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The American Negro in My Time

By W. E. B. DU BOIS

I WAS born four years after the close of the American Civil War which abolished legal slavery of Negroes in the United States. My active life covers the time from 1890, when I received my Bachelor's Degree from Harvard, to the present.

A word must be said as to the prelude of my day. The North did not conquer the South in order to abolish slavery. The majority of Americans, including Abraham Lincoln, were willing for slavery to continue to exist in the South; but the North refused to let the South secede and thereby break up the economic and social unity of the nation. The North had become the center of processing and manufacture. The South was an agricultural region, with its great crops of raw material like cotton, and minor crops like sugar. This union of cheap raw material and manufacturing was profitable to the North, while the South might have found a better market in Europe. But the North refused to have the union disrupted in this way.

In the ensuing Civil War, the North, in order to obtain victory, had to use the Negroes first as laborers and then as armed soldiers. For this reason the South surrendered. It was threatened by the loss of its laboring force which was supporting its soldiers in the field; and it knew that these black laborers could be turned into a million soldiers. In fact, 200,000 were under arms at the time of the surrender, and the South itself tried to attract Negro soldiers to its ranks. But it started too late and gave up in despair.

Thereupon, the South agreed to submit to continued economic and social unity with the North, but on condition that it was allowed to restore slavery in all but the name. There were three kinds of opposition to this program. First, the resistance of the freedmen themselves, who had long revolted against slavery either by force or by running away and finally as soldiers in the war. Secondly, the pressure of a large group of Americans, white and Northern Negro, who were determined upon

the abolition of slavery; and thirdly, by the organized industry of th North which feared that the restored South, with increased politica power due to emancipation and by alliance with the agrarian Wes would lower the tariff walls which had built up manufacturing in th North; and also might repudiate the war debt or add to it the debt o the States which had rebelled.

These three conditions led the nation to give the ballot to the freed men in 1867, despite the often expressed warning that without educa tion, land and some minimum of capital, the freedmen would neve be able to defend their rights. The resulting bargain of 1877 betwee Northern financiers and Southern planters, resulted in the disfranchise ment of the freedmen in the South by tacit agreement, and reductio of these freedmen to serfdom and color caste, on condition that th political power of the South was to be used to retain high tariff rate and pay the national debt in gold.

There was thus created a new and unusual status: a democracy wit more than a twelfth of its inhabitants disfranchised; a caste system de pending on skin color or previous condition of servitude, with resultan rotten boroughs whose power lay in political control based on disfranchise ment. And in addition to this, a working class divided into two part by color and privilege, yet competing for the same jobs and wage which meant of course that the lowest paid labor would oust the privilege white labor from much of its work. Hates, crime and violence develope in these ways.

INTO this situation I was born and began my work.

There were in the United States in 1890 some 7½ million perso of acknowledged Negro descent who formed nearly 12 percent of the tot population. There were many other Americans of Negro descent wi so small a proportion of Negro blood that they were not classed Negroes. Also within the so-called Negro group there was a large propo tion, officially stated as 15 per cent but probably 35 per cent or mor of persons who were descendants not only of Negroes but of Europea whites and of Indians.

As a group these people were poor, ignorant and diseased, chief as the result of the slave system which had existed legally for 271 yea By 1890, half the Negro breadwinners of the nation were partially su merged by a bad economic system, an unjust administration of th laws, and enforced ignorance. A million and three-quarters economical

just above these, began fighting a fierce battle for admission to the industrial ranks of the nation—for the right to work. They were handicapped by their own industrial history, which has made them often shiftless and untrustworthy. A quarter of a million stood at the head of the Negroes, and by a peculiar self-protecting group economy were making themselves independent of prejudice and competition.

At the beginning of the twentieth century two million Negroes were occupied as farmers, a million as laborers and servants, and most of the rest as artisans of various sorts, with a few teachers and clergymen; making the total of Negroes in gainful occupations about 4 million. In the registration area, the Negro death rate was thirty per thousand, or nearly twice that of the white; and as most of the Negro population lived outside this area, the discrepancy of the total Negro population was even greater. During the first decade of the new century, a concerted effort was made to strengthen a legal Negro caste system in the former slave states. This new caste separated Negroes in education, travel, on railways and streetcars and in the use of public facilities, like parks and railway stations; and limited or totally denied the right to vote. These laws applied principally to the South but customary action in accord with these laws was followed in many Northern states.

From this depth of half citizenship, the Negroes began to organize and fight for social progress. They first demanded political and civil equality, but as progress towards this was slow, they offered compromise. The first distinct proposal came from the Negro leader, Booker T. Washington, who in 1896 proposed that Negroes should cease to demand political rights and restrain their effort towards civil and social rights but ask for technical training for industry. This program received wide acquiescence from Southern and northern whites and from some Negroes. But gradually it was opposed bitterly by a group of young Negroes who contended that: first, the Negro must have educated leadership in accord with the best modern methods; second, he must insist on political rights in order to meet the competition of white workers; and third, he must not give up his demand for civil and social rights. An organization taking this stand was formed at Niagara Falls in 1905, and issued a manifesto in 1906 demanding equal rights:

"We will not be satisfied to take one jot or tittle less than our full manhood rights. We claim for ourselves every single right that belongs to a freeborn American, political, civil, and social; and until we get these rights we will never cease to protest and assail the ears of America.

The battle we wage is not for ourselves alone, but for all true Americans. It is the fight for ideals, lest this, our common fatherland, false to its founding, become in truth the land of the Thief and the home of the Slave—a by-word and a hissing among the nations for its sounding pretensions and pitiful accomplishment."

Three years later this movement merged into a larger movement known as the NAACP (the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People). This united colored and white people in one organization, which was incorporated in 1909. I was asked to come as Director of Publication and Research. I began my work by publishing and editing a small magazine called the *Crisis,* which was first issued in November 1910. It started with a circulation of 1,000 and by 1918 we were selling over 100,000 copies a month.

With this organization of propaganda, together with a legal bureau and with lectures and writers, the NAACP was able to organize one of the most effective assaults against prejudice and reaction which the modern world has seen. We placed before the country a clear-cut statement of the legitimate aims of the American Negro and the facts concerning his condition. We began to organize his political power. We started a campaign against lynching and mob law, and we gained a series of court victories before the highest courts of the land.

I ATTENDED the great Races Congress held in London in July, 1911, which would have marked an epoch in the cultural history of the world, if world war had not followed so quickly. Amongst the many Indian sponsors of this Congress were Bipin Chandra Pal, G. K. Gokhale, Surendranath Banerjee, and a modest barrister from Johannesburg known as Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. The tone and scope of the Congress were set by an opening contribution from a scholar of truly remarkable learning and personality, Professor Brajendranath Seal.

Returning to New York, I faced the political campaign of 1912. The attitude of Taft, candidate of the Republican Party, was disappointing; but I thought that the Bull Moose movement under the first Roosevelt might be a refuge for us. I proposed this plank for the Chicago meeting in 1912:

"The Progressive Party recognizes that distinctions of race or creed in political life have no place in a democracy. Especially does the party realize that a group of 10,000,000 people who have in a generation changed from a slave to a free labor system, re-established family life,

accumulated $1,000,000,000 of real property, including 20,000,000 acres of land, and reduced their illiteracy from 80 to 30 per cent, deserves and must have justice, opportunity and a voice in their own government. The party, therefore, demands for the Americans of Negro descent the repeal of unfair discriminatory laws and the right to vote on the same terms on which other citizens vote."

Jane Addams, Joel Spingarn and others supported it, but Theodore Roosevelt would have none of it. Woodrow Wilson became president of the United States, and I joined Bishop Walters of the African Zion Church to secure a statement of his attitude towards the Negro. He wrote over his signature "his earnest wish to see justice done to colored people in every matter; and not mere grudging justice but justice executed with liberality and cordial good feeling. I want to assure them that should I become President of the United States they may count upon me for absolute fair dealing in everything by which I could assist in advancing the interest of their race in the United States."

For this reason I supported Wilson, and tried to induce as many Negroes as possible to do the same. But unfortunately, with his accession to the presidency in 1913, there opened for the American Negroes a period of six years of cruelty, discrimination and murder. This was because the southern democracy had come to power for the first time since the Civil War; because of resentment in the South against the NAACP; and especially because of increasing economic rivalry between white and colored workers. No less than twenty bills advocating race segregation in various ways were introduced into Congress. In addition, Wilson segregated nearly all the federal colored employees in Washington, herding them in separate rooms with separate eating and toilet facilities. When we protested, Wilson angrily dismissed the Committee and declared their language "insulting."

There followed a number of city ordinances segregating Negroes in housing, and in 1915 the United States seized Haiti and killed 3,000 of its citizens. Then came the attack upon the American Negro in the film *Birth of a Nation;* mob murders had so increased that nearly 100 Negroes were lynched during 1915.

In 1917 we entered the world war and there came the draft with color discrimination and mob rule. First, the nation refused to allow colored soldiers to volunteer in the army. Then, when war was declared, the draftees were segregated according to color, which meant that some 33,000 Negro draftees had to train in separate encampments where al-

most no preparation had been made for them. Nearly all were sent South to be insulted under southern law and custom. Hundreds were drafted regardless of their home duties and physical health, and some draft boards like that of Atlanta had to be dismissed for open race discrimination. Once in camp most of the colored soldiers were trained as laborers and not as soldiers. There have been few periods in the history of the American Negro when he was more discouraged and exasperated.

THE NAACP fought back to secure decent treatment in encampments; to see that reasonable numbers of Negro soldiers went to the front as soldiers bearing arms; and to ask that some Negroes be commissioned as officers. The opposition to Negro officers was intense and bitter. A conference of Negro organizations was called in Washington and adopted resolutions which I wrote:

"We trace the real cause of this World War to the despising of the darker races by the dominant groups of men, and the consequent fierce rivalry among European nations in their effort to use darker and backward people for purposes of selfish gain, regardless of the ultimate good of the oppressed. We see permanent peace only in the extension of the principle of government by the consent of the governed, not simply among the smaller nations of Europe, but among the natives of Asia and Africa, the Western Indies and the Negroes in the United States."

Efforts were made in Washington to placate the Negroes. A Negro Civil Consultant was appointed in the War Department, and two Negro regiments planned. After much agitation, it was decided that since Negroes could not be trained in a regular officers' camp, a separate Negro camp should be instituted. This was resented by many leading Negroes, but finally in October 1917, 639 Negro officers were actually commissioned.

In 1917 migration of Negro workers out of the South began in order to man the war industries in the North. Perhaps a quarter of a million came North during the year, and as a result this was a time of division and hesitation among the colored people. I felt it in my own thought. I tried on the one hand to be patriotic and ask Negroes to "close ranks" and wholeheartedly join in the war. On the other hand I refused to give up criticism and complaint. I tried to have the voice of Africa and the Negro people heard during the Congress of Versailles; and through the French Black Deputy from Senegal I succeeded in hold-

ng a Pan-African Congress in Paris in February 1919, with some 57 elegates from various groups of Negroes.

I discovered during my sojourn there a less than human document hich the Americans had issued to guide the French in treating the Negroes. I had it published in the *Crisis,* and for a time our mailing rivileges were withdrawn. Then they were hastily restored, and we sold 00,000 copies of the *Crisis* that month.

The year 1919 was for the American Negro one of extraordinary eaction. There were two causes: the competition of Negro workers ouring into Northern industry, while the South was deprived of its istomary cheap labor; and the resentment of American soldiers, especially ose from the South, at the recognition which Negroes received in the Vorld War. There were during the year race riots in 46 American cities. n Chicago in August 38 Negroes were killed, between 35 and 50 in rkansas, and 6 in Washington. For a whole day in July the city of Vashington was actually in the hands of a black mob fighting with hand renades against the aggression of whites.

The NAACP thereupon staged the determined fight against lynching. national conference was held in New York City; and among those ho signed the Call was an ex-President of the United States, an Attorney eneral and Governors of seven states. The chief speaker at Carnegie all was the Chief Justice of the United States. We gained victories efore the Supreme Court in the Grandfather Case of 1916, the Segrega- on Case of 1917, and the Arkansas Case; and in the freeing of Dr. veet, who had been sentenced to death in Detroit for defending his me against a mob.

Between 1918 and 1928, I made four trips to Europe in addition to e three made before 1918: to France during the Congress of Versailles; England, Belgium, France and Geneva during the earliest days of e League of Nations; to Spain, Portugal and Africa in 1923 and 1924; Russia in 1926.

MEANWHILE the American Negro population was changing. The nine million of 1900 had grown to thirteen million in 1940 and obably fifteen million in 1950. White immigration had reduced its tio to the total population from one-twelfth to one-tenth, but that nth was a far more powerful body in education and income than the elve per cent of 1900. By migration, 30 per cent of the Negro popula- n was now in the Northern states instead of ten per cent as at the

beginning of the century. The Negro death rate decreased markedly, but was still much higher than that of the whites. Most important, however, was the development of economic and social classes among Negroes. A professional and business class had arisen, with incomes from $3,000 to $50,000 a year, and with it grew up the clerical, artisan, domestic and laboring classes. About half of the Negro population now lives in cities, a great change from the 23 per cent in 1900. But the rural Negroes are still very poor, and of the total Negro group, city and country, in 1940, 49 per cent had annual incomes of less than $500 a year, compared with 17 per cent of the whites.

The Second World War improved the condition of Negroes by increasing employment and entrance into trade unions. Meanwhile the education of Negroes increased. Before 1914, less than 5,000 Negroes had received the bachelor's degree, while over 6,000 received such degrees in the single year 1947. Illiteracy has fallen from 44 per cent in 1900 to perhaps 20 per cent or less today.

These vast social changes have brought new and intricate problems of development. American Negroes have now entered the current of world affairs. Their laboring classes are part of the labor of the world; their incipient capitalists are part of world capital investors. Their intelligentsia are among the thinkers of the world. They no longer form a group entirely segregated and apart; indeed they are no longer one solid group or so far as they are, their inner struggle parallels the struggle of the modern world.

In 1936, through a grant given me by the Oberlaender Trust, I made another trip to Europe for purposes of study. I spent five months in Germany, and a second visit of ten days in Russia which took me across the whole land from Moscow to Otpur. I had short visits in Manchuria, China and Japan and came home by way of Hawaii.

It is difficult for me to realize what has happened to the world since 1940. Ten years have passed; the most fateful and arresting in the history of modern civilization. I have found myself forced on conflicting currents but, on the other hand, I have become more and more convinced as to the future path which the world and my people ought to follow. My belief in Socialism, in the social control of wealth and state ownership of capital has become firm. After three trips to Russia (the last in 1949), I consider the Soviet Union the most hopeful of modern states; and with it I couple the People's Republic of China and the new governments of Poland, Czechoslovakia and the Balkans. I am deeply

sensitive, at once, of the terrible struggle which these countries have had to establish their regimes, and of the numberless mistakes and crimes which have been committed during the revolution. I am not at all sure that any smaller toll of blood could have brought the present result.

Yet I do not believe that, in the economic revolution through which the present world is bound to go, force or violence is necessary. Mankind surely is coming to the stage when great and revolutionary change can be brought about by reason and peace. Indeed, that seems to me to be the only conclusion to which men can come now that we are on the threshold of a Third World War which may destroy present civilization.

Peace is not an object in itself; it is a method, a path to an ideal. We who ask for peace, and peace now, do not for a moment believe that peace will settle all or any of the deep and serious differences between men and nations. What we insist upon is that by no other method save peace can we be in a position to begin the settlement of world problems. Happily, I have gathered from many signs that this is also the feeling of the peoples and governments of India, China and most of the Asian nations.

So American Negroes face a new change in their problems. We have today more than ever before among us the rich, the well-to-do and the poor. And we have got to face this problem as most of the rest of the world has faced it. If we are wise, we will realize that the day of exploitation of the poor by the rich is passing: we must socialize our wealth. We must take up the cause of the masses; we must submit to that discipline which is going to result in a more equitable distribution of wealth among us; we must work for the abolition of poverty and its natural concomitants: ignorance, disease and crime.

This is the new problem which faces the American Negro—the problem which many other colored and colonial peoples have already faced. We have not yet faced it, but as I look back upon the struggles of my time I feel sure that we will.

(The article by Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois appeared in the magazine United Asia *published in Bombay, India, and is here reprinted with his generous permission.)*

A Southern Town Makes Its Choice

By VIRGINIA GARDNER

JANUARY 28: At Hoxie, Arkansas, several persons who had boarded the bus at Memphis, including your correspondent, get off at the bus stop, a drug store on the highway. It is a warm, muggy night. Not much of Hoxie is visible, certainly no hotel, so I go in the drug store for directions.

Not knowing how Hoxie as a town, and the druggist in particular, feels about the fact that its School Board had won its fight to integrate Negro and white children in the schools, I am circumspect.

As it is, I ask only how far it is to a hotel. He is as helpful as the diffident stranger gives him a chance to be. "I'll call you a cab first." That done, he advises: "Now you could go to Walnut Ridge. That's right next to Hoxie. Where Hoxie ends right up the highway, Walnut Ridge begins. But just a few blocks down the highway is Hoxie's motel: it's new, clean, and cheaper than Walnut Ridge motels." Why, of course, I'll take Hoxie's.

We smile, and by this time the cab is waiting. He apologizes because it is a Walnut Ridge cab; that Hoxie doesn't have.

At the motel, a pleasant man and his wife tell me about the recent snow. Four and a half inches. But the ground needs more rain, before March planting. So the rain predicted for next day will be welcome. They are recent arrivals in Hoxie, opened the motel in November. When I tell them the druggist had recommended their motel above Walnut Ridge accommodations, they nod placidly. Apparently Walnut Ridge doesn't excite them.

Only later I learned that rivalry between the two towns increased of late. I was assured that, though it wasn't acknowledged, the decision to integrate was a joint one between the two school boards. But when the boom fell on the Hoxie board and the outside White Citizens Councils and others moved in, fomenting disorder, the Hoxie board moved quick against them in the courts,

hile the Walnut Ridge board pitulated. So, I was told, many who came adherents of the Hoxie board, w patronize Walnut Ridge stores luctantly, and even talk of getting gether and forming a cooperative arket.

Their treatment by the *Times-ispatch* of Walnut Ridge they ame on the paper's advertisers. oxeyites point out that while Wal-t Ridge has a bigger shopping nter and the only bank, "the trains ll stop at Hoxie not at Walnut dge." The railroad shops which ade jobs for this former railroad rminal are gone, but Missouri-cific and Frisco trains still stop. nd freights sound in the night.

UT now, as I emerge from my motel refuge bent on foraging od, Hoxie seems silent and peace-.

A light beckons from the motel staurant in front. It is 9 p.m. New ork time, 8 p.m. Hoxie time. My t meal was on a plane Memphis-und, and I am enjoying pork chops d hot biscuit when an ugly phrase, at n - - - - - boy," hits my ear. Other rds, "that lawyer," and then sub-ed voices, sound from the group ddled by the opposite wall. I n slightly to see them, and one the men, who is picking his teeth, looking curiously at me. Not an pert in vigilante types, I never-less recall the looks of the ring-leaders in the Delaware mass meetings in October, 1954, when Bryant Bowles and his National Association for the Advancement of White People stopped integration at Milford. This man's face has that look. With the group, leaning over the table, her expression vindictive, is a woman who seems to be in charge of the restaurant.

My appetite gone, I saunter past them to a newspaper rack near the doorway, get a Memphis paper and return to my booth. A top head page one story gives the clue to their obvious excitement. Five Negro children, their parents and a National Association of Colored People representative from Little Rock, had applied for admission into Walnut Ridge Schools the day before and were turned down.

In a phone booth outside, I try to reach K. E. Vance, Hoxie school superintendent whose name figured in news stories as a leader of pro-integration forces. His phone is disconnected. No addresses are listed in the phone book for Hoxie subscribers, and I have no other Hoxie name to call. I get the same Walnut Ridge cab driver, who has a friend with him and suggest he just drive me around Hoxie. The town has 1,855 inhabitants, and it doesn't take long. Finally I explain to driver and friend I'm a visiting journalist. Would they know if some White Citizens Council or anyone is meet-

ing tonight? They have uttered not a word and utter only a few now; the answer is, they don't. Do they know where Superintendent Vance lives?

No, but the driver stops the cab, gets out, walks over to a car parked with motor running, and talks to a young man at the wheel. He returns, and the car proceeds, with us following. I ask timidly who it is. It's the town marshal (Cletus McClintock), who will show us where the high school coach lives. He is not home. The marshal calls out something, and we start out again; it seems there's a basketball game and we may find him at the school. But the marshal's car again stops when a car passes. That, he says, is the coach's car. We head back, and a pleasant, strongly built young man is seen disentangling himself from embracing little children who have run to meet him as he gets out of his car. He makes his way to us.

The little tableau suggests that even now, with peace restored, and the hate fomenters restrained under a court injunction, the children of school officials and teachers may still wait uneasily when they're away from home at night, still rush to them eagerly when they return.

"Mr. Vance resigned," Coach Ray Saunches tells me, while the cab driver listens silently. Then the coach adds feelingly: "His wife was driven into a nervous breakdown. And Mr. Vance was about to have one. H took the brunt of all this, you se They left the two Vance boys he to finish out their terms, and th went off—where no one knows."

He tells me how to reach Actin Superintendent Bob Williams phone and I drive back to the mot with the silent driver.

WILLIAMS, who has been in t new job less than a month, te me the schools are open, with twen Negroes integrated in elementa and high school, among some 1,0 white pupils. They are "getting alo fine so far as I know." Are all scho facilities open to them, without segr gation, including buses? Yes, he plies, cafeterias, drinking fountai everything. No, no parent has pressed opposition since he's be there, "or expressed himself to one way or another."

Then, with quiet emphasis, adds: "There have been no diffic ties of any kind since Jan. 9."

That was the day a permanent junction against interfering w the operation of Hoxie schools v issued by U.S. District Judge Alb L. Reeves in Jonesboro. Restrain from demonstrating, boycotting trespassing the schools, and fr making threats of physical violer against school officials, were the C zens Committee Representing Seg gation in Hoxie Schools; its cha man, Herbert Brewer; the Wh

itizens Council of Arkansas; Curt opeland, of Hot Springs, acting itor of the WCC's publication, and torney Amis D. Guthridge of Little ock, a leader in White America, ., and lawyer for Brewer. Earlier emporary injunction had been won plaintiffs, who were School Dis- ct 46, its board members and nce.

Williams gives me the names of ard members, but some live in arby towns in District 46, some farmers, one works nights in depot. He suggests I might reach em after church tomorrow. I turn at least assured no plot is being ched publicly by anti-Negro die- ds that night.

Sunday, Jan. 29: Dawdling over akfast, I ask a customer at the e about farm prices. He complains, tenant farmer can't make a ng no more around here, with cent hogs and $3,000 Chevrolets." the counter another man mildly icizes the pie. "That's the way *she* its them, with the juice all run- g out, don't ask me why," the tress says. Her boss is away. As ay the bill I ask what churches e are in Hoxie. In kindly Arkan- fashion, the man offers to drive He suggests the Methodist, u'll hear the best sermon there." xplain I'm in Hoxie for a story school integration, hopeful of rmon touching on it.

In that case you'd better go on to the Baptist," he says. And what is his own idea of integration? "I'm against it," he says uncomfortably. "But, well, I'm in business here. So I don't want to say any more." This reply I was to hear more than a few times—even from former hot-heads.

IN THE pulpit is an earnest young man, speaking in the familiar accents of the Ozarks. His sermon deals strictly with Biblical reassurances of an afterlife. Then he pleads with his listeners to come forward and be saved, but all remain comfortably seated. Many young mothers or fathers have babies in arms or squirming beside them. A mother gets out a bottle and feeds a baby. A father darts down the aisle to rescue a fast two-year-old, returns with him, without a blush. Middle-aged and young, they seem at ease in the rawly new interior with its shiny varnished pews. A deacon arises, speaks simply and well of how they hope the young acting pastor will answer the call and decide to stay with them.

He is the Rev. L. D. Eppinette, of French descent, from Springfield, in the Missouri Ozarks. I explain I'm originally from the Arkansas Ozarks, and am writing on Hoxie's integration. He fixes his burningly sincere eyes on me, mentions he teaches weekdays in Walnut Ridge schools, which he expects will integrate next year. He's never spoken from the

pulpit on integration — a fact my courteous driver must have known— "unlike the Methodist minister; of course he's a Northern minister." Then, after a deep breath: "I think it is Scriptural—what the Hoxie board did. It's what Jesus would have us to do." But he didn't necessarily agree with the means used; he thought the people should have been called together and asked. And his church had lost two families, the Dan Gibsons and the Coxes, and Lloyd Cox "was one of our biggest contributors."

I leave, promising to visit the Methodist minister on Rev. Eppinette's suggestion, reflecting how even refusal to speak against integration can call for strength, and wondering about this Methodist who even speaks for it from the pulpit. I think again of the pleasant-faced women with friendly Arkansas voices who greeted the stranger after services. Possibly the men who passed the collection plate thought regretfully of Farmer Cox, but I doubt if his moving to Walnut Ridge left a big void among the Hoxie Baptists.

Picking my way across a muddy street, a glance back toward the church reveals a familiar object in the back yard of the adjoining house. It is a big black three-legged iron pot, under which a fire will be built as soon as it is dry enough, and clothes stirred and boiled within. Nearby are the big wide tin washtubs used for rinsing, lying on their sides.

From the bus window, traveli from Memphis over the muddy M sissippi, and through the flat nort east Arkansas countryside, so unli my beloved Ozarks to the west, I h seen a few other iron pots in fa yards—and an occasional mule, t even a couple of ancient privies. had thought to see all these obli rated, after all the accounts of n Yankee money in the South. But also saw TV aerials on tiny far houses, and though the fields we sodden and empty, more than a f tractors. Some fields were new disced. Only a few bore the wis of hangover cotton trailing fr bolls, always left by mechani pickers; most of them where cott stalks remained were clean-pick for in this area much hand-picki is done.

It is for this reason, so childr can help their fathers in cotton pi ing time, that District 46 operate split school term, beginning July

I decide to check on buses a trains and wander to the railro depot, get to talking with an o timer. He shows me where abandoned schoolhouse is. It is lit ally on "the other side of the trac from the main part of Hoxie. It co never have been much more th forlorn; now it is a mark for i stones, thrown by boys, I'm told, a that is why the windows are broken. I hope that some of stones have not been idle, that

least one was thrown by some boy or girl who'd flung it with purpose, and then danced down the road, glad never to have to go there again, hating its Jim-Crow meanness. This is where all fourteen Negro children of those now in the re-opened integrated elementary school would have returned, with one teacher struggling heroically to teach them all, if Sen. Eastland had had his way.

Now Hoxie's modern, new-looking high school still is crowded, according to the acting superintendent, as four sections are being used to accommodate the elementary school. As I walk away from the abandoned school, I remember Joseph Braxton, 16. His father, Clarence Braxton, 73, one of the courageous Negro witnesses, testified he'd sent Joseph to Pasco, Wash., to live because of the letter the father got in the mail Oct. 10. It enclosed a clipping on the Emmett Till murder in Mississippi. A note with the clipping read: "Your boy can get the same thing." I return to the depot, go to a phone booth, locate a relative. No, she says, Joseph hasn't returned to Hoxie.

In the Hoxie school district, according to the old-timer I met in the depot, the average farm is about 80 acres. An egg and cream broker complained that too many farmers or their wives come in town "to work for four or five dollars a day," instead of acquiring herds and making real money. Some work at the Joanie-Jan dress factory in Walnut Ridge, with a payroll of about 120, mostly women; or at a small luggage-making outfit. The old-time railroader, however, said that most crops wouldn't grow on the land, without irrigation, 'it's only good for cotton." So how could a small farmer have much of a herd? he wanted to know.

WHEN the school board decided to integrate it gave three reasons: desegregation was "right in the sight of God"; it was obedience to the Supreme Court; and it was cheaper.

"They couldn't claim 'separate but equal' with that dilapidated old elementary school," the Methodist minister, Rev. H. L. Robison, tells me as I face him that afternoon, while his mother serves us tea. "It was costing them $6,000 a year to transport children to the Negro high school at Jonesboro and run that elementary school. Besides which, they're now giving them a better education."

The minister shows me a Little Rock Gazette editorial, describing how the integrated schools operated without incident for 18 days. The editorial said "teachers were satisfied," "ministers endorsed" the move. But Hoxie was at the time the only school district in the old South to abandon color bars. Abusive letters to Vance began arriving from the deep South, especially Mississippi. The Little Rock organizers of White

America moved in, the newspaper said.

The editorial, which ran Aug. 21, 1955, commented on Southerners' years-old complaint — which the *Gazette* felt was "for good reason"— of "outside interference" in race relations. "Now Arkansas has a classic example at hand in the Hoxie School District," said the *Gazette.* Praising the board members, the *Gazette* said if they were forced to resign "the job will have been done largely by outsiders." The Hoxie Committee on Community Relations reprinted the editorial as an ad, in the Walnut Ridge *Times-Dispatch.*

Rev. Robison hands me a booklet called "Arkansas Faith," the cover bearing U.S. and Confederate flags, in color, and showing the rugged countenances of ex-State Sen. Jim Johnson and Curt Copeland. This is the November issue of the publication of the newly organized White Citizens Councils of Arkansas. Johnson, acting head, is the only defendant named by the Hoxie school board who was released from the injunctions. "He wants to be governor," the minister relates.

"Arkansas Faith" is filled with congratulatory messages. A flowery telegram from Sen. James O. Eastland of Mississippi, sent from Ruleville, to Johnson and Copeland, is reprinted. Eastland wishes them well in their organization, says they deserve the support "of every decent white person" in Arkansas.

The dates of the Hoxie struggle Rev. Robison knows by heart, and counts them off on his fingers. Integrated schools opened July 11; on Aug. 3, Brewer and his committee called a mass meeting at City hall. On Aug. 4 a boycott of the schools began, "which was less than 50 percent effective at peak." Schools closed Aug. 10—two weeks early. On Aug. 13, a mass meeting in a vacant lot in Hoxie. On Sept. 17, on the lawn of the courthouse in Walnut Ridge, sponsored by the White Citizens Councils of Arkansas.

That was the meeting the court cited at length in its findings. It was here, too, that Mississippi was tied in with what the court found was a conspiracy to incite violence.

Copeland and Johnson played a record, saying it was a speech by an Arkansas Negro before an NAACP meeting in Mississippi. They said the recording was obtained after they conferred with Sen. Eastland and Patterson. The court's findings were that defendants played over their public address system a phonograph record "purported to be in the voice of the NAACP." Judge Reeves cited its inflammatory nature, continuing:

"The purported Negro voice . . . prophesied that with the coming of integration throughout society it soon would be possible for Negro

n to give to white women the
ual pleasures and satisfactions they
previously been denied by
regation."

udge Reeves said defendants
ntified the record as one furnished
"one Robert Patterson in his
acity as executive official of the
ite Citizens Council of Missis-
pi located at Winona, Miss."

Testimony showed Copeland had
ed time as a bootlegger—one of
more mild offenses, according to
minister. It was Copeland who
le the speech about blood running
ee-deep all over Arkansas." The
t findings were that in the same
ch the editor discussed, too, "the
of Smith and Wessons and Colts
grass rope as devices successful
eeping 'the n------ out of the
oom.'" He boasted of having
n part in a lynching "with a five-
piece of tow-line" which saved
unty in Mississippi $800.

ev. Robison and his 88 year-old
ner were badgered by knocks on
door of the parsonage "in the
lle of the night," the minister
me. "And the only thing I said
the pulpit was, on the Sunday
e the integrated schools opened,
norrow we integrate, and I want
children to treat the colored chil-
as you would want to be treated,
u were members of the minority
p.' And to the older members, I
'Regardless of how you feel, I
you not to discuss this in front
of the children, so as not to make
it harder for them.'"

"For that," he says, "I've been
called leftist, bleeding heart, and so
on. But for the board members it
was worse. Brewer and his men called
on board members in the middle of
the night, getting them up at 1 and
2 in the morning."

"And poor Mrs. Vance," speaking
of the wife of the former school
superintendent, who during those
hectic days was often meeting with
other school officials at night. And
he describes how she would be
called to the door when alone at
night with her sons, only to hear
the intruders shout before they sped
away in a car: "You n----- loving
bitch, you."

"Do you think they're stopped for
good?" I ask. He shakes his head.
No, they are quiet now, but they'll
try again. And they would be licked
again said the pastor, his eyes and
lips smiling confidently.

I tell him I was sent to him by
the Baptist acting pastor, Rev. Ep-
pinette.

REV. ROBISON, I want to make
clear, knew only I was a journal-
ist. Most of the out-of-town report-
ers and free-lance writers who came
to Hoxie wound up seeing him. The
New York *Times* man had spent
a day with him, he tells me.

Formerly in youth organization
work for the Methodists, his heart

still is with the young people. His teen-agers call him "Pops," confide in him. Urbane, self-confident, with keen kindly eyes in a face as quick to smile as the lean young Baptist minister's was sparse of smiles, he is 50, large and on the plump side. I tell him of my interview with the Baptist pastor in his study. He matches the younger minister's frankness and modesty as he says: "He's a sincere young man. He's helped unite his congregation even if he hasn't spoken out publicly. All ministers—there are four here—are not in my position. Only my bishop can remove me." He is not worried about that. He smiles when I ask if he is a "Northern minister." He is from St. Louis. He speaks of the "wonderful job" being done there in integrating schools.

"Only two Hoxie families now are keeping their children home from school, the Brewers and one other. All the rest are back in school.

"In our church we lost three sets of parents. Two of them still let their children attend." He looked at me intently to see if I saw the significance of that. He was proud of it. "You'll have to see our young people. They are marvelous." I saw them that night, in the choir: no robes or formal dress; the boys wearing white or colored shirts, open at the throat or with ties; the girls hatless, in cotton dresses, pretty as pictures. His sermon is aimed more them than their elders.

Rev. Robison is a fighter on ma fronts, I gather. He serves not that the group rumored to be dick ing to take over the skating rink a allow a beer concession there w not be allowed to, that he will stand for it. Religious folk are cused of interfering, he says, there are times they must. He den they are kill-joys but talks of distinction between pleasure and j He ends with a prayer asking Lord to spare them "sad-sacks," to help them seek joy, not idle pl sure, and to see life in its totality

Now, seated with him and gentle, pleasant white-haired moth I ask him how it is that Hoxie co do what other places hadn't do "How do you explain it, that Ho could triumph against Senator E land, the powerful White Citiz Councils of Mississippi and ambitious Little Rock organizer

Soberly, without making comp sons with any other place, he s he thought the fact that Hoxie wa dominated by big planters had so thing to do with it. "And our bo members were men of courage integrity," he said. "Every conceiva kind of pressure was applied to th economic included."

I asked him about Negro witne at the Federal court hearing, wh he attended. He cited an insta of how they stood their ground.

direct examination one had testified half a dozen white men including Brewer visited him to ask him to keep his children out of school. "When the defense lawyers began grilling him," said the minister, "he was asked, 'Well, did they intimidate you?' His reply was: 'Well, no, but it took six of them to bring the message.'"

(One witness was Marshall Hill, Negro mechanic, who told Brewer and his men he would not comply with their request unless asked to do so by school officials. Another witness was a 61 year-old Negro farmer, Roy Kelly, father of five.)

Rev. Robison produced a clipping, large ad from the Walnut Ridge *Times-Dispatch*. The ad reprinted a letter to Brewer and his offer of a $25 reward for information on its authorship. "Folks said he should have paid $2,500 to keep it out of the paper. Of course I was credited with it. It isn't my style, but I can admire it. A typical sentence read: 'Your boycott is plain rebellion, open defiance of law and order, and it may be an attempt to incite riot and bloodshed in Hoxie."

He feels Hoxie is united now behind the board. The churches have played a role; he felt Rev. Eppinette had helped unite his congregation though he'd not spoken from the pulpit on integration.

From his file, Rev. Robison now brings out literature put out by White Citizens Council, White America and the Association of Citizens Councils of Winona, Miss.

"Horrible, isn't it?" he said, pointing to one inflammatory publication. "But they have worse. One even showed a picture meant to be a Negro man lying prone on a white woman. It was a photo of a couple dancing, of course, cropped and turned around to mislead the credulous."

The court's findings said that the Sept. 17 speech of defendant Guthridge "suggested that the School Board, by carrying out the Supreme Court's integration order, was 'engaged in a revolutionary plot,' violently accusing The Methodist Church of favoring the integration of the Negro 'into the white bedroom.'"

They have to resort to that theme as they have no rational or moral basis, the minister explains. As "an example of the kind of men we were up against," he produces a clipping from the *Times-Dispatch* of Walnut Ridge Nov. 10.

"This man O'Connor was one of of their active workers around here."

Date-lined Bald Knob (Ark.), the story said W. R. O'Connor was in White County jail "facing a charge of attempt to rape an 8 year-old Negro girl here Monday." O'Connor, it said, was "arrested near here Monday night by White County Sheriff Jack Price" and Bald Knob city

policemen Henry Varnell and Tommy Everett.

The alleged attack, it said, occurred in Liberty Valley, 1½ miles from Bald Knob. "The negro (sic) child was at her home with a sister and a blind negro (sic) man who was staying with them while their parents were away from home, the officers said."

The news story went on to relate: "The girl told officers that the white man told her if she would go with him they would go to Jonesboro for medicine for the sister. When the blind man told the intruder to leave, he grabbed the 8 year-old girl and pulled her into the car, officers said.

"Officers were called, and O'Connor stopped his car after the police had fired several shots at him.

"According to a statement by Dr. Porter Rodgers, Searcy, and by Dr. William Carroll Dood, Bald Knob, an attempt to rape the child had been made." It added charges "will be filed today by Prosecuting Attorney Lloyd Henry and his assistant, Bill Rosa."

TO SHOW me how persons "from all over the nation" are cheering on Hoxie in its fight, the minister reads excerpts. I see one big stack of letters put aside as solely from Southerners or former residents of Arkansas and other states in the Old South.

"You people have courage, stay with it,"—from a man who adds, "I'm white, third generation Southerner"; it's postmarked from a Pennsylvania town. One is from a Holden, La., retired chemist; another, Shenandoah college in Virginia; a preacher sends $5; from Memphis, native of Arkansas and proud of it" is now doubly "proud of my native state."

They come from North Carolina; from "the son of a Greenville, S. C., father; my grandfather had slaves"; a New Jerseyan who came from the South writes, "You and your associates are the pioneers of a new era for the South. Pease accept this small contribution."

From Rosemont, Pa., "a white woman born and raised in Mississippi" sends a contribution from "30 women who banded together" to raise it, saying, "I know what this will cost for you," so they are not only praying, but helping in this way, so that Hoxie may show "that integration shall work."

From an Arkansas letter: "I'm very glad that with God's grace you're able to take a definite stand on the race question." The Arkansas writer is "proud you're a Methodist . . . if people would follow Jesus' pattern of life and principle they would stand up and be counted . . . am a Methodist and find great pride in a stalwart character with conviction and pride to back them up."

A Pine Bluff, Ark., Methodist writes Rev. Robison has been "

ash of hope and pride to me," since ading in the Little Rock Gazette at "one outspoken advocate of the oard is a Methodist minister."

Probably because these have meant much to him he looks a bit sad, omentarily, as he points to another ibute—not to him, but to Vance. is in the Jan. 19 issue of *The Mus-ng,* published by the Commercial ub of Hoxie High School. "He obably never saw it," he says brief-

Then his rotund face assumes its tural expression, as he reads:

"We the students, faculty and town ve our vote of thanks for giving us e chance to make ourselves credit-le in the community, county and te . . . to one who has done per-ps the most toward making our hool stand out as one of the most editable schools in Northeast Ark-sas."

Before I leave I ask the minister out the phonograph record sent m Winona, Miss. "The record was hoax," he said.

Later, in Jackson, Miss., in the rse of a lengthy interview, W. J. mons, "administrator" of the As-iated Citizens Councils of Missis-pi, told me he'd heard the record yed, and "I couldn't understand

(When I asked casually if it was l being used, adding I'd just come m Hoxie, where it was used last , he said, "It's almost useless." mons succeeded Patterson, who still goes about speaking almost nightly in Mississippi, as "administrator," and said he didn't know how the record was obtained. But when I asked, "Well, is it authentic?" the man who couldn't hear the words said rather offhandedly, that he guessed it was, it "sounds typical.")

JANUARY 30: I have talked to parents who are reserved, unenthusiastic but finally resolved to support the school board and preserve law and order in Hoxie, as well as spoken briefly to the most consistent adherents of pro-integration, who seem to center about Rev. Robison and the Methodist church. Even with these, it is a topic brought into the conversation only if you bring it up, and then the answer is apt to be given after a deep breath, as in the case of the Baptist minister. It is evident a deal of soul-searching preceded this final crystallized opinion they now declare, but declare only sparingly.

Before I leave Hoxie I want to see Brewer and some of the men on his committee. At breakfast I broach the matter to the cafe proprietress, Mrs. Sylvia Pickrall, who resides in Walnut Ridge. Why, she says, "I'm Mr. Brewer's sister." I said I'd heard by now she was related. "But he's in Florida, honey," she said. I asked if he had gone to recuperate, but she said oh, no, he wasn't of such a weakly constitution, he had just gone down for a vacation and to visit. I

say I've read that the committee intends to appeal the court decision, and would like to know more. Is there someone local, outside of the Little Rock and Crossett lawyers, I can go to? Obligingly she telephones someone and returns to say he'll leave his job and be right over.

Tall, thin, reserved, he reminds me of many Ozark mountain men though he may never have been closer to them than Hoxie, which is eight miles from where the foothills begin at the Ouchita river.

He does not want his name mentioned. This time it isn't because he owns his own business but because he doesn't; also because he's "under an injunction." I ask him names of others who might speak for the committee, but he misunderstands.

"I know what you're getting at," he says, looking at me with brown, brooding, suspicious eyes, eyes I've met with time and again in remote regions of the Ozarks, traveling with my father; eyes which now disturb me because they suggest he may be unhappy over the position he has taken, but stubborn and proud and unrelenting. "I know what you mean," he said. "You think we're riff-raff. You want to know who's on the committee? Well, just people like me and Sylvie here. I'm just what I am, just what you see." And he turned on his heel and walked away.

But Sylvia Pickrall I had observed before—enough to know she was no victim. And while she and I had waited for the man she'd counted on to speak for Brewer, she'd said chattily: "I don't know why they call it the Citizens Committee. There isn't any committee. They just act for District 46. My brother just speaks for the people, that is." She said she herself agreed 100 percent with her brother.

"I base it on the Bible," she said. "If the Lord had intended it, it would be from the beginning." But, she said, virtuously, "I believe they're human beings." She opened her eyes wide. "I really do. I don't want you to get me wrong. I believe they're human beings. I'm not against the n-----s. I just think they should be in their place."

From the depot I phoned others whose names she and other persons had mentioned. Mrs. Cox, now ensconced in a new home in Walnut Ridge after her husband sold their Hoxie home, said their 16 year old son liked school there "just fine —but of course it isn't like home. They'd moved, she said, because of their 4 year-old. When I suggested that by the time he started school Walnut Ridge probably would be integrated, she said, "Oh, dear, I hope not."

Dan Gibson, who runs the Hy Grade Cleaners, explained they'd lived in Walnut Ridge for three

ars, but had continued to send eir two children to Hoxie schools ntil this came up." He said frank- "It's been a little rough on my year-old daughter," who missed r old classmates so that they had und her in tears more than once. He said he didn't want to say much more; "I'm in a small business." I boarded the Frisco train convinced that whatever base Brewer and the Mississippi and Little Rock white supremacists had has all but slipped from their grasp in Hoxie.

TO OUR READERS

Due to circumstances beyond our control, *Masses & Mainstream* is compelled to skip the February issue. This will help to put the magazine back on schedule. All subscriptions will be extended by one month to make up for the omitted February issue.

THE EDITORS

JOE HILL'S SISTER

An Interview

By JOHN TAKMAN

"THIS portrait is most like him, but there should have been some humor around the mouth—and that is not there," she says.

It is a photo taken in the U.S.A. He is wearing a coat of thick cloth, no necktie, and the unironed working shirt is buttoned at the neck. The hair is combed back, the eyes look upward and the expression is tense, serious. That is the picture of Joe Hill which one sees most often, Joe Hill, labor organizer, shot by the state of Utah on a frame-up.

"Joel's eyes were dark blue. There probably was a brownish edge nearest the pupil—as in mine. The hair was brown, somewhat like my own used to be."

Childhood memories are clear and rich in detail. Ester Hägglund was 15 years old when her Joe Hill, her brother, then 23, emigrated to the United States in the autumn of 1902. There had been nine brothers and sisters, but only six lived beyond childhood.

We sat together for four nights in my work room—Ester, her husband Ingebrikt, and I. Our talk was a wandering back in her home tow of Gävle, a Swedish seaport, in th years before and at the turn of th century. Pictures come forward a if etched in metal. Quietly, thought fully she talks, now moved by sa memories, now with a warm smil Ingebrikt Dahl, who was marrie to Ester in 1908 and has heard thes stories many times before, quietl recalls now and then some omitte happening.

Joel was born in Gävle on Octobe 7, 1879. His father was a conducto on the Gävle-Dala railroad, a jo in the low wage category. The fam ily lived in a tiny flat.

"But Papa was very handy," Est recalls, "so when he had any free tim he made the furniture himself. H built a mangle and that becam mother's means for earning a livin after his death."

The parents were interested ar talented in music. In order to intere the children in music at an ear age, the father built an organ h hand.

"Both Mamma and Papa were sin ers', Mamma sang very beautiful

in a soft and clear soprano voice. She could not play the organ but Papa played and sang and as soon as we could reach the keys, we began to play. We played by ear and we accompanied. We often sang duets."

The father's death had been a catastrophe also from the economic standpoint. One did not want to ask for communal help—life was already full enough of humiliations without running to the poorhouse authorities. The mother had a little pension from the railroad. One or another charity organization came around sporadically. . . .

But Joel, the legendary Joe Hill? Could one see anything in the young Joel Hägglund which revealed a lyrical or musical talent? Had he, as a boy, that courage and will of granite which made him a symbol over the whole world for champions of progress and peace? Little sister Ester is full of memories and her warm eyes glisten as she recalls pictures of that brother whom she best remembers.

"His chronological place in the family had given him a unique position. He was by nature solitary, actually because of the fact that his older brothers had their common interests and Joel was on the outside. We sisters were younger so that he had no share in our interests either. He kept much to himself and had his own interest and that was mostly music."

Joel was eight when the father died and it is believable that he experienced the poverty that the family was forced into more brutally than the older brothers who had begun to be able to get along on their own. Some years later he became sick with a skin and joint tuberculosis which also attacked his face and right wrist and for long periods made it impossible for him to work. Ester tells that before he was taken in for treatment at the Serafim hospital in Stockholm in the year 1900 he used to play the violin with the bow bound fast to the bandage. In a family photo evidently taken a full half year after the father's death, Joel's brothers Efraim and Paul are securely and self-consciously standing behind the mother. Joel stands on the fringe of the family group like a timid and sad little boy.

However, when Ester characterizes him as of a "solitary nature" she has in mind that he was a dreamer who because of his imaginative talents became a special personality among his more realistic brothers and sisters. Joel had a violin, an accordion, and a guitar at home. He tried them all but he preferred the violin. Joel played mostly by heart. He accompanied and sang, but Paul played mostly from notes. Paul was in the Gävle choir. There he often sang solos. He had a beautiful tenor voice. . . ."

AT FOURTEEN Joel began to work for a living, first as a rope maker, later as a fireman in a wood

refining factory. His last job before his journey to the U.S.A. was at an American-made crane. He also had odd jobs, but during his long periods of illness he occupied himself passionately with his interests in music —composing and playing.

How old do you think he was when he began to compose?

"When he was around eighteen, nineteen—I should think."

Of these creations she recalls teasing songs which he wrote and sang about her and their sister Judith.

But from where did the impulse come for Joe Hill's political development? They could not have come from the parents or the narrow milieu which surrounded him in Gävle. The parents belonged to the evangelical church and were devoutly religious.

"There were no politics in our home for we were conservative. There were no political discussions, not that I remember. We were taught to be obedient to God and the King and submit to all authority."

The three older brothers respected the religious beliefs of their mother but did not go to church. Efraim and Paul, who were the first to earn a living, may have brought new political ideas into the famliy. They were both employed by the railroad company.

"I remember that they kept on complaining that the pay was bad and that the promotions were too slow. Joel kept to himself. He kept what he had inside himself, and he wrote music, he played and sang but there were not many who knew what he had inside himself—only that which expressed itself in the music. I believe that he awakened after he arrived in the States."

That he awakened—do you mean that he became interested in the labor movement?

"Yes, that I believe. He could have had many thoughts about that when he was at home but he never mentioned anything—never anything like politics. Nearly everything he said went into that teasing tone. But I think that there was much seriousness in all that."

During his stay in Stockholm, while being treated for his illness he wrote letters "which sparkled with a love of life" even when things looked black for him, sick and without money as he was. At the same time his home was breaking up. The mother was taken to the hospital in Gävle and died there in 1902. Shortly after her death they decided to sell the house. Thus there was 6500 crowns ($1,300) to divide. Judith used her part to study at the teachers' college and when he got a position as a teacher the autumn of 1904 in Högvälen, in the Northwest, Ester moved there, too. Joel and Paul went to America.

The rest of the story about Joe Hill has already been told by Barrie Stavis in *The Man Who Never Died*

(just published in the Swedish language), one of the most fascinating and proud chapters in the world history of the labor movement. Until a few years ago any part of the Swedish background was missing in this chapter. The reasons are many. One of them was, perhaps, that Joel Hägglund called himself Joseph Hillstrom in the United States even during the trial. It was quite common for the emigrants of that time to take another name which could be pronounced easier in English. Joel Häggund's father was born in Hille, a few miles north of Gävle. Joel's grandmother on his father's side, was generally called Hille Kajsa (Kate from Hille). Here we have most likely the origin of his name as emigrant which later was shortened to his professional name, Joe Hill.

Another reason that nothing was known about Joe Hill's life in Sweden earlier may be found in the lack of historians and history-minded writers in the progressive movement in Sweden. Moreover, not once during the campaign for Joe Hill's life does there seem to have been much interest in the Swedish labor press. During the very last weeks before the execution, short articles did appear in a couple of papers with the smallest circulation. However, no labor politician or labor journalist seems to have paid the least attention to the question of Joseph Hillstrom's origin.

Of course, this would not have been only a question of satisfying one's curiosity, which in itself could have been an inspiration for research. It was also a practical question. If Joe Hill had relatives or personal friends in Sweden it would have been reasonable to trace them and mobilize them in the fight for his life. There are, however, few signs that the Swedish labor movement, with the exception of its American offshoot, actively participated in the world-wide campaign. The largest labor newspaper *Social-Demokraten* printed, in a well-concealed space, a notice about the execution and seems to have accepted the perfidious version which the authorities in Salt Lake City and the big press agencies distributed. Possibly further research in the press and records of that time could give reasons for a milder judgment.

Naturally one must remember that the campaign took place in 1915. The happenings of the First World War occupied much space in the press and relatively small attention was given to personal fates.

THAT Joe Hill also remained afterwards the anonymous emigrant Joseph Hillstrom is much more difficult to understand. His identity was confirmed some weeks following the execution. Four of his brothers and sisters lived in different parts of Sweden, and the sister

Ester, who remembers her remarkable brother with so much admiration and love, could have become a critical and competent co-worker with the research worker who showed interest. Högvälen, where she lived not far from the Norwegian border, was during the first years a remote place but in the later years this part of Sweden has become a popular tourist place with good communications. Ester Dahl up to quite recently was in charge of the telephone station in Högvälen. It would have been the simplest thing in the world to reach her and hear the story of Joe Hill. That this was not done in an earlier stage is tragic, not least from the standpoint that valuable written material was later destroyed.

In the magazine *Folket i Bild's* (May 1, 1949), there were some articles about Joe Hill, one by the American journalist, Ray Bearse, and one by the Swedish publisher Ragnar Johansson, who had known Joe Hill personally in the U.S.A. Ester read these stories and wrote to Ragnar Johansson.

A statement by Ray Bearse that Joe Hill had gone to sea for some years before he went to the U.S.A. is surely incorrect. Ester has no memory of that and if he had shipped out between his periods of illness it must have been for a very short time only. But Joe was no ordinary emigrant who was satisfied with the Swedish public school education, for he began to study from English dictionaries and most likely also a grammar book before he crossed the Atlantic.

"They had books with English and Swedish words which they studied —both Paul and Joel. They could not speak English as yet but they could get along. Paul wrote that it was a dog's life they had that first year in America."

The first year they stayed together and perhaps even the second year.

"They had a hard time and had to take temporary jobs. They sailed on ships, too, but then Paul got a job as a locomotive engineer. Then they separated. Joel went to different places and played and sang, wrote Paul. They had a little contact through correspondence but they never met. Paul, of course, had his definite place of work. Joel was free and could go wherever he wanted to."

Ester has only one of the letters left. It was written on board ship the Cunard Line's "Saxonia," when they went over to the U.S.A. It was dated Oct. 27, 1902, and was stamped in New York the following day and addressed to his brother Efraim in Gothenbourg. It is written with Paul's running hand and ends with a postscript, "Julle (Joel) and I will appear on a most magnificent concert on board this barge—a violin duet and piano, what do you think of that." On the last page there is a

note in another handwriting, "Agree with former speaker on all points. Your brother James Brown, New York." That is Joel's special humor and the handwriting is already something like the elegant, flourishing style beginning to be found again eight or nine years later in the original manuscripts of the songs by Joe Hill. Two Christmas cards, both sent from Cleveland, Ohio, in December 1905, Ester still retains. One is signed "Julle" and the other has no signature. The handwriting is now identical with Joe Hill's.

It is quite possible that direct greetings came later also from both Paul and Joel but Ester cannot remember for certain. In any case these must have been very few. Paul may still be alive.

Ester and Judith who still lived at the same place, far away from their birth town, and who often must have talked about their brothers in the U.S.A., had no idea of Joel's development and got to hear only after his death about the role he played in the American labor movement. As his songs were written in English and not translated into Swedish till many years later, he was, in fact, unknown to people in general in Sweden. Ester has a definite remembrance that she had written, probably in the middle of the twenties, to either *Brand* (The Fire) or *Stormlockan* (The Storm Bell), two progressive publications, to give information regarding her brother's origin. The initiative, however, did not lead to anything

A remarkable fact is that the family knew nothing about the drama of Joe Hill while the campaign for his life took place.

"We knew nothing either of his imprisonment or of the trials. Nothing more than that Judith and I received the information from Gävle that he had been executed and carried to the grave by six maidens dressed in white."

The communication came through a letter from the aunt in Gävle to whom the official information about the execution together with excerpts of the court proceedings had been sent. From these documents it was clear that Joel Hägglund was condemned and executed on a murder charge. Information about the funeral had most likely come from an article in a Swedish-American newspaper. It is not known that any other name than Joseph Hillstrom came out in the Swedish-American press at that time but evidently the aunt and the uncle had drawn a conclusion from the published photographs and the direct communication about the execution that Joe Hill, Joseph Hillstrom and Joel Hägglund were one and the same person.

A MONTH after the authorities in Salt Lake City rid themselves of the labor song writer and trade union fighter whom they feared so

much, *Arbetarbladet* (The Workers' Tribune) in Gävle, a Social Democrat daily, published a confused correspondence (printed in the issue of December 18, 1915) from an anonymous Swedish-born woman in Salt Lake City, and in that correspondence the real name of the executed emigrant is revealed as Joel Hägglund from Gävle. The woman who claimed to have known him very well (both came from the same home town) could have answered some of the questions in the trial, but because of her social position in Salt Lake City she did not dare to come forward to confirm where Joe Hill was during the period of that drama for which he was innocently executed.

Ester and Judith never were informed about this correspondence and it was just as well. That was a hateful rehash of the lies which the newspapers in Salt Lake City spread energetically about the man condemned to death. If the woman had the alibi for Joe Hill on that fateful night, which is not improbable, she deadened her own conscience by convincing herself that he was surely worth his sentence because of possible earlier crimes, i.e., those crimes that were invented by the authorities and the press.

The official report of the trials and the execution came, as stated before, to August and Ulrica Wennman, half-brother and half-sister to Joe Hill's mother.

"He (August Wennman) saved them until his death in 1927, and then his widow got hold of them. She felt ashamed of this kinship and so she simply burned the papers. She did not want to be a relative to a murderer and so she thought it best to burn them. She did not want us to see them either."

This aunt had come into the family after Joel had gone to America and had never met him. For this prejudiced, narrow-minded woman there existed but one thought—that he was condemned for a *terrible* crime. The thought of a frameup certainly never had lit up her undeveloped mind.

In Sweden as in the U.S.A., research about Joe Hill has, at every step, come up against such experiences. It has been as if an infamous sorcerer had taken hold of the documentary material. Letters, photos and much else which carried on Joe Hill's signature or had to do with him have been destroyed. Even the records of the trials have almost entirely disappeared.

But here in my library sits Joe Hill's 68-year-old sister, youthfully alive, happy that her brother's memory is honored all over the world and proud of the contribution he made to the cause of the labor movement.

Translated from Swedish by
Adelyne Cross Eriksson

STEPHEN CRANE

A Critical Study

By M. SOLOMON

(This is the second and concluding section of an essay on Stephen Crane. The first part appeared in our January issue.)

WITH the publication of *The Red Badge of Courage*, Stephen Crane had "arrived." But somehow he always regarded his success with almost as much bitterness as his earlier failures. In 1897, he wrote to John N. Hilliard: "Now that I have reached the goal I suppose that I ought to be contented; but I am not. I was happier in the old days. . . ." In the first place, he had no respect for the American literary public which was now singing his praises (like many of his contemporaries, including the later Mark Twain, there was little or no rapport between successful author and audience). He wrote: "They used to call me 'that terrible, young radical,' but now they are beginning to hem and haw and smile. . . ." On the other hand, Crane was afraid of the corrupting influence of success; he knew how easily he could have become a strictly commercial writer, playing on the vogue of *The Red Badge* with hack Civil War stories.

This was no idle fear, since Crane more than once succumbed to the easy way, as in the novel *Active Service* and the superficial *Great Battles of The World.* And even in the fine collection, *The Little Regiment* (1896), are certain stories, such as "Three Miraculous Soldiers" and "A Grey Sleeve," which are pale, romanticized Civil War tales with the familiar sentimental trappings.

In the sincere but flimsy novel, *The Third Violet* (completed in December, 1895), Crane voices these fears in his best satiric manner (often

used when he is writing of his own deep personal conflicts or ideas):

"I started my career . . . with a determination to be a prophet, and, although I have ended in being an acrobat, a trained bear of the magazines,* and a juggler of comic paragraphs, there was once carved upon my lips a smile which made many people detest me. . . . I concluded that the simple campaign of existence for me was to delude the populace. . . . And now I can make myself quite happy concocting sneers about it."

Of course, it is altogether too simple to read into this only Crane's criticism of his own work. It is also a clear attack on commercialization of the artistic and literary world which forces artists into hack work, preventing them from exploring the problems of their art and time. Thus, Hawker, the talented painter-hero of the novel speaks banteringly of his own accomplishments in the commercial world of art:

"Did you ever see these beautiful red and green designs that surround the common tomato can? . . . Well . . . I have made them. . . . When first I came back from Paris I began to paint but nobody wanted me to paint. Later, I got into green corn and asparagus. . . ."

The problem which Crane is pointing up is the domination of the art world by big business, and the resulting increased control of the artist by his 'buyer.' The book industry, during the 1890's, fell more and more, as the *Literary History of the United States* notes, "under the control of finance capitalism, with the result that the banks and investment trusts, which supplied it with capital, insisted on greater efficiency in the interest of surer profits." Frank Norris wrote: "More novels are written —practically—to order than the public has any notion of. The publisher again and again picks out the man . . . suggests the theme, and exercizes, in a sense, all the functions of instructor during the period of composition. . . ."

The era of the 'mass market,' the 'standardized product' and the 'sure-fire success' had arrived, with the freedom of the artist diminishing rapidly. The best-seller lists became increasingly filled with books of the trashiest and most ephemeral character. More and more subjects became taboo among the commercial publishers and many talented but radical authors found difficulty in having their works published, so that Crane published his first novel himself, Garland's *Main-Travelled Roads* was issued by the left-wing Arena Publications, and Dreiser's *Sister Carrie* was largely suppressed after publication.

Typical of Crane's running battle

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* The phrase is Howells', contained in Crane's *New York Times* interview of him in 1894. Speaking of the purpose of fiction, Howells noted: "A man should mean something when he writes. Ah, this writing merely to amuse people—why it seems to me altogether vulgar. A man may as well . . . dance on the street for pennies. The author is a sort of trained bear. . . ."

vith censorship was the correspondence concerning *The Black Riders,* vhich Copeland and Day had agreed o publish, but with certain changes. Crane wrote to them: "In the first place, I should absolutely refuse to have my poems printed without many of those which you just as absolutely mark 'No.' It seems to me that you ut all the ethical sense out of the ook. All the anarchy, perhaps. It is he anarchy which I particularly nsist upon."

It was during this period that nany of our leading creators slipped way into voluntary exile on the Continent and in England (especially ngland, "Where," Crane said, "you an have an idea without being sent o court for it."). Henry James, Henry Harland, Harold Frederic, ames McNeill Whistler, Jacob Epein, Henry Adams—the complete st of permanent or temporary exatriates reads almost like a roll-call f American letters. Crane himself ent most of his last years outside s native country, and set up his nal home at a manor-house in rede, England.

Can it be said that these intelctuals left our land merely because their difficulties with publishers d the owners of art-galleries? The asons lie deeper. The frontier had osed and the optimism of 'demoatic vistas' faded with it. Millions immigrants to 'The Golden Land' ere crowded into the tenement slums of our Eastern cities; the Populist movement against drought, hard times and mortgages died sharply in 1896; lynchings of Negroes in the fair Southland reached record heights as the last remnants of Reconstruction equality were destroyed; scores of thousands of small businesses were wiped out by fierce competition and two depressions; the coal-mining, railroad and steel strikes were broken with bloody warfare; the Knights of Labor died out while the A. F. of L. leadership continued to sell out . . . To the thinking person (let alone the actual victims), the '90's presented a picture of almost unrelieved gloom. This was a 'critical period' in American history.

CRANE was a thinking person. He possessed a profound social sense. He was appalled by the American scene and discouraged by his inability to offer a social solution; nor did he find in the theories of his Utopian Socialist and Populist friends the ultimate answer: "I was a Socialist for two weeks," he wrote, "but when a couple of Socialists assured me I had no right to think differently from any other Socialist and then quarrelled with each other about what Socialism meant, I ran away." Crane could easily have become a victim of despair, or an escapist into medievalism, or an aesthete, or a sneering cynic, or a 'detached onlooker.' He *did* develop a cynical

veneer at times, and often put on a 'know-nothing' cloak, or pretended to a Bohemian attitude. But these were masks to hide a sensitivity which was out-of-date in the '90's.

There is no blueprint for society in Crane's work. There is no acceptance by him of any single ideology of his time by which he can be labelled and thus assigned to a comfortable niche. He is close to many movements, but part of none. He is opposed to many things, however, and this links him with the social reformers of his age. He rejects the pragmatic substitution of expediency for good; he denies the Social Darwinist idealization of the victor in the 'struggle for survival'*; his heart fills with wrath at a man of God who would "not risk [his respectability] to save a soul"; his mind clouds with anger at the sweat-shops which turn working women into "mere mechanical contrivances. . . ."

Crane had heard the cry for justice he had writhed at the sight of a girl accused of prostitution screaming in the shadow of a policeman's club; he had suffered with those who felt pain, hungered with the starving sorrowed with the sorrowful.

Crane's was a great anger. The sociologist, Lester Ward, had written: "The whole history of the world shows that those who have achieved have received no reward. The rewards for their achievement have fallen to persons who have achieved nothing." Crane was no sociologist, but a poet In *War is Kind,* he wrote:

"The successful man has thrust himself
Through the water of the years,
Reeking wet with mistakes—
Bloody mistakes;
Filled with victories over the lesser,
A figure thankful on the shore of
money. . . .
Complacent, smiling,
He stands heavily on the dead.
Erect on a pillar of skulls
He declaims his trampling of babes;
Smirking, fat, dripping,
He makes speech in guiltless ignorance
Innocence."

If Stephen Crane could deny, h could also affirm. His affirmation wa not a political program, but a pro found humanism, an ethic, a morality rising above the plundering morality of his society. Dreiser was correct when he noted that Crane was "on of the very few writers who stood forth intellectually and artistically

* It may seem paradoxical that Crane's work, despite his attack on the central conservative feature of Social Darwinism, nevertheless continued to reveal his belief in many of the Spencerian doctrines. To a thinker critical of capitalist relations, the "struggle for survival" doctrine, which drew an analogy between the biological world and society, might appeal as a reasonably accurate reflection of bourgeois competitiveness and anarchy, with its frightful destructiveness. The "evolutionary" aspects of Social Darwinism might even hint at a brighter future. The working class, however, does not believe that the bourgeois anarchic "struggle for existence" is an eternal law of society. Its view is more scientific, moving toward a society which eliminates the exploitation of man by man. It is an historic limitation of Crane that he did not arrive at this working class philosophy, although he had deep sympathies for the exploited and was sharply critical of the myth of the "successful man." Thus we can see why he would not be able to free himself completely from these doctrines.

a time when this nation was . . . thoroughly submerged in romance and sentimentality and business. . . ."

Crane could not see Socialism as a solution, but he clung to the search for dignity, holding to the ideal as he saw the destruction of warmth and kinship around him. In this he was close to the religious movement called the Social Gospel which appealed for the "welding together of those who love for the service of those who suffer," calling for reform through the application of the law of love and asserting its belief in the unbreakable and eternal brotherhood of man.

This current touched the heart of millions of Americans, as witness the vast success of Rev. Sheldon's fictional tract, *In His Steps,* and the impact of Stead's *If Christ Came to Chicago.* Russell Nye was perhaps the first to observe that Crane's "ethic, with its emphasis on mercy, justice, sincerity and social brotherhood, is strikingly parallel to the basic doctrines of the Social-Gospel movement in religion. . . ."

We have seen how Crane left the Bowery and sought in *The Red Badge* the heroism and comradeship which he could not find on the East Side. In the process he gained an optimistic vision but lost the immediacy of subject and contemporaneity which his naturalist tales contained. In the magnificent stories of his later years we find a fusion of the critical realism of *Maggie* and the ethical optimism of *The Red Badge* achieved through an application of humanist standards to contemporary life.

II

VICTOR HUGO had written of the profound task of social thinkers: "The transformation of the crowd into the people." In *Maggie,* Crane had viewed the people as a crowd, the result being dehumanization of character, so that Maggie herself never emerges as a tragic person but remains a pitiful creature. This 'crowd' approach is manifested in much of Crane's naturalistic work, and can be illustrated also by his writings on the coal miners for *McClure's* magazine, where despite his compassion for the workers, and his hatred of the "cruel and insatiate" forces which oppress them, he sees them not as people but as "little men" at the mercy of nature and society: "They have carried the war into places where nature has the strength of a million giants. . . . Man is in the implacable grasp of nature. It has only to tighten slightly, and he is crushed like a bug. . . ."

In *The Red Badge,* Crane began to work his way out of the crowd. Henry Fleming, a young farm boy, was, as Van Wyck Brooks writes, "'jest one little feller' among a lot of others," but he was not crushed.

He was a youth fighting to establish his individuality, and the realistic optimism of his story created, in Brooks' words, "a kind of actuality that readers had seldom found. . . . They felt they were shuffling in the mud in Henry's shoes."

Crane no longer believed that the mainspring of life "is a sort of cowardice," nor that people react against oppression by revelling in the downfall of others. He began to treat of the indissolubility of human hope and the solidarity which grows out of human suffering. Thus, in his short-short story "An Eloquence of Grief" (probably written in 1896), a spectator (Crane) in a police court hears the anguish of an accused girl's cry of innocence, and her wail rouses a feeling of the universal bond between people. Her cry swept away the "curtain of the commonplace, and disclosed the gloom-shrouded spectre that sat in the young girl's heart . . . in so universal a tone of the mind, that a man expressed some far-off midnight terror of his own thought." Her scream brings her out of the 'crowd' and into the heart.

The celebrated story "The Open Boat" (1897) is the first of Crane's major achievements on this theme. It is a narrative (based on fact) of four men drifting in a life-boat for many days under the threat of death, and finally reaching shore. The imminence of annihilation (and one of them does die) necessitated disciplined activity for their salvation; and from this they learn the meaning of comradeship.

The calmness of the men is significant; there is no hysteria or anguished soul-searching: "there were no hurried words, no pallor, no plain agitation." As Carl van Doren notes: "They were men of one mind, united against the sea that might be death to them." And out of their oneness of mind and action came "this comradeship, that the correspondent . . . who had been taught to be cynical of men, knew even at the time was the best experience of his life." Crane (who was in real life the war correspondent of the story) speaks of ". . . the subtle brotherhood of men that was here established on the seas."

This 'no man is an island' theme is poignantly brought home in a scene where the correspondent meditates on a verse he had known in childhood, of a soldier of the Legion who lay dying in Algers, with a comrade standing beside him, clasping his hand, the soldier mourning that he will never see his native land again. "He had never considered it his affair that a soldier of the Legion lay dying in Algiers, nor had it appeared to him as a matter for sorrow. It was less to him than the breaking of a pencil's point. Now, however, it quaintly came to him as a human, living thing."

And in this transformation of the cynical correspondent into a senti-

ent, warm individual who breaks with his hard-bitten past and achieves sympathy with his fellow-men (as people, not as units of the 'crowd'), Crane has in miniature depicted the first stage in the social growth of all people. Finally, "He was sorry for the soldier of the Legion who lay dying in Algiers."

A naturalist motif enters the story. The boat passes tantalizingly near the shore, and a tall white windmill reared above them. "This tower was a giant, standing with its back to the plight of the ants. It represented . . . the serenity of nature amid the struggles of the individual. . . . She did not seem cruel to him then, nor beneficent, nor treacherous, nor wise. But she was indifferent, flatly indifferent." And again, in a famous passage, Crane seemingly reverts to naturalism:

> "When it occurs to a man that nature does not regard him as important, and that she feels she would not maim the universe by disposing of him, he at first wishes to throw bricks at the temple, and he hates deeply the fact that there are no bricks and no temple."

But this is a rejection of naturalism. Crane is saying that the solutions of man's problems are to be found in man, and that he will receive no outside assistance. The source of victory (over the sea and the implacability of nature) is in the united struggle of the captain, oiler, cook and correspondent, that motley crew which finally reached land: "and the wind brought the sound of the great sea's voice to the men on the shore. . . . They felt that they could then be interpreters."

IN "The Open Boat" the enemy is the sea, a natural, impersonal force. If this were Crane's only story on the theme of brotherhood one might discover a certain implied mysticism. However, in his other masterpieces of 1897/8 there is no such abstraction. The brotherhood ethic appears in violent conflict with, and growing out of, specific social forces and prejudices. Thus, we cannot accuse Crane of elevating "Man" to the level of a Deity and then sermonizing on the homely virtues of love, honor and dignity. Crane does not fall into the idealistic trap of picturing oppressor and oppressed alike as victims whose sins must be given equal and sympathetic treatment. In his stories, Crane, above all, believes in responsibility, whether the guilt is individual or social. "The Blue Hotel" (written in February of 1898) spells this out. Its keynote is "Every sin is the result of a collaboration."

"The Blue Hotel" is the story of a Swede, a traveller from a distant land, who arrives at a little town in Nebraska filled with fear, and trembling with consciousness of impending death. He does not ask for help from the men he meets in the ram-

shackle hotel; but all of them (including 'The Easterner' — Crane) know of his fear and of his need. In his anxiety he is goaded into a fight which leads to his being driven from the hotel, and then, in a mood of desperation and semi-sanity, he creates a situation which leads to his murder. Even his corpse is then deserted and it lies alone in the saloon with "its eyes fixed upon a dreadful legend that dwelt atop of the cash-machine: 'This registers the amount of your purchase.'"

Carl van Doren misreads the meaning of this line when he writes that the murder "springs logically enough from the sleeping angers and resentments the Swede arouses in men, who, left alone, would have been peaceful." Crane rather is highlighting the terrible desolation of a stranger in distress who needs sympathy and finds death because society measures relationships in terms of false pride and cash value. Only Scully, the hotel-keeper, does not reject him outright; he at first assists him, reassures him; but even Scully deserts the Swede when family pride interferes with his basic humanity.

The crucial question, then, is 'Who is Guilty?', not only of the Swede's murder, but of inhumanity. Crane answers the Dostoevskian question unequivocally, and as in "The Open Boat" we are moved by the sudden leap in the consciousness of the characters who people "The Blue Hotel." The Easterner speaks: "I refused to stand up and be a man. I let the Swede fight it out alone. And you—you were simply puffing around the place wanting to fight. . . . We are all in it! . . . Every sin is the result of a collaboration. We, five of us, have collaborated in the murder of this Swede." Another character closes the story, whimpering, "Well, I didn't do anythin', did I?" but he knows, too.

The long story "The Monster" (completed in England, December, 1897) was long regarded simply as a gruesome horror story, and was even rejected by one New York magazine on the grounds that it would frighten expectant mothers. Van Doren summarizes the plot as follows. "The monster is a Negro coachman who, rescuing his employer's child from a burning house, has had his own face burned away and has become harmlessly insane. Dr. Trescott, grateful and loyal, not only preserves Henry's life after the accident but also resolves to take care of him as long as he lives. But the children of the small town are terrified, the women upset, the men concerned. Gossip makes the pathetic victim monstrous, enlarging the horror, till even Trescott's friends demand that he keep Henry elsewhere, and then abuse and desert the doctor when he will not." There are hints of mob violence by the townspeople, which the bewildered doctor meets

with staunch resistance, because the ethic of loyalty and gratitude are stronger than his fear.

This is no mere horror story. Nor is it enough to call it (as Wilson Follet does) a "miniature Late Victorian anticipation of *Main Street* . . .", although this is quite true. Nor can we merely discuss it in terms of the ethic of loyalty—the loyalty of Henry who sacrifices himself for little Jimmy, and the loyalty of Dr. Trescott who sacrifices his medical practice and his family's prestige to maintain his principles. Central to "The Monster" is its appeal for brotherhood between all races. Which is perhaps why Howells called it "the greatest short story written by an American"; and this perhaps made it objectionable to the *Century* magazine, which, according to Rayford Logan, was one of the publications containing "the largest number of derogatory stereotypes."

EVEN the radicals shied away from this subject in the 1890's, while on the other hand a huge spate of anti-Negro fiction was pouring from the presses as an accompaniment to the largest wave of lynchings the South had endured since Reconstruction. Tourgée had dropped the issue which he had earlier championed so well. G. W. Cable's latest effort, *John March, Southerner,* caricatured its Negroes, in sharp contrast to his heroic 'Bras-Coupé' of the earlier *Grandissimes.* Mark Twain's *Puddin'-head Wilson* was no *Huckleberry Finn.* And Howells' *An Imperative Duty* was merely another variation on the 'tragic octoroon' theme. The field was left to the *Red Rocks* and *Gabriel Tollivers,* shortly to be followed by Dixon's *Leopard's Spots* and *The Clansman,* where American fiction descended to its nadir.

"The Monster" opens as an idyll, picturing the gentle relationship between Little Jim (Dr. Trescott's child) and the Negro coachman, Henry Johnson. There is more than a touch of condescension in Crane's portrayal of Henry, as when he speaks of him and the child: "In regard to almost everything in life they seemed to have minds precisely alike." Or when he writes of Henry's consummate dress of lavender trousers, straw hat and bright silk band. Here, as in several of the *Whilomville Tales* (written in 1899, published in 1900) and particularly the supposedly-humorous "The Knife," Crane unwittingly helped perpetuate one or another of the stereotypes which Sterling Brown outlined as dominating literary portrayals of the Negro, "stressing the Negro's divergence from an Anglo-Saxon norm to the flattery of the latter."

It is not recorded in any of Crane's biographies that he knew a single Negro as a friend or acquaintance, nor that he had concerned himself greatly with Negro history or op-

pression. In Crane's newspaper account of "The Wreck of the Commodore" he shows a callous lack of regard for the lives of the Negro seamen who perished. There are only single, stereotyped references to Negroes in *The Red Badge, Maggie,* and *The Third Violet,* and none of consequence in *Active Service, George's Mother* or any of the major short stories.

There are several disturbing anecdotes attributed to Crane in Beer's and Berryman's biographies, even though none of them is fully authenticated. Crane is reputed to have written a racist story called "Vashti in the Dark" sometime in February, 1895, and to have revised it in 1898, but this also is unauthenticated. Beer (who accepts the existence of the story) reports that "Crane burned it in one of his rare fits of pique," which, if true, may be more significant than the supposed writing of the tale. Therefore, "The Monster" remains as Crane's only work devoted to this subject, and as such we cannot fail to admire this young writer who was intuitively so far in advance of his contemporaries.

For despite the patronizing descriptions of the early scenes, the rescue itself is one of Crane's greatest heroic pieces, and Henry, a Negro, one of Crane's greatest heroes.* Moved by his devotion to the child (and Crane does not portray this devotion in the servile, stereotyped manner which the Plantation Tradition novelists insist upon), Henry plunges into the fire, which was "roaring like a winter wind among the pines." Fear of death battles with love as Henry climbs through the furnace. This is no knight-on-horseback portrayal. At one point he "had given up almost all idea of escaping from the burning house, and with it the desire. He was submitting, submitting because of his fathers, bending his mind in a most perfect slavery to this conflagration." Crane probes deep into Henry's mind and once again (as in *The Red Badge*) grasps the essence of courage:

> "In his sudden momentary apathy there had been little that resembled fear, but now, as a way of safety came to him, the old frantic terror caught him. He was no longer creature to the flames, and he was afraid of the battle with them. It was a singular and swift set of alternations in which he feared twice without submission, and submitted once without fear."

The rescue was completed and

* Full appreciation of the historical importance of Crane picturing a Negro performing a truly heroic act comes only when one notes that no work of American fiction by a white author has such a Negro character for decades following the publication of "The Monster." Occasionally, a Negro hero appears in a minute role in such novels as Herrick's *The Common Lot* (1903). But Sinclair's Negroes in *The Jungle* (1906) are unheroic, O. Henry's "Municipal Report (1910) is merely poignant, Dreiser's "Nigger Jeff" (1918) is hardly pathetic O'Neill's *Emperor Jones* (1919) is slanderous And where Negroes are treated sympathetically in later works, it is almost invariably as victim of society, not as heroes.

"the morning paper announced the death of Henry Johnson. . . . In the breasts of many people was the regret that they had not known enough to give him a hand and a lift when he was alive, and they judged themselves stupid and ungenerous for this failure." But Henry was not dead. His mind had been destroyed, "his body was frightfully seared, but more than that, he now had no face. His face had simply been burned away."

And then begins another fire, which consumes the moral fibre of the entire community (save only the foreign barber, Reifsnyder), eating away the face of justice and exposing to Dr. Trescott the face of the mob. Henry is stoned and the chief of police explains: "Of course nobody really wanted to hit him, but you know how a crowd gets. It's like—it's like—" And the civilized community of Whilomville, New York, reveals to the good doctor that "He had heard an utterly new challenge in the night of the jungle."

A digression is necessary here, to express a certain indignation at recent Crane studies, which, utilizing a Freudian pseudo-science, attempt to turn Crane into a reviler of Negroes. Maxwell Geismar, in *Rebels and Ancestors,* asserts that there is little doubt "that the fire in Crane's mind was equated with sexuality . . ." and that Henry is therefore undergoing a bloody mutilation ("his castration from the flames") because he was a "dandy and a beau; perhaps at bottom another symbol of the dark sexuality which Crane was attracted to, feared, and in the end always punished so ruthlessly." And with easy logic, Geismar proceeds to use his Freudian standards to prove a completely opposite viewpoint: the attraction of Negroes for Crane "resided obviously in the fact that they were, in his view, so childlike—so much in 'slavery' . . . to their fathers, white and black, good or bad alike, whose voice spoke to them, as here, from the contemplative sky . . . or the flames."

Geismar allows the reader to fill in the details of this theory. But John Berryman, author of the most recent biography of Crane, hesitates not at all in his elucidation. He "finds" numerous references in Crane which "prove" a relation between Negro-sex-knife-stabbing-rape-war, and proceeds to substitute any one of these where another is mentioned by Crane. Thus, in "The Monster," a Negro rescues a child and is "punished." Why is he punished? Because "a rescue may be a rape." A neat solution, which Berryman admits is unsatisfactory, but nevertheless is the "only . . . way that I can understand . . ." this story. For Berryman, the Civil War (oepidal resentment) is the scene of *The Red Badge* precisely because it is *"about the Negro* — about the object, that is, of Crane's own . . . horror, envy, fascination,

and inquiry." (italics in original).

We can only sketch here the fantastic logic by which Berryman perverts Crane to his purposes. Three examples only: (1) Reifsnyder, the barber of "The Monster," sympathizes with Henry because barbers use razors; (2) The poem, "The Black Riders," has a sexual significance which is uniquely important because Crane has the riders emerging from the sea and Berryman insists that they ride on white waves; (3) The sinful heroine of *Active Service* is named Nora *Black.*

Contrary to what such critics would make of this story, its essence lies in its humanism. A brief symbolic passage sums up this story of brotherhood vs. hate. Henry Fleming plunged into the flaming house:

> "In the hall a lick of flame had found the cord that supported 'Signing the Declaration.' The engraving slumped suddenly down at one end, and then dropped to the floor, where it burst with the sound of a bomb."

IN "The Open Boat," "The Blue Hotel" and "The Monster" we have seen the flowering of Crane's art which occurred from 1897 through the winter of 1898. And there were other important stories written in those months which emphasized loyalty and brotherhood, seeking the meaning of life in the common bonds of all people and crying out against the obstacles to human fulfilment. "The Five White Mice" (inspired by Crane's Mexican trip of 1895 as a reporter for the Bachellor Agency) is on the surface a 'hard-boiled' story, but its chief lesson is in the hero's realization that all men are fearful when faced with death: "He had never dreamed that he did not have a complete monopoly of all possible trepidations. . . . [T]he Kid was able to understand swiftly that they were all human beings." Its emphasis is on the common denominator rather than the divisive factor.

"The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky" is a fine, sardonic Western folk-tale which (like those of Twain, Harte or O. Henry) could almost be an expansion of an oral story. The characters are treated with loving appreciation for their failings in this story which Crane called his favorite and Van Doren summed up as "perfectly realistic, humane, humorous." The longer "Death and the Child," which explores the torments of a coward-in-spite-of-himself during the Graeco-Turkish War (in which Crane was a correspondent) is one of Crane's masterpieces. In many respects a re-working of *The Red Badge,* we find expressed here for the first time a consciousness of just- versus unjust-war which was lacking in the Civil War novel. And also, in a significant passage, we note Crane's advances in social understanding, although despite his con-

suming passion for the people, he could not rid himself of a certain disdain:

> "Peza was proud and ashamed that he was not of them—these stupid peasants who, throughout the world, hold potentates on their thrones, make statesmen illustrious, provide generals with lasting victories, all with ignorance, indifference, or half-witted hatred, moving the world with the strength of their arms, and getting their heads knocked together, in the name of God, the king, of the stock exchange. . . ."

The words "moving the world with the strength of their arms" should be italicized, not only as one of Crane's fine images, but to emphasize his growth since his Bowery days, where men's arms were lifted only to strike one another. The great human image in "Death and the Child" is, of course, where the innocent infant, wandering playfully in the ruins of war, meets the coward and asks, with eyes "large and inscrutably wise and sad . . .: 'Are you a man?'"

The touch is pure Bierce, deriving probably from his "Chickamauga," but Crane does it better, underlining the pathos of cowardice and the horror of war with one simple stroke. Suddenly, the coward knows his stature and the measure of his contribution to life: "he knew that the definition of his misery could be written on a wee grass-blade."

III

CRANE'S steady outpouring of masterworks was interrupted April 19, 1898, by the passage in Congress of the so-called resolution for Cuban independence, authorizing the use of U.S. armed forces against Spain. As the Beards wrote: "The hour had come for the planners of world-power politics to steer the country out on the course of imperialism." But, they continued, this was not the accepted view at the time: "To all appearances it was a war for the liberation of Cuba from Spanish dominion — an altruistic, moral war."

Crane was immediately consumed by his passion for liberty and, like Mark Twain at the outset, he wholeheartedly supported the war. He attempted to enlist in the Navy, but upon being rejected as physically unfit, joined the *New York World* as a war reporter. The Cuban War not only interrupted Crane's development as an artist but hastened his death, since he contracted dysentery (and possibly yellow fever) in Cuba and exerted his consumptive body beyond its limits.

He was disappointed in Cuba. He could not understand why the Cubans themselves did not rally to the support of their heroic American defenders. His thoughts on the conduct of the war by the Washington brass were: "In our next war our first bit

of strategy should be to have the Army and the Navy combine in an assault on Washington . . . the rest of the conflict would be simple." However, he could not see through to the essential fact — the violent transfer of dominion over Cuba from Spain to the United States—and some of his dispatches mirror the usual glorification of the war in almost Hearstian terms. To some extent he had been disarmed by the demagogic propaganda, and even later, when the aims of imperialism were exposed by the Phillipine adventure, he did not join openly with Twain, Howells and, as Brooks has pointed out, "virtually all the good writers of the Republic" in attacking the war of conquest.

The Beards quote Thomas Paschal's letter to Cleveland's Secretary of State on the ideological shrewdness of the war: it will knock more pus out of the "anarchistic, socialistic, and populistic boil" than "would suffice to inoculate and corrupt our people for the next two centuries." Some of Crane's anarchism was knocked out of him by the Cuban war. But he was not totally disarmed, contrary to what Geismar indicates. He did not, and could not, accept the White Man's Burden. He tenaciously held to his love for the common man—in this case, the plain guys who fought and died in what they thought was a defense of freedom:

"Imperialism? All right. The White Man's Burden? What in hell did Private Jones and Seaman Smith know of it? Stop being sarcastic. A year hasn't diminished by one inch my respect for the men. I shall never see another war. I don't care if Buller drives all the Boers up Egypt's fattest pyramid. The men were all right."

Crane probably knew (at least sensed) that the war was being fought for no good purpose. He asked: "What were we doing there at all?" But his typically untheoretical answer was: "There was no use in quoting Tolstoy. There was no Napoleon to say the right thing and lend a gilded finish to the occasion. It galled one's mind at times. But there we were."

As simple as that. "There we were." But out of that primitive acceptance of a primitive fact, combined with Crane's deep warmth for the soldiers, came what is perhaps his greatest story, "The Price of the Harness."

THE story was published under the title "The Woof of Thin Red Threads" over Crane's strenuous objections: "The name of the story is 'The Price of the Harness' because it is . . . the price the men paid for wearing the military harness, Uncle Sam's military harness, and they paid blood, hunger and fever . . ."

It is written in six short sections, reminiscent of the impressionistic

briefness of the chapters of *The Red Badge.* As the story opens, we see twenty-five soldiers making a road out of a path up the hillside. They reach camp, wondering, not about causes or battles, but whether they will get anything to eat. Martin begins to curse the Spanish foe and is silenced by Nolan, who tells him: "Better think of your belly. . . ." Crane thus emphasizes his "there we were" theme and rules out any glorification of the Cuban War at the outset.

The second section opens with camp breaking, and the men moving through the forest toward the battle. Crane typically stresses the silence and "marvellous impassivity of the faces" as they march. They pass wounded Cubans, screaming in agony. The tension mounts in their minds as they discuss small subjects. And for contrast, Crane gives us a classic portrayal of the young officer who had inherited "traditions of fidelity and courage" from previous generations, and whose duty required that he fail "to heed the wails of the wounded . . . even as the pilgrim fails to heed the world as he raises his illumined face toward his purpose —rightly or wrongly, his purpose— his sky of the ideal of duty. . . . The young man was merely an officer in the United States regular army."

The "men knew that the time had come." Chapter three opens the battle, which "had burst out with a roar like a brush-fire." As in *The Red Badge,* Crane refers to the contradiction inherent in "charming scenery, enigmatically potent for death." Martin is hit, and the men "deemed it ill that they were being badly cut up on a most unimportant occasion."

The first climax of the story is reached in the fourth chapter as Martin joins the death march of the wounded, stoically moving toward the rear, "buried in a vague but profound melancholy," amidst a catalog of war horrors. And then a new 'Tattered Man' screams: "Bread! Give me Bread!" over and over. In his hour of greatest need, the hour of death, the wounded soldier cries out for the eternal want of mankind. Martin refuses to help carry a comrade, and his refusal "which rings now so inhuman, pitiless, did not affect the other man." So that even the veil of shame which covered Henry Fleming's inhumanity is ripped off in the context of the inhumanity of the Cuban War.

Martin reaches the hospital, but chapter five shifts the scene to Nolan, in battle. Crane shows the men being forged by struggle into a collective unit, a warped cooperation, but the only saving grace: "He had loved the regiment . . . because [it] was his life—he had no other outlook. . . . [I]t seemed to him that his comrades were dazzlingly courageous." But there is no victory; the scene ends

with Nolan dying, unconscious of his terrible wound, speaking lightly to his comrades.

The final chapter shows Grierson covering Nolan's face, with Watkins summing up: "Aw, it's a damn shame." Swiftly, Crane moves back to the hospital tents, where "In the blue gloom of evening . . . the two rows of still figures became hideous, charnel." Weaving through the speech of the wounded, rising like a gruesome motif is the song of a dying soldier, "a kind of man always found in an American crowd—a heroic, implacable comedian and patriot, of a humour that has bitterness and ferocity and love in it, and he was wringing from the situation a grim meaning by singing 'The Star-Spangled Banner' with all the ardour which could be procured from his fever-stricken body."

"Through the clouded odours of sickness and medicine rang the dauntless voice. . . ." This line rings down the curtain on a story which shows Crane as an opponent of this imperialist war, as an artist who cries out against its waste of life and ravagement of youth.

But this story cuts the optimistic thread which ran through the stories of Crane's previous period, where despite evil and prejudice, a stalwart belief in the possibility of redress was set forth. Crane, forced on one hand by the realities of the Cuban horror, and limited on the other hand by his own vision ("A man is born into the world with his own pair of eyes") has reverted to a form of naturalism. The comradeship of the men shows that he has not rejected the brotherhood ethic, but once again we are confronted with the 'inevitability' of *Maggie*: the sound of the rifles "reminds one always of a loom, a great grand steel loom, clinking, clanking, plunking, plinking, to weave a woof of thin red threads, the cloth of death." This line (which possibly derives from the famous 'loom' passage of Melville's *Moby Dick*) knits together the threads of "The Price of the Harness" and of the Cuban War, where Crane as an artist found heroism, but no possibility of victory.

UNTIL the end came, in June of 1900, Crane produced no further masterpieces, although there are some miniature gems in *Wounds in the Rain* (published 1900). The spark was fading together with Crane's life. His second volume of poems, *War is Kind,* appeared in 1899, but the best of these poems had been written between 1895 and 1897. The *Whilomville Tales* (written at Brede in 1899) is a collection of stories about children in the tradition of *Tom Sawyer,* and has many humorous and tragic insights into the mind of youth. But these stories, as Grant Knight acutely perceived, "revealed his retreat from

adults to the young whom he loved." Indeed, the tradition of such stories —from Twain to Tarkington to Saroyan and Wolfe—is symptomatic of an overweening nostalgia for days gone by and unrecapturable. Crane was no longer crossing swords with society in his "beautiful war" for truth.

In 1891, the year in which Crane was writing *Maggie,* a young Chicago writer, Theodore Dreiser, who was born in the same year as Crane, composed a similar slum romance of "an Irish girl, her mother's last hope, who was seduced and disappeared." In 1900, *Sister Carrie* was published and, like *Maggie,* shocked an unsuspecting audience with its realism. The beautiful war was continuing. The sword which Crane had given to the grass was in new hands, and other writers emerged to "hasten the age of beauty and peace."

On the occasion of the 75th birthday of William Z. Foster, the editors of Masses and Mainstream *join with countless others, both here and all over the world, in wishing Bill Foster many happy returns.*

Foster's life has been one of the richest and most creative, rich in a down-to-earth working man's experience in factory, ship and railroad, and creative in the mingling of this experience with the illuminations of Scientific Socialism.

Foster's vision cut through the fogs of falsehood and deception with which the men of Big Capital surrounded American reality. He placed before his fellow-Americans the goal of a better life to be won through noble and courageous struggle. His place in our country's history will grow brighter long after the men of the Trusts and their agents who have tried to break, buy, or jail him have been forgotten. We salute a great American.

books in review

A NOTABLE BIOGRAPHY

ROBERT MINOR, ARTIST AND CRUSADER, by Joseph North, *International Publishers,* $3.00. Paper bound, $1.75.

I CAN see him still, for he does not fade, his books around him, stacked like weapons ready to hand, his great bald leonine head covered by the cap he wore indoors and out, giving of his experience from a half century of valiant struggle that took him half around the world, to some friend who had come to him for advice.

I speak, of course, of Robert Minor, one of the country's great artists, a thinker and a man of action, and because he was all three a great American and a great Communist leader. We who saw him in the last years of his life, heard his booming laugh and felt his fighting, vibrant spirit in each word he uttered, sometimes had a strange sense in talking to him that we were seeing both past and future. Out of the American years that had formed him and his family, years including the Revolution and the frontiersman ever moving westward, there lingered something almost palpable, something that brought the buckskin figure of Bob's kinsman, old Sam Houston, somehow nearer. But even stronger about him was the suggestion of something new, of a pioneer American fighting, as valiantly as ever his ancestors did, with new weapons that his country might have socialism and peace and a better happiness than it had ever had before.

This book by Joe North is a book to love and cherish, primarily because of the man it concerns but also because of the man who wrote it and the skill and feeling with which he has portrayed a great American. It is a book for those who love the party, for which Bob Minor fought and bled, but, even more, it is a book for those who know neither the man nor the party, as of now, but who love bravery and love their country. It is a book for the young. It is a book for those who admire the gallant human spirit, for those who love great adventure in thought as well as action. Let us celebrate it and talk it up and see that it gets around.

It is a beautiful book, lamentably marred by typographical errors, but

eautiful enough to soar over these aws. Much of its beauty, another ame for effective force, comes from ne cartoons and drawings of Bob Minor, those terrific communications n black and white that still speak oday with all the impact of the day f their birth. In them we have the erfect interpenetration of political nderstanding and art and it is beause of their fusion that Bob Minor's asterpieces celebrating the struggles f the Negro people, the colonial eoples and the fight for peace and ocialism, still have an undiminished npact.

This book has range and scope beuse Bob Minor's life had range and ope. We see him as artist, reporter, litor, political candidate, labor deender, see him on the St. Louis *Post ispatch,* the New York *World,* the *Liberator* and the *Daily Worker.* Alays he is vivid, always he is learng. We see him interviewing Lenin Moscow, see him menaced with ecution by the American Army ter his arrest in France at the end World War I, accompany him to est Virginia where striking miners oot it out toe to toe with company-red gunmen. We see him amidst e bullets of the Spartacus revolt in ermany, are with him in his great fense of Mooney and the Scottsro boys; see him leading the unployed in great demonstrations and are with him in prison as he fights for life through desperate illness. We experience his danger at Gallup, New Mexico, where he was beaten and left for dead in the desert by vigilantes seeking to end his help to framed-up Mexican miners, and we accompany him to Spain where he worked and fought for Spanish freedom against the hated Franco.

The book is specific, perhaps not only because that is the best way to write, but perhaps, too, because Bob loved the definite and the precise and hated windy generalities. When he wanted to know a thing he wanted to know it exactly and in the pursuit of such knowledge he learned Russian and German and French. In his constant, daily study of the great classics of mankind's liberation, he would study the same work in all three languages, when it was available, that he might apprehend it more fully. He tackled each book he read in a spirit of eager adventure. But never was the word a blueprint. Always it was seed for something new under new conditions. He had an immense zest, a constant appetite for life in all its aspects.

It is a beautiful book, let me say again, and it is beautifully written. It has substance, too, and fire and eloquence. It is a story of growth and change, of learning and development, a story not only of the progress

of Robert Minor but also of the development of the American people. It begins in Bob's native Texas near the dun-colored walls of the Alamo, where Bob learned to ride almost as soon as he could walk, and to shoot before he was out of knee britches. It tells of how he first heard of Socialism, and from the first he liked its sound, from an old Irish mule driver who gave the tall, lanky boy a lift as he plodded through the dust of the Texas plains on his way to his first job, working on the railroad. It shows his first steps as an artist, drawing his fellow workers around some evening camp fire, tells how he became a carpenter and a union man, pictures him drawing his first cartoons for the San Antonio *Gazette* and later going to St. Louis and the *Post-Dispatch* where he was to win national fame.

It was in St. Louis that the young Texan became a Socialist and there that he participated, chiefly by distributing leaflets, in his first *cause celebre,* the defense of Big Bill Haywood, his beginning in the field of labor defense, a field in which he was to become the foremost American practitioner. On the *Post-Dispatch* and later on the New York *World,* Bob became pre-eminent among America's political cartoonists. He had security, money, fame, all the adjuncts of success which he later surrendered without a qualm when he felt them detrimental to his quest for knowledge, his fight to free American life from Big Business control.

Before going to the *World,* Bob went to Paris. He was hungry for the formal instruction in art that as a poor boy who had always worked, he had never received. But he was quickly disillusioned by the dry-as-dust academicians who taught there and spent most of his time in museums rather than in class. He particularly liked Daumier and Jo North writes of Bob's thoughts at this time:

"Daumier! Who could improve on his sense of life's illimitable struggle, the snivelling bourgeois, the haggard workingmen, the old combat between the two *There* was reality, for life, as Bob saw it was an incessant struggle between being and dying, something coming into existence, something going out of it. Motion was an internal law of life, men lived in an eternal swirl; he had been in that all his years, was some part of it, and *that* he wanted to get down on canvas. That for him was art."

And later when he had become through his work on the *Liberator* one of America's great reporters, he felt much the same about that as North writes of him:

"Bob was, as writer, a foremost master of the art of reportage: he worked to

instant, the scene that he saw, into the framework of the time's principal political, social, economic factors. His eye unerringly caught those particulars that contained the general.

"The artist in him could reproduce the sight, smell, the very taste of a moment, the political thinker could convey the hour, the day, the time we live in. The miners of Matewan did not only live in the mountains of West Virginia; the stuff in them, their hardy rebelliousness, their courage against seemingly overwhelming odds, was the stuff of all workingmen in the land, all workingmen everywhere. His was no interest in the bizarre, the unique, the accidental: he searched for, and found, in each scene, in each man, the universal, the essence of the time. Life had purpose; causes created effects; everywhere the dying fought the living; in everything there was 'the fight of forces.' "

One of the best parts of this moving book is North's description of Bob during the war in Spain which he felt, unless the Loyalists won, would be the beginning of World War II. Bob was fifty-three then, no longer young, when Joe North met up with him during a Fascist air-raid in Spain where North, too, was reporting the war.

"He was even thinner than I had seen him last," Joe writes. "Under his beret he looked like the monument of an ancient Spanish patriarch. What a job Valesquez or Greco or Goya could have done on him. Strong-nosed, lean-chinned, his bearing bold and proud, he stood scanning the sky profaned by the planes, so absorbed that he did not detect my presence at his side until I touched his elbow and he turned."

Not long later, Joe and Bob were in a small car lurching through the mountains on their way to the front. "Between long silences," Joe writes, "he launched into lectures on the war as though I were an audience of thousands. Nearly deaf, he did not know that his voice boomed through the valley and into the pine trees as he talked of the Popular Front government and the responsibility of American Communists in this epic war."

Bob was a sentimental man who could love and hate with terrific intensity. He was hard on himself when he failed and he could be hard on others for the same reason. But when he loved he gave his whole self and he loved those Americans who fought against Franco. Some of them he called his sons and among them were John Gates and Steve Nelson. And later, he thought of Ben Davis as a son, too.

When Joe and Bob arrived at the front, they found that Steve Nelson had been wounded and they took him back to a Valencia hospital. North writes of the ride back and of his thoughts as he looked at the two men:

"Steve, in his early thirties, a plain

workingman in appearance, his homely face lit up by the blue of a pair of sharp eyes that could in a glance divine a man's mood, his thought. His face, severe in repose, had the quality of instant illumination at an idea or a scene or a situation, the spark revealing the quick intelligence behind the eyes. Bob, a score of years older, had a similar quality. The kinship between them was apparent. Both had been through the mill; both were exemplars of the best in the Communist tradition; both would walk into the valley of death, uncomplaining, if that would advance the lot of mankind. One had the blood of our nation's founders in his veins; the other was an immigrant; the same blood." (And Joe North, too, he is of the same blood, he is a son of Robert Minor.)

The story nears its end. "Sixty-three now, the fringe of hair on his bald head was snow white," but he drove himself as ruthlessly as before, often fighting for the rights of the Negro people, rights whose winning he regarded as absolutely fundamental to progress in America. He toured the country, making hundreds of speeches for Spain, warning that it was the prelude to World War II if Franco won. When he did win and World War II did come, Bob wrote, spoke, and organized for victory with single minded passion for he loved his country well. In 1947, while working day and night on the defense of Gene Dennis, charged with contempt of Congress and later sentenced to a year as a prelude to the Smith Act convictions, Bob Minor suffered a severe heart attack.

He was confined to his home where Lydia Minor, artist and poet and the wife who had given him strength and comfort over the years, tried hard to keep him still and quiet. But he would work and work relentlessly after his comrades were indicted under the thought-control Smith Act. Labor defense he knew better than any one and each night, sometimes until three in the morning, the dying man would work for his comrades, his party, and his country. He died in November of 1952, sixty-eight years after his birth in Texas in 1884.

"He who endures to the end," the Bible says, "shall be saved." Bob Minor endured to the end—but he did more. Those who knew him, such was his life, know beyond doubt that victory is his and ours and the American people's. And he shall be saved, perhaps not exactly as the Bible meant, but in the sense that he shall live forever in the hearts of the American people. This fine book is one guarantee of that.

RICHARD O. BOYER

WORLD JOURNEY

PARIS TO PEKING, by Joseph R. Starobin. *Cameron Associates, Inc.*, $3.75.

On January 30, 1956, the *Daily Worker* published a news dispatch from Shanghai that must have seemed weird to most American readers: "More than 2,000 representatives of Shanghai capitalists today made a round of visits to Communist Party and government organizations . . . to carry news of the successful socialist transformation of the city's industrial and commercial enterprises into state-private ownership."

Apparently it was a festive occasion: "Thousands of groups formed by all sections of the population paraded through the streets"—with banners, drum dancers, musical bands, dragon lantern dancers and "a sea of red flags." Leaders of "the Shanghai Federation of Commerce and Industry, the capitalist couriers, riding in long lines of shining motor cars decorated with portraits of Chairman Mao Tse-tung paraded through the city's main streets among the explosions of firecrackers."

On their visits these Chinese capitalist spokesmen read pledges ". . . to accept work entrusted to them by the state willingly and to become working people contributing to the cause of socialism." At one of their stops, in response to a speech by the chairman of the Shanghai Trade Union Council, they "rose to their feet, waving their hats and shouting: 'Long live Chairman Mao Tse-tung! Long live socialism!' "

Strange behavior for capitalists, indeed!

Yet, the event here reported is fully understandable and comes as no surprise to the reader who has followed Joseph R. Starobin through his interviews with Nan Han-chen, director of the People's Bank of China and chairman of the China Association for the Promotion of International Trade; and with Chang-Nai-chi, Minister of Food, a leader of the Democratic National Construction Association—political party of the "national capitalists," and formerly head of the Chekiang National Bank and owner of factories in Chungking and real estate in Hong Kong. China's national bourgeoisie, no longer faced with the competition of foreign capital and operating in a stable and expanding economy, really "never had it so good." As Chang put it: "We have a status such as we never before enjoyed." Moreover, he is reported to be "optimistic about the outlook for his class."

And this is but one of the many insights that *Paris to Peking* affords into profound, but little understood, changes now under way in many parts of our world.

Whenever a perceptive, politically

sophisticated person reports on his travels, the result is likely to be illuminating to most readers. How much more true this is when that traveler is a Marxist who has been studying and writing on foreign affairs for a decade and a half!

Although *Paris to Peking* draws upon previous trips abroad, its substance is based on the remarkable peregrinations of the author between the spring of 1952 and the summer of 1955. And they were "remarkable": to Paris, with side-trips to Berlin, Geneva and Rome; back to Paris; again to Berlin and on to Moscow; then to Peking, with long tours into the agrarian areas of North China; then to Vienna on the other side of the world; and again (via Moscow) to Peking, with more tours, this time into the industrial Northeast; a side-trip to the fighting fronts of Indo-China and an interview with Ho Chi Minh (reported in Starobin's earlier volume, *Eyewitness in Indo-China,* 1954); back to Peking; and finally back to New York!

Included in the journey were attendance at the International Youth Festival and the World Peace Council in Berlin, the United Nations Assembly in Paris, the Conference of the Asian and Pacific Regions and the Chinese Trade Union Congress in Peking, the Congress of the Peoples in Vienna, together with May Day demonstrations in Paris and Peking—and lots more. And all along the way the reader finds himself in the company of an exceptionally well-informed observer who understands and can interpret what he sees.

Although the early parts of *Paris to Peking* deal with Western Europe, this is mainly a book about People's China; two of its six chapters, "Peking, the Unbelievable" and "Vienna, and a Chinese Compound" (mostly the latter), comprise nearly sixty percent of its 280 pages. And what insight it gives into the transformation being wrought in the lives of this one-fourth of mankind on the march toward socialism, and into the profound repercussions of China's new role in international affairs!

One grasps here the irrepressible might of this vast land where the whole people is studying—the "remolding of one's thoughts" — and where criticism and self-criticism (as in the *Wu Fan* and *San Fan* campaigns against corruption in business and government) has been raised to the level of a great national movement.

One hears everywhere the people's shout of *"Ho Ping Wan Shui!"* or "Peace, Ten Thousand Years!" One learns from peasants on the countryside and from workers in the factories, from intellectuals and businessmen and soldiers and government officials and Communist Party leaders and emigré Americans, the dramatic

ory of a nation being reborn—of onomic reconstruction, democratic alition government, progress in alth, education, science and culture, d of the great upsurge of national ide and confidence among peoples d classes now being truly united r the first time in their long history. China still has a long way to go fore she catches up with the West; d Starobin is ever careful to make is clear. But all who read *Paris to king* must end with the profound nviction that catch-up and forge ead the peoples of China surely ll—and that in the process they ll illuminate the path to genuine tional reconstruction for the under-veloped countries of Asia and rica, the Middle East and Latin nerica.

Incidentally, several pages of wood-s and paper cut-outs, traditional forms with a new content, do ch to deepen the reader's apprecia-n of People's China.

The three early chapters on West-Europe and Moscow consist main-I suppose, of reportage; but they m to be dominated by the author's losophic reflections on the prob-s and perspectives of the Left.

One sees here, concretely and effec-ly analyzed, the high degree of nopolization of French capital, e-by-side with that multitude of *it bourgeoisie* out of which a Pou-e was later to emerge. One sees also the very class-conscious French proletariat — with its skillful Communist leaders, along with that precarious "balance" of class forces which underlies the chronic instability of French politics. Here, likewise, are the especially oppressive capitalism of Italy and the magnificent Italian working class—also led by Communists of great stature. Here are brief glimpses of the East German and Soviet capitals, and of Geneva. And here, above all, are the masses of people fighting powerfully and effectively for peace—in Paris, Rome, Berlin and Moscow, even as is true in Peking.

Clearly, there is no dearth of able reportage; yet, somehow, the author's account of his European travels seems to serve chiefly as a framework within which to elaborate his preconceived views on a lot of things. A chance conversation with an American naval officer in a Paris cafe provides the occasion for what amounts to a four-page "discourse" on the prospects of war and peace, NATO, the rise of the world socialist movement, and the historic roots of socialist thought in the United States. At another point, with no pretext at all, there is an eight-page semi-autobiographical commentary on the economic crisis of the 1930's, the basic contradiction of capitalism, the leading role of the working class, the patriotism of the American left, the

Supreme Court and the Smith Act, the McCarran Act, McCarthyism, and the need for coalition strategy and tactics. These and similar non-travel excursions into philosophical and political contemplation are generally quite perceptive; but I think they are somewhat over-done.

Starobin was very much impressed, and justly so, with the strength of the Left in Italy and France:

"Nothing could be done in France against the Left, against this remarkable force with its devoted rank and file, its remarkably able leaders, its legends of struggle."

And, likewise, with the unchallenged citizenship of Communists:

"Thousands of university professors, teachers, and civil servants in all domains are Communists, some of them leading ones. They would not dream of concealing this fact, nor is it it considered a barrier to their right to work."

He notes especially the indigenous *national* flavor of the French Marxist movement:

"The striking thing about Communism in France is its accent on the values, the great traditions, the national heritage of the whole of French life."

And, reflecting on the quite different status of the Communist movement in our country, he observes:

"It was only in the rediscovery of our own national essence, I had become convinced, that the American Left could make any progress."

Vaguely perceptible in most of this discussion — definitely implicit but never quite expressed—there seems to be an undercurrent of derogation of the American Left, an impatience with its lagging development and restricted influence—along with the apparent inference that these limitations stem largely, if not chiefly, from subjective errors of policy. If this is, in fact, the author's implied thesis, I wish it were brought to the surface and discussed frankly. Certain it is that American Marxists have erred often, and at times grievously. Yet, in any rounded analysis, it is probable that differences in the status of the Left in the United States and in Western Europe would find their *main* explanation in the specific historical and continuing differences in the development of capitalism in the two areas, not in the presence or absence of correct policy.

Incidentally, the almost detached "objectivity" with which Starobin contemplates the problems of the American Left is a bit unseemly, and at times slightly irritating.

The final chapter of *Paris to Peking* — "Geneva, 1955, and Thoughts for Another Book"—is in the nature of an epilogue, seemingly inspired by the historic Four-Power

Conference "at the summit." The author well understands the changed relations of world forces which imposed "Geneva" upon the reluctant "Big Three," thereby opening up renewed prospects for the consolidation of peace:

> "From Paris to Peking stretches a solidarity of peoples which rises above present differences of social system. It enlists a large part of mankind, and makes its inevitable impact across the Atlantic and the Pacific. To this new reality, America must adjust herself."

And he likewise sees the impetus "Geneva" gives to the movement of peoples—along their different national paths—to Socialism, and its impact in hastening the necessary and inevitable growth of Left influence:

> "None of this is possible without the Left, or against the Left, in any country, including our own."

There is also some more *ab extra* "lecturing" of the American Marxists; but we'll leave that, as the author says, "for another book."

Paris to Peking is obviously intended for, and is admirably suited to, an audience much broader than the Left. It is very well written, and free of clichés; and its frequent historical and literary allusions give it a quality much too rare among political writings of the Left. The book should prove illuminating and convincing even to readers who are hostile or indifferent to Marxism. I am so convinced of this judgment that I can almost forgive the occasional Olympian tone which seems to say to the non-progressive reader that *this Marxist* at least, can look objectively upon the American Left.

Let it be clear, however, that this is frankly a book from the Left, with no hint of ideological dissociation from Marxism. Indeed, the author is at pains throughout to interpret what Marxism teaches about the big problems of our day. A unique feature, for example, is the contrived — "in this connection" — introduction of a whole series of theoretical works. One finds here substantial and effective summaries of the principal ideas in Lui Shao-Chi's *How To Be A Good Communist* and *Inner-Party Struggle,* in Stalin's *The Economic Problems of Socialism in the U.S.S.R.,* and in Mao Tse-tung's *The New Democracy,* along with briefer interpretations of his *On Practice* and *On Contradiction.* Starobin is clearly seeking to give the unsophisticated reader some appreciation of the quality and substance of Marxist thought; and, although his digressions along this path detract somewhat from the exciting story of concrete experiences he has to tell, the loss is minimal and the theoretical analysis quite illuminating.

Over-all, one must assess *Paris to*

Peking as a very good and useful book. It merits wide circulation within the Left and far beyond.

DOXEY A. WILKERSON

LIVING HERITAGE

WOMEN AGAINST SLAVERY, by Samuel Sillen. *Masses & Mainstream,* Cloth, $1.50; popular edition, 75 cents.

At a time when the slaveocrats are raising their ugly heads more arrogantly than ever, Samuel Sillen has provided a new and keener appreciation of the role of women in the anti-slavery struggle. In his fine book of biographical sketches, he has let the facts of their lives pay tribute to 16 women whose contributions to this struggle were indeed historic. At the same time, he has shown the inescapable relationship between just causes, the nobility of the causes and of the women who fought for them; he has made apparent his appreciation of the special role of these women as mothers, wives and housekeepers, in addition to the struggles they lead outside their homes.

And finally, through his choice of material, he has pointed up the link between the struggle against slavery 100 years ago and against the slave mentality today.

Negro and white, Christian and Jew, from lowly to aristocratic birth, writers, poets, editors, agitators and teachers, from the South, up through Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, New York and New England, these remarkable women had at least two things in common: a deep and abiding hatred of slavery, and a passionate zeal for women's rights. They braved social and economic boycotts, insults, arrests, charges of conspiracy and treason, threats against their lives—but never for a moment wavered in their devotion to what Lucretia Mott referred to as "right principles . . . the inalienable rights of the slave."

Striking, too, is the strong Quaker strain among them — a noteworthy fact in view of the great democratic tradition of the Quakers and of their significant role today in the interests of world peace and civil liberties.

Prudence Crandall, teacher, became a bitter target for her wealthy townsmen, who suppressed her boarding school because she had opened it to Negro students.

There was Lucretia Mott, teacher and mother of six, who had to fight for the right of women to be organized Abolitionists when the men refused to recognize them, and who was denounced in the pro-slavery press as "the modern Borgia, planner of wars and murders." Maria Weston Chapman was the driving force of the Boston Female Anti-Slavery So-

ety, and the militant Grimke sisters, enegades" to their aristocratic outhern background, having witessed at first hand the horrors of avery, infuriated the slaveholders by riting and sending into the South eir anti-slavery pamphlets.

Sojourner Truth and that most agnificent of women, Harriet Tubman, were perhaps the greatest roines of their day. In the words an admiring co-worker, they had ot only *heard* of American slavery t had . . . *seen* and *felt* it." Their ssion for freedom and their inmitable strength of purpose make r one of the most inspiring chapters American history. Sojourner Truth, th her marvellous oratory, brought e Abolitionist message to lecture tforms all over the land; while rriet Tubman was called "General bman" by John Brown, for, as said, "she could command an army successfully as she had led her all parties of fugitives" to freem on some 19 hazardous trips into e South. She was able to provide own with first hand information the South's terrain which she ew as only a military leader, familiwith guerilla warfare, could know Later she served with a Negro iment in the Civil War.

Sarah P. Remond, born a free gro in Salem, Mass., was an ardent i-slavery organizer and a strikingly effective speaker. Her whole life was devoted to seeing to it that all her people were free. During 1859 and 1860 she lectured in England, Ireland and Scotland, winning support and raising funds for the struggle at home. In 1871, she obtained a medical degree in Florence, Italy, where she continued to live as a physician.

Some of the women were creative writers. One, Frances E. W. Harper, the most popular Negro poet in mid-19th century America, helped rouse the country to the cause of Abolitionism with her spendid poetry, and Sillen quotes some of her most inspiring verses.

Lydia Maria Child, one of the most prominent authors of her day, startled the American reading public with her book *Appeal in Behalf of That Class of Americans Called Africans.* In a manner all too familiar today, bookstores refused to handle her works. She went on to produce over thirty books and pamphlets on Abolitionism. In choice and ever-timely fashion she answered those reformers who championed what they called individual action as against work through organization. ". . . the simple fact is," she said, "anti-slavery societies are the steam, and they are the passengers in the cars. They may not like the puffing and the blowing, the cinders and the jolting; but the

powerful agency carries them onward."

The names of Lucy Stone, Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton are virtually synonymous with the women's rights struggles in America. But just as they were resolved to "call no man master," were they militantly devoted to the Abolitionist cause.

The fact that Ernestine Rose was at once a woman, a Jew, an Abolitionist and a crusader for social reforms in general, made her a favorite target of the conservatives. ". . . Nature has not created masters and slaves," she said. ". . . I go for emancipation of all kinds—white and black, man and woman. . . . There should be no slaves of any kind among them. There are ties that bind man to man far stronger than the ties of nation—than the political and commercial ties—ay, even stronger than the ties of relationship; and these are the ties of humanity."

Another, one who lashed out bitterly against the Mexican War, as well as slavery, was Jane Swisshelm, a pioneer from birth, forced by poverty to go to work at the age of 14. She was, Sillen relates, a talented artist who left only one painting to posterity, having been taught upon marriage that "a man does not marry an artist, but a housekeeper." Her main activity was literary, writing for and editing anti-slavery newspapers. On one occasion her editorial office was raided by a self-styled "Committee of Vigilance"; she was even burned in effigy as "the mother of the Republican Party."

If all of these women contributed to the final emancipation of the slaves, the name of Harriet Beecher Stowe stands out in bold relief. Mother of six, with the concomitant duties of housework, cooking, plus some writing on the side to supplement the family income, her passionate zeal for the anti-slavery cause led her to write *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, called by Abraham Lincoln "the book that made this great war!" Not only was its impact felt in this country (by the end of a year, over 300,000 copies were sold domestically), but no American book, Sillen tells us, ever made such an impact abroad. "Translated into many languages, it was hailed by writers the world over —Heine, Dickens, Macaulay, George Sand, the young Tolstoy. The Russian translation of 1853 was greeted by the leading revolutionary democrats as an aid in their own struggle against serfdom. . . . From London, the Negro Abolitionist, William Wells Brown wrote in 1853 that when Mrs. Stowe appeared at an overflow meeting of 5,000 at Exeter Hall, 'there was a degree of excitement in the room that can better be imagined than described. The waving of hats and handkerchiefs, the clapping of

ands, the stamping of feet, and
ie screaming and fainting of ladies,
ent on as if it had been in the
rogram. . . ."

Sillen has performed another of
is many services in the interests of
eeping alive and vibrant the Ameri-
in democratic heritage. As the Ne-
ro liberation struggle soars to new
eights, and as the battle to defend
ie "inalienable rights" of *all* Ameri-
ns is winning increasing support,
is valuable book gives added confi-
ence in today's struggles. The pas-
on for equality and justice that
otivated the 16 women described
ere lives on in our own years. The
ll call is long and led by the im-
ortal Ethel Rosenberg; it would
clude such others as Elizabeth
urley Flynn, Claudia Jones, Dr.
ary Bethune, Rosalie Ingram and
untless more. On the eve of Inter-
tional Women's Day, 1956, Sillen's
ok stands as an inspiring tribute
women of all times.

CAROL REMES

HILDHOOD SCENES

e Great Fair, Scenes from My Childhood, by Sholom Aleichem, translated by Tamara Kahana, with a drawing of the author by Marc Chagall. *Noonday Press,* $3.75.

The publication of *The Great Fair,* sixth volume by Sholom Aleichem to appear here since 1946, testifies to the unallayed hunger for English translations of a great master in Yiddish and a figure in world literature. The appetite for him grows as it is fed.

The fare is more than passing rich, and poignant, with the unmistakable flavor of his realism edged in humor. Writing it mostly in New York in his last years, Sholem Aleichem regarded this "autobiographical novel," as he called it, as "my book of books, the song of songs of my soul," and he dedicated it to his children in the hope that they "will learn something from it—to love our people and to appreciate their spiritual treasures. . . ."

When his untimely death in 1916 interrupted the work, Sholem Aleichem had brought his autobiography only so far as his 'teens. For an ordinary autobiography to stop so short would be almost fatal. but Sholem Aleichem is no ordinary autobiographer, for he is concerned not so much with himself and his personal process of growing up as with the social setting in which he was born and fledged. In a profound sense this is a biography of Jewish life in the Ukraine in the 1860's and 1870's.

People and situations are more important than events in *the Great Fair.* The narrative pace is slow, but the social and psychological web is

complex. This is a book to be sipped, not quaffed, to be read and re-read, leisurely. Of people there is a veritable gallery or album, of family, playmates, teachers, of the folk of the Jewish small-town. There are deftly and sometimes superlatively done line drawings, sketches, silhouettes, profiles and occasionally a fuller portrait, as is that of Grandfather Moshe Yossi, the poor dealer in sheepskins, the visionary and ecstatic Hasid whose grotesque inspired dancing in the streets on *Simhath Torah* (the Festival of the Rejoicing in the Torah) embarrasses the boy Sholom. Those who have read the fictional works of this author will find here the origin in real life of many a memorable figure or tale.

Generally Sholom Aleichem avoids the occupational disease of the reminiscencer who idealizes the past. There is a brief but searing chapter, "The Bird-Jew," about the sporting nobleman who drove a poor Jewish innkeeper, leasing a tavern on this lord's land, to make like a bird by jumping off a roof so that the nobleman would try his aim. "The lord fired and hit Noah in the forehead. . . . Such were the lords of long ago!" It is true that in the 1880's and 1890's Sholom Aleichem wrote in a sharper satirical vein about some of the types and situations that in this book he treats more gently. But the change, it seems to me, is not due to Sholom Aleichem's having become more conservative, or "mellow," or nostalgic, but rather to the fact that social change had made some of these types less important as obstacles to progress and enlightenment.

For the big *event* in the book is the process of social transformation that begins to affect the Ukrainian small-town as capitalism advances, that causes an exodus of many Jews to the larger cities, where the Enlightenment (the *Haskalah*) impinges upon them. We are introduced to the products of the Enlightenment, to "the pioneers" who went to a Russian school with a curriculum of secular studies and natural science, to Arnold of the suburb of Pidvorki, who preferred honesty to piety and "laughed at wealth and had no use for money," to the books, in Hebrew and Russian and even in Yiddish, that sent light through the fog of superstition, ignorance and backwardness wrapping so much of the Jewish life of the period and the place. In the way in which all great literary art is a social document that instructs as it delights the reader, *The Great Fair* is such a document.

The translation, by Mrs. Tamara Kahana, the grand-daughter of Sholom Aleichem, reads more smoothly than her translation of *The Adven*

tures of Mottel the Cantor's Son two years ago, but it is open to the same question about her condensations, elisions, and omissions. Most serious is the fact that she seems to be unaware that in Yiddish there are three parts to *The Great Fair,* of which she has given us only the first two, which stops with his childhood. Part three is half as long, and much richer, than the work as published!

In 1959 the world will be celebrating the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Sholom Aleichem. The qualitative defects in the English translations already published here lead to the hope that, for the celebration, an institutional publisher will be found to issue a six or ten volume Selected Works *responsibly* translated by a competent panel. Will a university press, or an organization, or perhaps the Jewish Publication Society of America undertake such a necessary project for the Centenary?

MORRIS U. SCHAPPES

ALMANAC

The People's Almanac, compiled by Elizabeth Lawson. *New Century Publishers.* 50 *cents.*

Ever since the colonial epoch, almanacs have played useful and distinctive roles in the lives of the American people. Unpretentious, inexpensive and informative, they told farmers when to plant crops and housewives how to eradicate stains. Some, like Ben Franklin's "Poor Richard's Almanac," gave valuable political inspiration during such decisive struggles of our nation as the Revolutionary War.

One wonders why modern progressives have not utilized such an accepted cultural medium to educate for freedom. But that need has now been fulfilled. Accurately, concisely, Miss Lawson's almanac reminds Americans of the battles they have waged for progress and a broader democracy from the founding of the first Virginia settlement during the early seventeenth century to the great strikes and social upheavals of the 1950's.

People's leaders, embalmed or forgotten by orthodox historians, come to life in the short, succinct paragraphs in which this almanac commemorates them. We feel for example, the forcefulness of Negro emancipation leaders like Harriet Tubman when we read her quoted epitaph: "On my underground railroad I never ran my train off the track, and I never lost a passenger."

The Almanac is not the sort of book that a reader will glance through and then deposit in a bookcase to gather dust. This reviewer has found it so continually useful that he has

placed it beside other regularly used reference works. Organizations will find it especially helpful in planning anniversary celebrations. Unions might well distribute it to their members.

The Almanac is profusely and delightfully illustrated. It is a monument of history in the shape of a pamphlet.

HAL HARPER

An anthology of the poetry of the Rosenberg case in the United States has been undertaken by Sierra Press.

Poems previously published, or unpublished, written since or during the campaign, should be sent to Sierra Press, P.O. Box 96, Long Island City 4, N. Y.