese people were good friends, but now they'd better take their troops out of our country and stop sending bombs and guns to kill us. Then we can keep on being friends. Else we'll have to throw them out, and that won't be so friendly."

Anna Louise Strong visited the Chinese people for the fifth time in 1946-47 and for the fifth time she reports to us and to the democratic people throughout the world a decisive moment in Chinese history. She was in China during the great revolutionary upsurge in 1925; she was there again in 1927 to see the revolution's betrayal by Chiang Kai-shek and the foreign supported bourgeoisie. In 1937 she returned at the crucial hour of Japan's full-scale invasion and then once more during the dangerous hours before Pearl Harbor in 1940-41. Others, of course, have taken trips to China but most have gone as conscious or unconscious agents of imperialism, that traditional enemy of the Chinese. Few have gone with the Marxist understanding and sympathy which are Miss Strong's. Nor are there many that deserve to be equated with her as technicians in the profession of journalism.

Wherever Miss Strong has appeared in China—and a whole article could be written just on the story of her travels—the Chinese people know that there are two kinds of Americans, the imperialists and the anti-imperialists, their enemies and their friends. In spite of the American-munitioned and

American-provoked slaughter of the Chinese people, fine personalities like Miss Strong are even today keeping unbroken the thread of a powerful and democratic friendship between the Chinese and Americans.

The other side of this picture is probably more important. If we may rejoice that a few Americans like Miss Strong have travelled in the Liberated areas we must see to it that their reports reach our own countrymen. Ponder for a moment this item which Miss Strong brings back. She talked with some leaders of the organized trade unions in one of the large Liberated areas of North China. The unions had a membership of 419,000 workers. The chairman proposed that advantage of Miss Strong's presence be taken to send a message to the world's trade unions and especially to the C.I.O. "Every one cheered the idea," writes Miss Strong. Then she adds: "They had several times sent cables to the C.I.O. but had never had an answer."

The workers' leader himself said: "Perhaps Chiang interfered with our cables or perhaps our brother workers in America do not believe that we exist." I myself know of a number of such messages which were received here by American trade union leaders; the Chinese unionist was being very courteous in suggesting an alternative reason for the failure of the Americans to support their brothers abroad.

And so it is that the most important task Miss Strong and a handful of others are doing is to produce first hand, authoritative and exciting reports on our Chinese brothers. A trained observer and writer like Miss Strong is providing us with the instruments with which to go to the American people so that there will be no more unanswered cables from Chinese to American workers. Our responsibility to ourselves and to our Chinese friends can be partly fulfilled by seeing to it that *Tomorrow's China* gets really big distribution.

The subject of Miss Strong's book is nothing less than the most important event of our day. It is the story of how and why the world is changing its face. It provides the background for understanding why the present victories of the Chinese people against their own oppressors and against American imperialism are decisively shifting the relation of world forces. There can be no denying that these victories, which now proceed at an accelerated pace and presage full triumph, constitute the greatest passing of a powerful people and a huge nation from the camp of war and imperialism to that of peace and democracy since October, 1917.

What is going on in China today will shape our future and that of our children to a degree

comparable only to a few other turning points of history. This year and next mark the time when nearly a quarter of the people of the world finally turned their backs on feudalism, on colonialism, on monopoly capitalism, on imperialism and on war. Today one quarter of the people of the world are taking their future into their own hands. They are focussing clear-seeing eyes on a close horizon of peoples' democracy, increased productivity, a rising standard of living, the extirpation of fascism and imperialism. They begin to pave the highway to socialism.

Americans have much, much to learn about China. What is the character of this historic revolution? Is it comparable to the American or French Revolution? To the Russian Revolution? To the new democracies of Eastern Europe? To what extent do the special conditions of China make it hard to compare its revolution with any other? And, then, there is a whole set of questions about the particular stage of the present revolutionary events. Some Americans seem to think "This is the works," by which they mean that the Chinese Communists are leading their nation directly from semi-feudalism and semi-colonialism to socialism. Others are still silly enough to prattle about the Chinese Communists as "agrarian reformers" or (as some elements in the State Department put it) as "a special Chinese type of Com-

munist." Then there are those who parrot a line of confusion which first began to emerge from American sources in China when General Marshall was the big shot there in 1946. That line rumors that there are two kinds of Communists in China, a "Russian" kind and a "Chinese" kind. Maybe that isn't so strange at that. I've heard from certain Americans who should know better that there are two types of imperialists, those who want to raise the standard of living of the "backward" people and those who don't!

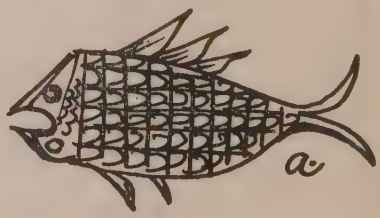
How many Americans know anything about the struggles of the Chinese Communist Party, struggles not only against the enemies of the people, but against Rightists and Leftists in their own ranks? How was this party welded into the powerful vanguard that advanced against the Japanese and is now destroying the Chiang Kai-shek regime and literally throwing the American imperialists out of the country? And except that he has a genial countenance and is a renowned revolutionary leader, how many of us can talk for ten minutes about Mao Tse-tung?

Miss Strong writes that she once asked whether he had any doubt of final victory. He replied: "That will depend on how well we accomplish the land reform. Chiang Kai-shek will fail because he goes against the needs of the peasants. If we Communists can solve the land problem, we shall win." To understand how the Chinese Communists are solving this problem is to gain insight, deep insight, into the whole colonial problem throughout the world. Remember that some of that problem not only touches our own mainland boundaries but lies within it.

How much we have to learn from Mao Tse-tung! Let me pass on to you one more item about him from Miss Strong's book. In the following remark he has made a pretty complicated idea very clear to me—maybe to you, too.

"We study Marxism-Leninism," Mao said, "not because of its good looks, nor because there is any magic in it, as if it were a kind of charm to cast out devils. . . . It has neither good looks nor magic; it is only very useful. . . . There are people who think it is a sort of a charm with which one can easily cure any disease. Those who take it as a dogma are that kind of people. We ought to tell them that their dogmas are more useless than cow-dung. For dung can be used as fertilizer, while dogma cannot."

How much indeed we have to learn from the experience and suc-



cess of the Chinese Revolution! But I believe most American progressives will have to admit that until the Chinese People's Liberation Armies began to win victories so sensational that even the commercial press could not keep the news off its front pages they had paid very little attention to China. It would have been better if we had paid heed to the Chinese Revolution much sooner; we could have played more of a part in this great defeat of the imperialist, war-making forces which emanate from our own country. Yet it is not too late. The Chinese Revolution has yet to be consolidated; the victories must be held. And American progressives have an unfinished job of their own to do at home, and it is not unconnected with events in China.

Miss Strong's book will set us well on the path toward understanding China's Revolution and America's relation to it. Read it, study it. Promote its distribution. Let it lead you on to some of the other sound books on China and on American imperialism in China. Especially let Miss Strong lead you to the study of Mao Tse-tung's great contributions to Marxism. Fortify your courage by learning how the Chinese farmer and worker, starting with hardly a sling, have brought to his knees what so many thought was the invincible Goliath, American imperialism!

FREDERICK V. FIELD

Trumpets of Jericho

JAZZ: A PEOPLE'S MUSIC, by Sidney Finkelstein. Illustrated by Jules Halfant. *Citadel. $3.00.*

SIDNEY FINKELSTEIN's new book is addressed mainly to the layman, and it is as a low-numbered card-holder in the Amalgamated Association of Unorganized Jazz Laymen that this reviewer will discuss it. The book has something to say to the critics as well, but I suspect that few of them will hear it because their needles have been stuck for so long in the same grooves — the hard-shell fundamentalists who pine for dear old Dixieland and the chromium-plated modernists to whom the only difference between Louis Armstrong and Sammy Kaye is that Louie knows better.

To say that this is the best work yet in this field—and I believe it is—is not to low-rate previous works upon which Finkelstein builds. In his preface Finkelstein discusses at length the work of those (Panassie, Ramsey, Smith, Sargent, Goffin and others) to whose scholarship he is indebted. But *Jazz: A People's Music* brings to the subject something new—qualitatively new: a social sense, a historical understanding, which is Marxist.

This book is an extension of one phase of the problems discussed by Finkelstein in his *Art and Society*, particularly the chapters on folk and popular art and

the national question in the arts. In this further development of his ideas in relation to jazz, he not only breaks new ground but corrects some of the flaws in his first pioneering work.

In *Art and Society* he saw a strong "national rebirth of the arts taking place" in America.

Jules Halfant

"And within this expanding national art, subdivisions are arising, such as the art of the Negro people." But now, in examining the most outstanding phase of the Negro people's art, their music, Finkelstein finds that its development takes place despite and in opposition to the general *decline* of our country's culture and art. As against the Standard Brand music commodity, labeled "classical" or "popular," he sees creative jazz to be "the most important and lasting body of music produced in the United States." In contrast to the vitality of jazz as a people's music, he points to the result of big-business control of concert music: "If we were to judge from the symphonic, solo concert and operatic programs given in America during the past two or three decades, we would conclude that the art of music was produced by dead men; that music was not an art in which the listeners expected a communication from a living contemporary."

Refuting the idea that jazz has its origins in mystical "African strains," in "primitive racial heritages," Finkelstein shows that jazz is a part of the common cultural development of the Negro people in America, first as slaves and later as an oppressed people, a nation within a nation. That there are African (and European, for that matter) elements in this culture is undeniable, but its roots are to be found in American soil and history. It is as ridiculous to call jazz an African music as it would be to maintain that the spirituals, another phase of the Negro people's music, are Hebraic since their imagery is based largely upon the Old Testament.

Jazz, like the spirituals, expresses the lives of a people; its vitality and surging drive reflect the continuing and growing struggle of that people against oppression, for equal rights. But where the spirituals arose under the conditions of chattel slavery and plantation life the "blues," which Finkelstein shows to be the underlying melodic base for all

phases of jazz, developed from the social and economic conditions of the "freedman," a second-class citizen who, when he left the fields, was segregated in the Jim Crow urban ghettos. Although the spirituals will live as a part of the music heritage of our country, their day as a language of communication is gone. But jazz is a continuing and thriving language, pushing ahead, setting for itself new tasks, adjusting to new conditions, even as do the people who were its creators and are still its principal source.

Much of jazz production is bad music. "Yet there is a golden vein in jazz of genuine music, produced by men who regard a musical instrument as an extension of their hand, voice and mind, who regard music as a language with which to speak to their fellow human beings." And it is this vein which Finkelstein assays in this new study.

There is some discussion of the role played by the great figures of jazz from New Orleans to bebop, but with the exception of Ellington this aspect is treated sketchily. Finkelstein deals mainly with the problems of jazz as music, its relation to the whole range of the classic and popular, and its specific aspects: improvisation, pop tune, hot solo, large band and small band, the new jazz and the outlook for its future development. Each chapter ends with a listing of illustrative records.

His chapter, "The Sound of Jazz," was for me the most illuminating of this technical discussion. Here Finkelstein demonstrates again his special gift: through perceptive and sensitive analysis he enables the audience to see more, hear more and hence enjoy more of the art under consideration. In this chapter, he examines the specific quality of jazz singing and playing and the contributions made by this music in extending the scope and subtlety of the various instruments—trumpet, trombone, piano, clarinet, saxophone, drum. He finds that in its fidelity to human expressiveness, "an extension of the voice and mind," jazz is closer to the spirit of the great classical composers than is the "refined" manner in which their works are presented today under the concert system—a manner which seeks "to banish from the listener's ear all consciousness of the instrument."

Readers of this magazine are already familiar with the author's views on the latest jazz developments, particularly bebop, which were presented at length in these pages (September, 1948).

In looking ahead to the future of jazz, Finkelstein declares that jazz has now reached an impasse, "a peak beyond which it can go no further within the forms in which it exists today." For its next great advance, he says, it must progress from a largely unwritten form to the more ambitious forms

made possible by musical composition.

Maybe so, but as Finkelstein has said elsewhere, jazz is full of surprises, it always seems able to pull yet another rabbit from the hat. I for one am looking for more. But even those who share my trepidations as to what will happen to jazz when a Lester Young will compose with notes and bars instead of with his winged saxophone, must, of course, join with Finkelstein in supporting the struggles of the Negro people to break through the barriers to musical education and a foothold in the concert and opera world.

Whatever happens to jazz in the future, there's one thing we can be sure of: when the walls of Jim Crow Jericho finally come crashing down it's certain that at least some of the trumpets will be coming on with something solid.

LLOYD L. BROWN

Heine as Realist

THE POETRY AND PROSE OF HEINRICH HEINE, selected and edited by Frederic Ewen; including 110 new verse translations by Aaron Kramer. *Citadel. $6.00.*

HEINRICH HEINE lived from 1797 to 1856. During his lifetime he was both abused and esteemed; since his death he has been admired, loved, hated. By now he has become a legendary figure. To those with a superficial knowledge of German literature he is the gifted Jew whose touching lyrics are sung to lovely music by Schumann and Schubert. The scholars have sympathetically evaluated his tremendous gifts but expressed sharp reservations about his character. A standard American history of German literature states, for example: "And when we come to cast the balance of his life, we find that, with all his noble sympathies and aspirations, he was at the end—or shall we not rather say, from the beginning?—religiously, politically and even artistically a renegade."

The book under review will dispel the established legend for those who have not studied the ten-volume German edition of Heine's works or the thirteen-volume English translation. Instead of the romantic legend there appears a virile, versatile realist, a persistent critic of the hypocrisy and superficiality of his day. While an English professor finds that "Heine suffered by having been born into an age when there were no clear issues or great causes to fight for," Professor Ewen rightly shows Heine as ever at war with the reactionary forces and individual deserters from the ranks of progress and correctly entitles his examination of Heine and his times as "Heinrich Heine: Humanity's Soldier."

Heine lived when Germany,

though its states were independent, sought unity, when the princelings, though weak and terrified, sought to hold back the development of the middle class. The particularism of the eighteenth century had been broken in France and the ideals of the French Revolution stirred the German mind. Repression in the age of Metternich was heavy on the press, the fraternities, the movement for assembly and franchise. Against this repression Heine fought. The German burgher, who bowed to authority in 1848, was amassing wealth and displaying it. Ostentation veneered the older German stuffiness. Heine hated both and attacked bourgeois smugness everywhere.

Excelling in the forms of poetry esteemed by his generation, Heine was caustic with his second-rate competitors. Heine seized the opportunity to use the middle-class outlet of self expression, the newspaper, and with his brilliant contemporaries shouted abuse and criticism at the reactionary movements of the day.

Poetry and the drama were more highly esteemed at the beginning of the last century than other forms of expression. Goethe, Schiller and the authors of the Romantic School were Heine's immediate precursors. Interest had been greatly stimulated in the German past, the early German epics, the German folksong. Examples of these movements can be found in Heine's writings, especially the poetry, though his essays show his consciousness of all the trends.

The most famous poem is probably "The Lorelei," with "The Two Grenadiers," "The Pilgrimage to Kevlaar," "Du bist wie eine Blume," "Es war ein alter König," presented as standard examples of Heine's power in every anthology. Since Professor Ewen's book is much more than an anthology, nearly three hundred pages are devoted to the verse. Over one hundred poems have been newly translated by Aaron Kramer with great care and sympathy. For the beginner, the "Lyrical Intermezzo" and "New Spring" will be a happy discovery. Most personal and introspective is the fifty-page narrative, "Germany: A Winter's Tale." Most important in dispelling the old legend is the group "Songs of Protest" and most timely the "Hebrew Melodies." As a lyric poet Heine advanced beyond the Romantic School by the clarity and simplicity of his expression.

Directness and intimacy also characterize his prose. Here the thought is rapidly and vividly expressed with the satire and wit that alienated so many of his contemporaries. Models of German prose style are "Düsselldorf" (autobiographical), "A Journey to the Harz" (travel sketch), essays on German literature beginning with "Martin Luther," or "The New German Folksong" and "The Nibelungenlied" under Ewen's head-

ing *Religion, Art and Life.* Models of style give way to breadth of interest. Thirty-odd pages collect Heine's writing on the Jews, for instance. Under the caption *The Citizen of the World* are gathered Heine's observations on contemporary mores and movements, as "The English Middle Class," "Emancipation — the Great Task of the Day," "Communism." Every subject that he touched he treated freshly, sometimes sarcastically, more often humbly, always personally.

Fortunately the editor-translator has reproduced a large number of Heine's letters where, even more than elsewhere, Heine records his personality, his faults, his desires, his frustrations, his polemics, his self-criticism, his self-esteem, his pride and his humility. Two hundred pages are devoted to the section "Self Portrait." Take the note to Goethe which accompanied the poems in 1821. It begins: "There are a hundred reasons why I should send Your Excellency my poems. I will name only one: I love you. That is reason enough. . . ." Part of the self-portrait appears in "Self-Vindication," "My Place in German Literature," and "Am I a Destroyer of Faith?" In the second of these Heine writes of himself:

> "A witty Frenchman—a few years ago this expression would have been considered a pleonasm—once dubbed me an unfrocked Romantic (*romantique défroqué*). I have a weakness for wit—and spiteful as was this appellation, it nevertheless delighted me. For it is apt. Notwithstanding the war of extermination that I waged against Romanticism, I always remained a Romantic at heart—and that in a greater degree than I was myself aware. After I had delivered the most deadly blows to the taste for Romantic poetry in Germany, there stole over me an inexpressible yearning for the blue flower of the romantic dreamland, and I seized my enchanted lyre. . . . I knew this was 'the last woodland song of Romanticism,' and I its last poet. . . ."

This review fails to give a hint of the age which Heine was so eager to wrestle with. That and

the course of the poet's personal life is given in the introduction by Professor Ewen. It should be read as part of the book of poems and the volume of prose, for Heine was peculiarly a child of his time and, as an iconoclast and non-conformist, its victim. Today, when the non-conformist is so hastily penalized, the reading of this book will be a support. Anyone aware of our current problems will benefit from a study of the verse and prose of this author of a century ago, and he will be entertained as well.

LYMAN R. BRADLEY

Three Poets

POEMS 1943-47, C. Day Lewis. *Oxford University Press. $3.75.*

STRANGER AT CONEY ISLAND, Kenneth Fearing. *Harcourt Brace. $2.00.*

THE SONG OF THE COLD, Edith Sitwell. *Vanguard. $2.75.*

THE authors of these recent books of poetry are well known poets of the pre-war period. Their books mirror the effect of the war and the false peace.

Lewis and Fearing both came into prominence during the depression days and both were known, then, as poets of the Left. The scene the poets of the Left pictured in the pre-war period was complex. The old values shifted, the eye saw only a blurred lettering of new values. Roads were still marked as they had always been but went nowhere clearly. The English scene lay peaceful and spelled fear: behind each bush and hedgerow was a guard and a gun; a kind of unreality led to a kind of hypnosis. The American scene held Hoovervilles and breadlines. The poets frequently seemed double men with a double vision of the past and the future. In England they had been bred of the traditional and were umbilically tied to it in emotions while their minds sought new horizons in social change. In America, with a dramatic abruptness, the poets of the middle class were pushed into the proletarian and jobless groups; they turned to bait the middle class, the ideals and the success they were denied.

Both in England and America, consequently, poetry indicated a split between emotion and intelligence. In Auden's poetry, for example—and his was the best mirror of the period—we are given man's last ditch stand on individualism, man's insistence on himself as actor in all parts of a historical drama, as interpreter of many voices in economic chaos, but as committed to no part and no voice. In Spender's and in Lewis' poetry we find the political and the personal alternating and often in contradiction. And more and more, as a result of the war and its exhaustion, we find the ex-

clusion of the political in favor of the personal. Today Lewis especially flutes down, as it were from the limbo of lost souls, the feeble almost forgotten strains of wholly personal love, honor and guilt.

The mock-heroics of Lewis' earlier political poetry are now gone. His attempts to assimilate the real scene are over. He foregoes the themes of economic insecurity and of the neuroticism of the English upper classes. He follows in every footprint of Auden's but without any of Auden's wit or ability to mirror struggle. At heart Lewis was always a romantic and his last book is definitely *fin de siecle.* His forms and language are, as always, facile but seldom felicitous. Everywhere in his late poems one hears the confused echoes of the decadent romantic and finds pictured the rather unlovely emotion of a vague self-pity, the picture of the poet as "a ghost by the future made."

There are, indeed, a curious assortment of such ghosts. For has not the American Poet of the depression also become a phantom? Kenneth Fearing in these latest poems is "being careful to notice as we go and return, the character and number of our tracks in the snow." But he is convinced, apparently, that we are of the winter of passions and of chilled convictions only. This satirist of the bourgeoisie, this poet who in so many ways best mirrored the bitter irony of the depression days, has never been able to affirm new social values, faith in change. As he has grown more popular, more acceptable to the *New Yorker* audience he once satirized, he has grown more sentimental. He lingers rather lovingly in the past where we are all castaways. And although he states that "elders were abandoned here" and that "the young may fail in confusion too," the reader is forced to wonder why the poet also must fail in his own confusion. Is there a technical reason?

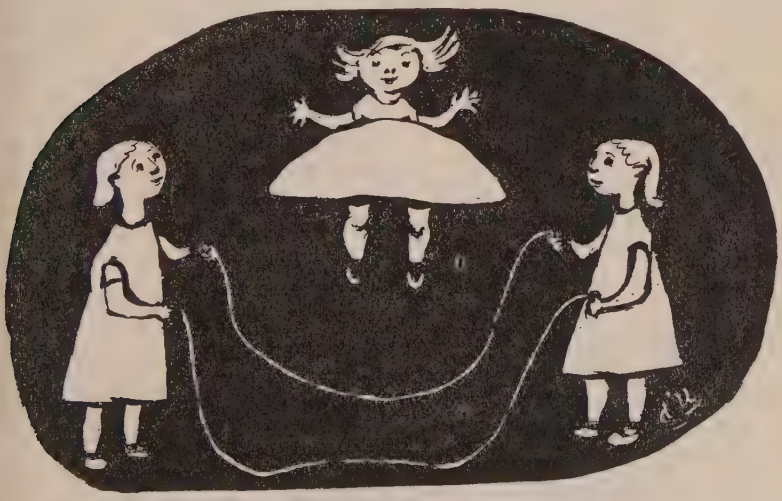
Primarily Fearing is a satirist and satire is always and only of the familiar. It never presents the new. Moreover, in America, emotions tied in with faith in socialism have long been confused with those tied in with belief in individualism. So they frequently appear even in Whitman and in Sandburg. And so they appear in Fearing. Fearing finds communication most direct when he relies on the obvious and sentimental picture of our imprisonment as individuals, of us going round and round in a mechanical squirrel cage, a little ridiculous and pathetic even to ourselves. His satirical pen grows dull and repetitious of late, and more senti-

mentally nostalgic of the denied values of love and beauty.

His poetry is still, in its way, an excellent picture of our decadence and our commercialized romanticism, but weariness dominates it and even constructive bitterness is lost as pity takes the place of any call to action. He may ask: "Is it not good that the race shall ever behold itself with pride and disgust, horror and fright?" But to what end? Should we therefore dwell nostalgically in even our past revolutionary dreams, or more consistently in the still further removed dreams of the good old days always plucking at our heart strings because these things have gone askew? Is this all there is to say? Fearing's pictures of life are almost wholly American. Of the rest of the world he gives us little. And this may be part of the trouble.

Strangely enough it is the oldest of these poets, Edith Sitwell, who would give us a myth of our resurrection from the present disillusionment and confusion. Catastrophe has not wearied this poet, nor has age dimmed her. In her early poems, she pictured her class as walking on a cardboard cover over hell, her world of the landed aristocracy as wooden, dead and corrupted, rhythmic only in a kind of cacophony. Her contrasts between her own childhood and her adulthood were sophisticated and correct. The passions of childhood and the idealism died, the commercial present ensued. She was one of the important wasteland poets.

But with the coming of the Second World War, she re-examined the meaning of the decline



and fall and gave us one of our truly fine war poems, "Still Falls the Rain." In "Street Songs" and "Green Song" she began employing different rhythms, long full-bodied lines and began working out a new framework of belief. Uniting the symbols of fraternity in early Christianity with symbols from primitive religions in which sun worship gave us the pattern of the creative cycle of decline, darkness and resurrection, she brought together with Christian mythology the more scientific overtones of life-creating processes. She turned to resolve her own fear of death by resolving the fear of total destruction of mankind in an atomic age. She pictures the present as the age of Cain, of brother destroying brother, the cold age; but states that such an age must end and the period of Christ return; fire and sun must do away with the chill, the age of ice.

Edith Sitwell, in other words, by using an old mythology and the most idealistic feelings of early Christianity, has found a means of communicating faith in the urgency of life, in life's conquest of death. Nor does she avoid reference to the real scene. Not strictly speaking a political poet at all, she indicates that war springs from the power of money. She refers to our age as one in which "compressed are the lusts and greeds into a greater heat than the sun holds." Such imagery refers indirectly to the atom bomb itself. This poet sees fire and energy as possibly the highest good now used as the worst of evils.

There is in Miss Sitwell's latest book a tragic terror and a deep religious urge to believe in the everlastingness of energy, passion and love. And if at times the poet resorts, as I think she does, to the grandiose and prolonged use of rhetoric, she has given us in this book such really fine poems as "Dirge for the New Sunrise"—with the subtitle, "Fifteen minutes past eight o'clock, on the morning of Monday, the 6th of August, 1945"—an immediate poetic reaction to the dropping of the bomb.

The book also contains some of her best earlier poems. But most impressive are those poems in which greed for gold is denounced, poems in which the smoke from the atom bomb mounts like a pillar of death, with the prophecy that this pillar might mean a better life for us all. In these poems there are great lines, now and again hidden in too much mystical ecstasy, but often struck clear. Miss Sitwell, in other words, has found a means of using both the Christian and the much earlier pagan energy-myths of death and resurrection as a framework of reference for a world which must either dig its own grave or rise from it.

EDA LOU WALTON

Buchenwald, U.S.A.

THE SHAME OF THE STATES, by Albert Deutsch. *Harcourt, Brace. $3.00.*

ALL Americans, save those with a vested interest in the hells that call themselves mental hospitals, have reason to be eternally grateful to Albert Deutsch. In the late Thirties and early Forties, the whitewash brush was being applied to the state hospitals with sweeping strokes. Any incompetent scribbler could gather rich royalties by picturing the asylums as centers of healing, and their staffs as uniformly able and uniformly concerned only with the welfare and swift recovery of their patients. A curtain was drawn over asylum horrors.

It will be to Mr. Deutsch's everlasting credit that he ripped this curtain aside and exposed to view these Buchenwalds of the medical world. Now he carries on by gathering together into a book, *The Shame of the States,* the blazing articles and terrifying photographs which first appeared in *PM,* stunning readers into awareness that incarceration in a state hospital is a far more dreadful fate than a term in the nation's worst prison.

Here, in the mirror of this book, is the picture in all its dreadfulness — patients crowded like cattle, food unfit for animals, filth; the incompetence and callousness of staff, the absence of medical care, the peon labor disguised as therapy, the needless re-

straints, the calculated brutality.

So outstanding has Mr. Deutsch's contribution been that I find it painful, in discussing this book, to devote part of my review to adverse criticism. Yet for several years I have been increasingly in disagreement with some of the writer's basic assumptions. Most of all do I differ with his statements that almost no one is railroaded to asylums any longer, that almost no one (except the senile) is needlessly committed or needlessly continued in confinement. Emphatically do I reject, as will many others, his plea for still easier commitment procedure.

I happen to be one of that increasing group of men and women convinced that a very great proportion of the patients in mental hospitals has no business there, and that this needlessly large population in our institutions is one of the most potent reasons for the evils that Mr. Deutsch's investigations have uncovered. Organizations are springing up all over the United States, attracting the services of physicians, attorneys, social workers, clergymen, whose thesis it is that if commitments were limited to those who need and can benefit from hospitalization, far fewer buildings, doctors, nurses, attendants would be needed, rather than far more.

The feeling is rising that for many years we have been on a commitment binge. The most incredibly trivial eccentricities are given as a reason—or an excuse—to rid families of members no longer welcome at home. Furthermore, the mental hospitals have become, because of easy-going laws, an arm of reaction: Negroes have been committed to asylums for running for office in the South; white women have been committed for marrying Negroes; other men and women have been thrown into state hospitals for protesting the death sentence against Sacco and Vanzetti, for organizing the unemployed, for placing workers' demands before state legislatures, for distributing union literature, for fighting fascism in Spain as members of the International Brigade, for demanding that their landlords render the usual services, for complaining to the authorities that their relief checks are overdue, and—to bring the wheel full circle—for criticizing the practice of needless hospitalization! It was commitments of this type that led the *New Republic,* in August, 1932, to urge editorially that "the law regulating such procedures be made proof against the belief that everybody's crazy who doesn't vote a straight Republican ticket."

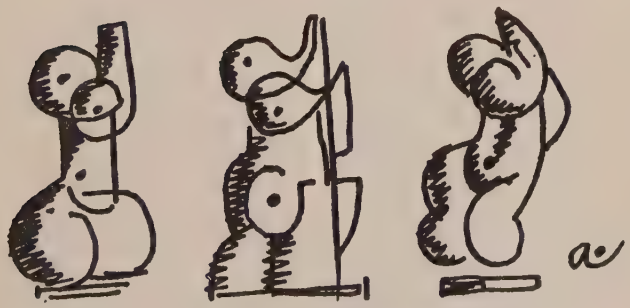
Today the hospitals are becoming ever more crowded, facilities are spread ever thinner and hospital life becomes more and more of a nightmare. Mr. Deutsch's book is passionate testimony to all this. And yet he pleads for still looser commitment laws! He urges, for example, that all states allow com-

mitment of any individual simply upon request of a relative, if the hospital agrees. In the friction-laden family life of postwar America, this is virtually—although Mr. Deutsch does not intend it as such—a cordial invitation to railroading.

It is my contention that we need, not less legal protection, but much, much more. We need, also, a realization that commitment is not always, nor even often, the best solution; that a patient who is able to function in any degree in the world outside hospital walls should remain outside, receiving, if he is mentally disturbed, private therapy or treatment at out-patient clinics and, where necessary, nursing at home. I would ask legislatures for the same amount of money that Mr. Deutsch asks, but I would channel a large—perhaps the largest—portion of it into these outside facilities. This, incidentally, is one of the major differences between Soviet and American psychiatry. The United States has developed a veritable passion for hospitalization; in the Soviet Union, as Dr. Henry Sigerist has pointed out, "The policy is to hospitalize mental cases only if it is absolutely unavoidable."

I write these criticisms of Mr. Deutsch's book in the hope that in his vigorous crusade for better mental hospitals he will fight with equal determination for the right of citizens not to be needlessly jailed, even if the jail is called a hospital. Such a reform would go a long way toward improving conditions for those unfortunates who must enter institutions.

SELDEN MURRAY



theatre

DIRTY HANDS

by ISIDOR SCHNEIDER

A DISTINCTION has passed from the American theatre. It had come through these recent seasons, unlike other cultural areas, almost unstained by Red-baiting. Now Red-baiting has arrived on Broadway, not in casual musical comedy sniggers but with the pretensions of high art and deep thinking—and loud blasts of publicity. Sartre's *Les Mains Sales* (Dirty Hands) retitled, *Red Gloves,* had its blow-up opening. After all the advance thunder the reluctant critics had to announce a dud.

The publicity campaign, which included alleged threats of violence to the producer, centered around Sartre's suit against the American adaptation as a "vulgar anti-Red" play; the producers counter-charged that their version preserved Sartre's content and intent; and other opinions were offered, alleging that the American version actually softened the anti-Red impact of the play.

All became grist for the publicity mill. Consequently, at the first night, news photographers popped flash bulbs; there were police cordons; crowds watched celebrities alighting from taxi-cabs; there was all the arranged fuss and feathers that goes into a "gala opening."

As regards Sartre's legal action it is hard to believe Sartre is so naive as to think it would achieve anything but publicity. He cannot be unaware of the tedious legal procedures which would allow a play to complete a run before any court ban could be imposed. Even assuming no conscious complicity in a promotion stunt, Sartre's act could be nothing more than a gesture, a pointing to his own "clean" hands.

In the absence of the original text one can only speculate on the conflicting charges and opinions. The producers did not deny that it was an anti-Red play, only that its anti-Redness was something faithfully taken over from the original. In Paris, where the original is on view, it has been taken, on all sides, as anti-Red.

The American adaptation cuts down a four-hour production to two hours. In a quantitative change of this sort some qualitative change can be assumed. If reports are

true the qualitative changes are of two sorts. One, a coarsening of the dialogue, with standard American Red-baiting substituted for Sartre's subtler brand; secondly, a toning down of the Red-baiting and a magnifying of one of the love episodes—not out of tenderness to the Left, but in the interests of the box office.

The American adaptation is said to eliminate one of the major characters, the leader of a Communist faction. This leaves the leader of the Party confronted only by a neurotic assassin giving the audience no choice, it is claimed, but to admire the leader. In fact, this distressed Mr. Atkinson of the *Times* so much that he warned his readers against being misled into such admiration. As I will show later, all that the audience is actually given is a choice between two negations.

In sum, the play is no philosophical disquisition on violence and shiftings in political movements as Sartre pretends. It is Red-baiting. It is true that the Communist Party is not named, but it may as well have been. The identity is made clear both by the declared rivalry of the Party in the play with the Social-Democrats and its declared sympathy with the Soviet Union.

Sartre, a widely travelled and sophisticated writer, is certainly not unaware that words and ideas are neither constants nor abstractions; that they change within and are conditioned by the social context. At this moment in history, no contemporary political movements and issues can be viewed in the abstract. Identifications will be made and sides taken.

Further, for a play to have historical relevance or value its points would have to be made through typical characters. In Sartre's play the characters are worse than atypical; they are incredible, as even the sorrowful critics admitted. This may be better understood from a synopsis of Sartre's fable.

The setting is a central European country, allied with the Germans but given no name or other concrete identification. The time is the German defeat at Stalingrad, with the consequent changes in atmosphere and subterranean shifts in political orientation.

The chief characters are given a symbolically significant confusion of German and Slavic names. They include, in the American version, the Communist leader Hoederer (powerfully impersonated by Charles Boyer) whose name is suspiciously close to Hitler and who is characterized as being similarly "magnetic"; Johanna (played by Anna Karen) a leader of the faction secretly opposing Hoederer; Hugo (played by John Dall) whom Johanna assigns to the assassination of Hoederer; the two bodyguards of the leader, done after the model of Hollywood gangsters, by Jesse White and Martin Kingsley.


TCHUM
Nausea
J.P. Sartre

Hugo is the son of a reactionary millionaire politician against whom he has a fixated hatred that is presented on the stage with almost clinical specifications. Breaking from his family, he has joined the Communist Party to merge his father-hatred in its antagonism to constituted authority, or the father-at-large. His neurosis makes him a serviceable tool to the faction in their plot against Hoederer. For Hugo comes to see his father re-embodied in the Party leader. To accomplish the assassination Hugo becomes Hoederer's secretary.

But as usual in such neuroses, there is a countering "good father" image whom Hugo has yearned for and whom he finds in Hoederer also. The conflict this produces in Hugo's mind paralyzes his will. Hoederer's forgiveness at the moment he becomes aware of Hugo's mission dissolves the conflict in favor of the "good father." Hugo returns to Hoederer to tell him so, only to find his wife, who has left him the night before, with Hoederer. The new emotion that sweeps over him, jealous rage, enables him to carry out his assignment. He shoots Hoederer. Mission accomplished—but by one of the ironic deflections so dear to Sartre.

The further consequences of Stalingrad mature. The Russians' westward march brings them to within a few kilometers of the capital. Political prisoners are set free, including Hugo who has been in solitary confinement for two years. Johanna and the other members of the faction await him —not to welcome but to destroy him.

For, by that time, they have accepted Hoederer's "opportunist" policy of participation in a coalition government, in which Hugo had seen himself betrayed by the good father to the bad father. Hoederer has become the hero-sage-martyr to whom statues are to be erected and after whom public buildings and squares are to be named. And, as his murderer, Hugo must die.

Johanna, however, who wants to spend the night with Hugo, offers him a chance to live. But on discovering that the faction has taken over Hoederer's opportunist policy, the helpless Hugo, who has never been able to act except at some substitute father's command, goes through a one-second maturity, acquires independence and manliness, and goes to his death, the perfected idealist keeping his hands unsoiled.

Now how typical are these alleged Communists? Take Hoederer, portrayed as a man who has stripped himself of emotions. He reiterates that he allows personal feelings no place in his life. His relations with women are of the casual "glass of water" type condemned by Lenin.

Or Hugo—a transparent neurotic and a millionaire's son, given

the vital post of the Communist leader's secretary and assigned the task of assassination — always and on principle condemned by all Communist parties! Or the Hollywood gangster bodyguards; or Johanna, the side-of-the-mouth woman party leader; or the henpecked Party heads who shamble out to let her have her tete-a-tete with Hugo. Not even the New York critics could swallow them.

Since the structural flaws and the inept characterization have been noted in the press and my space is limited, I will dwell only on some inconsistencies left unnoted by the critics. Hoederer is represented as having a mind so clear that its perceptions approach the clairvoyant. Yet he accepts the neurotic Hugo as his secretary, he skips over Hugo's tell-tale jitters; and after learning of his danger, he leaves his potential murderer unwatched.

Hugo, who starts at the point of mental collapse, survives the ordeal of a trial, an attempted poisoning, semi-starvation, two years in solitary and that final crushing blow, the revelation of the futility of his sacrifice — any of which might have cracked a far stabler mind. Out of that he emerges the calm and resolute idealist.

Such contradictions make *Red Gloves* the flimsiest dramatic structure of the four that Sartre has had shown in America, and the characters are more literally reduced to neurotic states than in any of the previous plays where they had more plausible functions as symbols.

A final note on the significance of the play. Sartre is not merely anti-Communist, he is anti-human. The play rejects hope and denies life. Hoederer denies life, strips himself of love, honor, consistency, abjures the fulfillments of heart and mind. To be a Hoederer (who is considered the most sympathetic of the characters) is to have destroyed one's humanity. Complementarily, the purity and honor achieved by Hugo in his unbelievable apotheosis at the end, have as their price—death.

Sartre has been claimed by many bourgeois intellectuals as their spokesman. In such a claim they confirm the Communist charge that capitalist culture has identified itself with death. Sartre's speech in their behalf is a funeral oration.

Artifice *and* Reality

by WARREN MILLER

WHEN the Russian film maker, Dziga Vertov, wrote that the news-film is the foundation of film art, he was taking an extreme position. Acting on this limited and limiting principle, he produced several excellent films; but so restricted were his means of expression—no professional actors, no story, no sets—that inevitably his subject matter was narrowed down to the occurrence in the street, changes of weather, and whatever could be salvaged from old film.

In 1921 Vertov issued a manifesto setting forth his approach to the film art; he called this the *Lenin Proportion* because it was Lenin himself who had put forth the original claim for the news-film as the foundation of film art. We can see now that Vertov was too strict in his interpretation of Lenin's statement. It was Eisenstein who stepped directly into the middle, between the realism of the news-film and the created reality of the acted film, incorporated the best aspects of both, and produced his masterpiece, *Potemkin.*

The great film makers of all nations have, in the main, followed Eisenstein's approach to the film. They have combined the artifice of the actor and the reality of the street. This concept has not ceased to shock the Hollywood-type film producer. Only a few years ago, a group of Hollywood producers, having been subjected to a viewing of *Old and the New* and *Ten Days,* reacted by stating: "But they look like newsreels!" Nothing could convince these men that conscious artistry and a tremendous amount of creative energy went into *making* these films look like newsreels; that the air of harsh reality maintained was desired and not the accidental product of poor laboratory methods.

The reaction of the producers is not isolated nor has time dissipated their notions. Indeed, time has given wider currency to the idea that if a film has not the slick smooth shiny quality of the Hollywood product, it is, for that very reason, inferior.

The combining, the fusion, of the created and the wholly real, has not often been better accomplished than in the postwar Italian film. Most reviewers have

granted that *Open City, Paisan, Shoe Shine* and, most recently, *Tragic Hunt,* are powerful motion pictures. But they still point out that these are "crude" films: the lighting is bad, the raw stock is inferior to Superduper XXX, etc. In spite of this crudity, they say, the films are powerful and probe areas of experience Hollywood neither dares nor wishes to enter. It has never occurred to the reviewers that it is because of the "crudity," not in spite of it, that the Italian film achieves a high level of reality and intensely felt experience.

The fact is that most reviewers have no knowledge of the techniques of film production. They have accepted the widely held and carefully maintained fiction that film making is a mysterious business, its secrets handed down from father to son—or husband to wife, in the case of Technicolor's Mr. Kalmus and his Natalie. Therefore, I suspect that when they speak of crudity they do not really have in mind the quality of the raw stock. I suspect the honest documentation of reality is *too* real for them, like a man scratching in public, and therefore "crude." When in *Open City* Magnani is shot by the Nazis and falls to the cobbled street, we see that she has a hole in her stocking. It is embarrassing to an audience nurtured on the artfully disarranged coiffure and the kittenish smudge of dirt on the heroine's nose.

The latest of these crude, blundering Italian films is *Tragic Hunt* (for two quite obvious reasons the title has been changed to *Woman Hunt*). It is a very good movie that misses being a great movie not because the lighting is "bad" but because the director's vision was not quite broad or deep enough to come to terms, completely, with the ideas implicit in his film. Honesty is at times confounded by evasiveness; but, unlike the Hollywood product, here it is evasion that intrudes on honesty—not honesty that appears briefly and uninvited and is dismissed like a leper.

A case could be made, I think, for showing that the director evades some of the social problems raised by the film. While the government forces certainly are not made to play a heroic role—after all, the film had to be shown in Italy—neither is the government revealed as being in any way responsible for the condition of the farmer and the returned soldier. The government simply is not mentioned, except in its role of lender of money to the co-operative farm.

The story is a simple one and was taken from an incident that occurred in Italy a year ago. The main fault of the film is that it adds needless melodramatic detail; the situation is dramatic enough in itself. The government loan to a co-operative farm is stolen by gangsters; a thousand

farmers, an entire countryside, is mobilized and sets out in pursuit of the gang.

The loan is to be paid the owner of the co-operative farm land; the owner, we learn, is "comfortable in Milan." His overseers, however, are on hand to receive the payment; they have brought with them several wagonloads of goons to take over the farm should the money fail to arrive. Later, the connivance of the overseers and the gangsters is revealed.

The gangsters use an ambulance in order to effect the hold-up and their escape. This vehicle is a double-edged symbol: not only are those inside it sick, but what should be the instrument of aid and succor is the vehicle of murder and theft. The ambulance fails the peasants just as the government has failed the veterans.

The veterans, organized into large bands, appear throughout the film. A truck with a large globe of the world mounted on it seems to be shadowing the gangsters. It always turns up: at the hideout in the country, in the deserted courtyard in the city. The globe contains the tickets for the veterans' raffle. And endlessly the placards they carry appear: *Pane e Lavoro,* Bread and Work.

In one scene of the chase we enter an apartment in a bombed town. There are no adults. A child is on the bed. One wall is covered by a heavy curtain. Another child is seated with her head face down on a table. She lifts her head; her face is covered by a heavy veil. More children enter, all wearing masks. The grotesque masks point up their disjointed lives; quite literally, they have had no childhood; in a sense, these masks are their real faces. They draw the heavy curtain and we see there is no wall behind it; the street below and the rubble of the town is revealed. It

is an allegory of the film art itself.

The chase shifts to a train carrying black marketeers: American money and American cigarettes change hands. But money and tobacco are not our only cultural contribution to Italy. A boy and girl jitterbug on a flatcar; many of the men wear field-jackets. It is on the train that Alberto, the leader of the gang, is recognized by several of the veterans who have boarded the train. They were all in the same concentration camp in Germany. Alberto pulls up his sleeve and we see the tattoo mark. "I was an anti-fascist," he says.

The veterans have a public address system and speak to the farmers in the fields as the train rolls through the countryside. A wad of American money falls from Alberto's pocket and his former comrades look at him with disgust. "You are not one of us," he is told, but he cries that he is one of them and makes a passionate and moving speech to the farmers: "We are worse than cripples—we have arms and cannot use them. We have eyes—but only to see our own misery." In the telling, this sudden conversion may sound forced and unreal; but in the film it is not.

The action, as has been intimated, is spread out over a wide geographical area. To confine it to a specifically limited area, the sky is effectively used to bridge sequences. In effect, the camera says: Under this particular space of sky and clouds the pursuers are moving and the pursued tremble. Also, the use of sound draws together the hunted and the hunters: church bells sounded by the farmers are heard by the gang in the ambulance.

This is, by the way, the only intrusion of the Church. There is no attempt to manufacture a positive role for it. There are just the bells as a signal of alarm; and one of the gangsters masquerades as a priest to gain access to the truck carrying the money.

The film has its faults but it is still so vastly superior to the home product as to forbid comparison on any level. The producers of the Joans of Arc with their slick minds and expensive cameras undisciplined by art, could learn a great deal from *Tragic Hunt;* for, in spite of its failings, honesty pervades it like a fresh wind, and the faces are the faces of human beings who have suffered, rebelled and endured.

TOMORROW'S CHINA

By ANNA LOUISE STRONG

Anna Louise Strong is the only foreign correspondent to have penetrated the Liberated Areas of China, including Manchuria, shortly after it fell under Communist control. *Tomorrow's China* is based on a year's stay, from July, 1947, to July, 1948, in these newly liberated areas, and her first-hand description of how the economic, administrative, and cultural life of these constantly expanding territories is developing and flourishing under the dynamic leadership of the Communist Party, makes enthralling reading.

By jeep, donkey and airplane, this indomitable reporter has visited places hardly to be found on maps. She has interviewed not only leaders like Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai, but spoken to workers, peasants, factory managers, doctors, intellectuals, and hundreds of others. Her on-the-spot description of the agrarian reform, how Mao-Tse-tung's military principles are applied in the fighting against Chiang Kai-shek's armies, Chinese attitudes to the Marshall Plan and U.S. intervention, and the developments leading to the establishment of a new democratic all-China government, throws a brilliant searchlight on the China of today and tomorrow.

Anna Louise Strong has become a fabulous figure in modern literary reportage, and in this book she carries forward brilliantly the rich journalistic traditions of John Reed, Egon Irwin Kisch, and Lincoln Steffens. Published by the Committee for a Democratic Far Eastern Policy.

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