



Mainstream

THE HUMAN ESSENCE IN SOVIET FICTION

Charles Humboldt

LITTLE TOO SMART (a story)

Philip Stevenson

POEMS

Martin Carter, Jean Cocteau, Marguerite West

BOOK REVIEWS of James Gould Coz-
zens, Jack Kerouac, Antonio Gramsci,
Leo Lowenthal, Francois Mauriac, and
Stanley Moore

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WE HAVE NO SHINY PENNIES

LAST month we carried an urgent appeal to our readers, explaining that we had to skip the December issue for lack of available funds. We assured you that we were determined to overcome our troubles, but that your help would be an indispensable factor in our continuing publication.

As you see, we *have* come out, but again behind schedule; and now we are forced to another painful economy move. The editor of *Mainstream*, Milton Howard, has offered to relinquish his position because of our straitened circumstances which make temporarily impossible the retention of even two staff members in place of the original four. Mr. Howard will function as a member of the board of contributing editors.

Another step we had to take was to raise the price of single copies to 50c and the yearly subscription to \$5.00. Mounting production costs have made similar increases mandatory for hundreds of publications. It should be remembered, too, that because of our Left-Progressive outlook, we cannot count on the subsidies or revenue from advertising which help to sustain so many other cultural journals.

It is too close on the last issue for us to be able to report on the success of our appeal to you, but I know that it must be renewed for this one month more at least. If we can get over this hill, we'll be able to climb the mountain. It is not an easy hill. We have one working editor, and have only now begun to get the life-giving volunteer help which will permit us to publicize and promote circulation throughout the country, as well as to reach the leading figures among American intellectuals: writers, artists, scientists, and the like.

We have no professional money raisers, those pep-pills of many less worth-while projects. Nor can we put pennies in the mail to entice potential subscribers, like the only other cultural monthly in the country, *Readers Digest*. And we must have another thousand subscriptions by the end of this year.

This is not a sob story. We are going to survive. I am not going to

go over the old ground: our need for donations of all sizes; our dependence on subscriptions, yours or your friends'; and the importance of your calling the attention of others to creative work, articles and reviews appearing in our pages, which might be of specific interest to them. You know all that, and as mature and alert people you know what has to be done by all of us, readers and writers alike.

Next month, we will carry a brief prospectus of our plans for expansion. We will tell you what articles are in the making, and what material we have already in hand. We will tell you how you can help us even in that field, by letting us know what specific things in the magazine you have liked or disliked, and what you want to see appear. We are much closer to being able to satisfy such demands and we will make every effort to do so.

A little patience, a little confidence, and a few more dollars will do the trick. Will you help?

CHARLES HUMBOLDT

MORE THAN BREAD ALONE

CHARLES HUMBOLDT

THERE are some books whose influence, for good or bad, is always argued before their intrinsic merit can be examined. Whether they should be so dealt with may be open to question; but the choice is not arbitrary and one ought not to be indignant about it on aesthetic grounds. Vladimir Dudintsev's *Not By Bread Alone* is an instance of such a novel. Its literary qualities, which have hardly been judged, were clearly subordinated to its interest as a social phenomenon, or rather as witness to a most significant one. The distinction is useful because the excitement which this book aroused gives it an unnatural aura of something absolutely unique. It was a bombshell, a cry of revolt, it rocked the Soviet Union; it was practically a modern shot heard round the world. One hardly knew whether one was reading a critic or the blurb on the dust jacket.

The author, in his preface to the American edition,* tells us how horror-stricken—they are his words—he was when he read the sympathetic reception he was getting in the “free world.” But such ax-grinding apart, it is still unfair to his novel to view it as an opening gun in the battle against bureaucracy, a rocket which could only be fired after the 20th Congress. Rockets are not conceived without considerable time-taking research and satellites are born in a climate of inquiry warmed by the thoughts of many like-minded people. Books too are often long in the writing; whether this one was published after a certain speech is ultimately not the point. It was surely being born long before. And though it is the first to have reached the American public at large, it is one of a number which have appeared in the Soviet Union, along with short stories and poems of similar intention. The matter cannot be viewed tactically.

* *Not By Bread Alone*, by Vladimir Dudintsev. E. P. Dutton and Co. \$4.95.

To tell the truth, it would have been better had the Soviet leadership not so viewed it. Or did they? From the remarks about Dudintsev in Khrushchev's speech of last August, it is hard to believe that he read the book carefully, if at all. Perhaps the section in which they appeared was prepared for his approval, as is the case with many overworked political leaders. Unhappily, it sounds as though it had been mulled over by the very same sort of functionaries of literature whom Dudintsev describes as having been entrenched in another field. Dudintsev is charged with being one of those who "latch onto the shortcomings and mistakes of individuals and dump them on a single pile without bothering to discriminate or interpret, frightening themselves and trying to frighten others." From the reactions of Soviet readers to the book and its popularity, attested to by our correspondent Ralph Parker (*Mainstream*, July 1957), one would gather that the only ones who were frightened and with just cause, were those whose shortcomings were described by the author.

The latter is further reproached for writing a book "which reactionary forces abroad are now trying to use against us." The Soviet reader is said to receive the impression that the writer "is not concerned about eliminating the shortcomings in our life, that he deliberately exaggerates and takes malicious delight in these shortcomings. Finally the editors of the magazine *Novy Mir* in which the book was serialized are warned to be more attentive to questions of principle in literature."

With the best of will it is hard to see the justice or wisdom in this criticism. It suggests a narrow pragmatic function for art which neither Marx, Engels, nor Lenin, ever proposed, evoking an air of emergency to cope with which is the death of literature. But even on the plane of sturdy common sense, can one really believe that Dudintsev's book is more disturbing than certain matters revealed at the 20th Congress by those leaders who felt it harmful, no, impossible to conceal them any longer? In the very speech which disposes of Dudintsev we are told that those whom Stalin delegated to supervise agriculture had great shortcomings from him and engaged in misrepresentation. And we learn of those who, having lost contact with the people's interests, can cause irreparable damage thereby. Even more recently, the Central Committee's resolution on Marshal Zhukov speaks of the sycophants and flatterers who saw to it that he was "praised to the sky in lectures, reports, in articles, films and pamphlets. . . ." How is this less frightening than that a writer should describe the efforts of the personnel of the ministry and two technical institutes to force into production the det-

tive invention of a big shot, at no matter what economic and human cost? Particularly when he relates how they do not succeed?

The charge that reactionary forces will make use of this book does not hold water. What will they not make use of? Besides, is association to be a criterion of integrity any more than of guilt? Especially when the sympathy of the parties of the second part is undesired? Yes, but one should wash dirty linen at home, as that arch pragmatist Napoleon is reported advising. (The authority for this is Balzac's *Vautrin* in the guise of a Spanish priest.) But the trick with dirty linen is not to worry about where it is washed; once it is clean, the neighbors will stop laughing. (They are not so jolly right now.) And if some writer wants to help in the rinsing, for god's sake don't shove him away. Where is a writer to wash linen if not in public?

The word of caution to the editors of *Novy Mir* is troubling. Can it mean that they should not have printed *Not by Bread Alone*? What else can one infer when they are told to rebuff the unsound and harmful tendency of which it is a prime example? In that event, no book. Would Soviet literature—indeed, Soviet life—be better for the denial of its right to publication? I doubt it. For what is involved is hardly the privilege of the Soviet state to protect itself against subversion, nor are the editors accused of lack of vigilance to it. All that they did was run a novel about an issue which has become the subject of debate in most socialist countries. Let Mao Tse-tung define it for us: "A dangerous tendency has shown itself of late among many of our personnel—an unwillingness to share the joys and hardships of the masses, a concern for personal position and gain." Note that Mao does not say "among a few" but "among many." In other words what we have here is a "contradiction among the people," not a singular but a typical one, and therefore ripe for the very kind of fiction for which the Soviet leadership has been calling. Therefore, when a writer addresses himself honestly to so crucial a subject, one should not squeeze the evaluation of his work down to the pseudo-question: to whom does the book give comfort? but rather widen it to the essential one: has it told the truth? But he has not told the whole truth, the complaint runs. Well, one shouldn't expect that of a work of fiction where the element of emphasis, and therefore of apparent distortion, is fruitful for both meaning and art. Also, in a healthy creative work the half truth implies its other half, its opposite; the act of denouncing is itself a promise; anger is construction.

In his June article Ralph Parker supplies an account of the Soviet

leaders' anxiety with respect to the influence of such books as Dudin-sev's. He says they feared a "dangerous disparity between the growth of a critical spirit in the public and the tempo with which bureaucratic abuses in the administration and managerial systems could be removed." The explanation is persuasive. (If anyone here is inclined to be sarcastic about it, let him remember that he is living in the land of the Power Elite, the Organization Man, the Pentagon and the State Department and that the highest title our senators can dig up for the technical guardian of our basic—no longer marginal—freedom is Czar of the missile program.) But the problem is not purely a practical one, and so not amenable to simple administrative action or disapproval. The voicing of a critical spirit in the Soviet people involves small risk compared to the opportunity it offers the leaders to build a firmer bridge between the intellectuals and the people (in that the former will identify themselves more surely with all the people's interests) and to increase the people's understanding of every aspect of social life (by planning with and suggesting to them methods for the gradual elimination of its negative features). Otherwise what responsibility is allowed the writer to fulfill?

SO many people have read the book around which we have been skating, or have seen reviews of it, that it seems unnecessary to recapitulate its story. Instead, we will examine rather briefly its main characters and one or two others.

Drozdov. He is the villain of the piece. His eminence stems not from his appearing more often or from his acting worse than his confreres but from his being the only one among them who expresses their view of themselves. It is his consciousness which covers for the most capable and the meanest of them. His is not an evil or vicious personality. Others' suffering or frustration does not delight him unless he has convinced himself that they deserve their pain by defying common sense that is by challenging his view of how things should run smoothly. To call him a saboteur obscures the sense in which he is one. The thing he would desire is visible harm to his country. He is an extrovert par excellence, and so it is perfectly natural for him to believe that what is good for Drozdov is good for socialism. His flaw shows only where there is a divergence between these two ends and he must decide for the former. Since this is a simple act of self-preservation for him, we should not expect him to suffer conscience pangs, though he will try much to bring the goals together again, at least in his mind. And when the struggle with his dangerous adversary, the inventor Lopat

ends with the latter's victory, he is not disheartened. It was a good fight, requiring all his manipulative resources. If Lopatkin was right, he was right for the wrong reasons; and the proof is that Drozdov is now Deputy Minister where he had been head of a department before.

We meet Drozdov first as the general manager of a giant industrial plant in a small Siberian town. Though he will rise higher in the world of offices, he will not again be so confident of the natural ties of ability to well-being. The author soon gives us a hint of the revenge the human side of nature will take on Drozdov. A few days after his courtship and unofficial marriage to his beautiful and romantic wife, the manager feels that he must break up her dream of impossibly idyllic human relationships. She has questioned him about his tactless handling of his subordinates. His explanation to her is at the same time his picture of himself.

A man standing before me is either a good or bad builder of Communism, a good or bad worker. I have the right to think of him so, because I cannot think of myself in any other fashion either. I live only as a worker, at home or at work. I am nothing but a worker. I get rung up at night when I am simply a sleeping man, and reminded that I am a worker! We are engaged in a race with the capitalist world. First one must build the house and then one can hang up the pictures. Have you ever seen one of those sturdy carpenters who smell of honest sweat, and who build houses? I am such a carpenter. The whole truth is in my hands. I will build the house and then you will begin to hang up little pictures and little ornaments on the walls, and I shall be forgotten. Or, rather, we shall both be forgotten, for you are my dearest better half and will share my fate.

Another time, when he has been reading *The Short Course of the History of the Party* and expounding upon it to Nadia, she says timidly: "But you've got things mixed up. It is not the things themselves which make up the material basis but the relationships between people in connection with things." Drozdov answers: "Let there only be things, then we needn't worry about there not being people enough to enter into relations in connection with them!" Intelligent and convincing is Drozdov, so that Nadia cannot think of how to answer him. Yet already her feelings, which have been the butt of his implicit ridicule, are stirring against him; from now on she will be somewhat annoyed that, despite all his sympathetic qualities, he sings so badly.

A bit later but still quite early in the novel, on the eve of his departure for Moscow to assume a lower-paying but key post in "the Ministry," Drozdov makes the speech which is to be his most interesting utterance.

Here he is self-perceptive in a way that is not characteristic of him. He has worked out a rationale for his behavior which is compounded of self-irony and self-admiration. He also gives himself a meet place in history. He is having morning tea with his wife after a night of strenuous work which has allowed him almost no time for sleep. Nadia has just reproached him for overdoing everything. He answers:

"It's almost the end, Nadia. The finish. The last lap!"

"I don't understand."

"Before I leave, I must bring off something that will leave Ganichev [his successor] so far behind that he will never catch up. That will be Drozdov's parting shot!"

"Why do you say things like that?" Tears glistened in Nadia's eyes. "You know that you are far better than you make yourself out to be!"

"I am what I am!"

Drozdov got up and went to the sideboard standing between the two windows. He looked at himself in the mirror from under his brows as if to butt at his reflection, touched his temples, threw back his head, and pushing his hand into his belt, said:

"Here I am. Standing face to face with myself. Now I will add to my portrait by a description of my innermost being." He closed his eyes, then slowly opened them again. "I see many deficiencies in this man; they are remnants of the past. This is a man of the time of transition. There are some slight traces of what used to be called 'ambition.' And I myself can't understand how one can live without it. But the men of the future will understand. I want to do better than Ganichev. And I want no one to have anything but a good opinion of my work. I am pleased when I get promotion or any well-deserved rewards. These are testimonials to my good qualities. I am glad to go to Moscow, too, and I am quite sure I shall do well there. There are many weak spots in me, because I love life. Touch me where you like, you will always find a living, tender, sensitive spot. That's why I need armor, like a snail. This armor is my strong will, which is not a bad thing for a man to possess. It holds him in check. And I shan't overstep my limits. Of course I shan't tell anyone that I want to fire a farewell salute. Only a wife may know that sort of thing. As you see, I am still young, and human passions are not unknown to me. For me, of course, there is no road to Communism. I am already too much encrusted; enclosed in a shell, a coat of armor. But as a builder of Communism I am useful, indeed first-rate. That is where this man fits in."

A good deal is accomplished in this compact revelation. I have called Drozdov an extrovert, and this speech offers enough proof of that of him: his healthy, yet "happy" belief that his promotions are testimonials to his worth; his eagerness for approbation; his pathetic conviction

that what is actually anxiety is warrant of his love of life; his pride in the strength of his will, by which he keeps the quivering, reckless love of life in check; his yearning to be human, all-too-human (a desire he can only put into words by abusing a familiar quotation); and finally his complacent acceptance of his limitations, once he has made clear that he conceives them to be historically conditioned virtues.

So much for his character and its appetite for self-deception. But the author has also endowed Drozdov with the capacity to mix his illusions with recognition, to stand outside his skin for a moment and see himself as "a man of the time of transition." One need not justify this apparent reversal of character. It is the privilege of any good dramatist—and writers of novels may be such in their crucial scenes. For some general truths to be grasped effectively, they must be spoken or acted out by a protagonist, even though they transcend his "psychology." In Drozdov's case the insight is mingled with an amount of obvious rationalization, so that we may accept his being in a sense what he says he is and yet suspect his smug evaluation of his function in socialist society. He admits to some stains of ambition, but that is because he wants to see this as a—for the present—positive trait. If he were a more cultured man he might even think of himself as an Elizabethan type, creative in administration, a shrewd and resplendent lord of productivity. Or an American captain of industry before the era of imperialism.

Then there is his desire to attach himself to a coming time from which he knows himself to be excluded even in spirit. Note the equivocal phrase: "But the men of the future will understand." He is sensible enough to know how different he is from a true Communist, either from the heroes of the Revolution, the makers of the present, or the men and women of the future. That is how the sentence is to be taken. But it has also the overtone of his wanting to believe that the future will pardon him his faults. Why? Because they are integral to the present; his opportunism is a necessary adjunct to his ability and energy. He must think that all others who possess the virtues which make him a successful manager will share the failings that turn him into a coarse individual and a criminal citizen. For this builder of Communism is a burrower. The lion is a fox, and the self-styled "man of the time of transition" is a quite transitory phenomenon of his period.

Such comments can wait though. The novelist doesn't appeal to history in the abstract to enforce his judgments. If they are valid, it is because one or another of his characters wills or feels them, even though

initially his or her desire may take the form of a doubt. Nadia is almost convinced by her husband's speech; but it was too perfect. "He would have done better not to answer at all!"

From now on he is unable to control the impulses that result in the destruction of his personal happiness. Visiting Nadia in the hospital, where she has been taken because of an emotional crisis during her pregnancy, he loads her with office gossip that exposes his interest in bureaucratic strategy and his indifference to intrinsic merit, whether of men or vital machines. He also twits her on her equalitarianism because she has refused to occupy a ward by herself to the discomfort of ordinary patients who have been put in the corridor.

Absorbed in maneuvers, he ignores the pit. As chief of the Moscow Ministry's technical department and a colonel to boot, he accuses the inventor Lopatkin of political instability because this crank refuses to accept an unfavorable official decision which he believes to have been arrived at dishonestly. Drozdov even has an edifying example to bait him with: the building ant which, along with thousands of its fellows in collective effort, by trial and error and in due time, accomplishes so much. But by then Nadia has transferred her allegiance to Lopatkin and warned him of the scheming against him in which her husband is involved.

No matter what happens to Drozdov in the way of advancement, the judgment which Nadia passes upon him is irrevocable. By leaving him for Lopatkin she tells him, who prides himself on his strength, that he is something less than a man. "The male in him had been hurt and had screamed with pain. He had suddenly experienced a helpless grief, had felt himself to be an old man unwanted by anyone." It is his misfortune to be most human when he is made to feel the poverty of his human resources. Of course, he recovers from the realization and counts on circumstances rather than love to return his wife to him. She will not leave her child and he will make no scenes. He even thinks Lopatkin's arrest will help him with Nadia!

Finally he knows that the juice of life has run out of him. "Was it possible that all his life he had never experienced a genuine emotion such as theirs? . . . It was terrible imagining how Nadia might have looked at *that man*. . . . Then he suddenly understood quite clearly that feelings do exist." He remembers their little boy Nikolashka hugging Nadia's dress. "No doubt it was different between those two, a little different. But it all came from the deadly emotion of love, without which that little being, also, would have died. And she, too. 'But I did not die . . .'" He did not die. That is his boast and his despair.

The utter opposite of Drozdov is the disillusioned inventor Professor Busko whose all-purpose fire-extinguishing compound he has given up trying to have accepted by the technical bureaucrats (he more than hints it was stolen and sold to a foreign country). Dudintsev's attitude toward this character is clearly ambivalent. One might almost say that the Professor is dearer to him than Lopatkin and Nadia. He is the quintessence of integrity and has an immeasurable gift for enthusiasm. He is innocent of the moral conflicts that sweep through the minds of modern heroes; compromise is simply inconceivable to him; it is easier for him to die than to surrender. How attractive is this crochety old man whose worldly shrewdness pretends to resist his childlike soul. In him Christian charity is replaced by a boundless generosity toward those he values. "We came together," he tells Lopatkin, "because I liked you. That was all. I like visionaries who live not by bread alone." And teaches his stranded protégé how to live on the "inventor's diet" of black bread and fish oil when funds run out.

No wonder that, finding Balzac's *Lost Illusions* on Nadia's bookshelf, he exclaims, "How I love it!" It is plain that he sees himself and Lopatkin reflected in David Séchard. "Not all inventors," he reads aloud, "possess the grip of a bulldog which will die before it lets go what it has once got its teeth into." At which Dudintsev observes that even in literature Busko understood only what was related to inventors. The remark is not quite true, but it does catch the humor as well as the pathos of the Professor's attachment to Dmitri.

Though incorruptible, Busko does know something of the world which Dmitri has still to learn. When Lopatkin asks of the people who acquiesce in the blocking of his design: "Is there not a single honorable man among them?" the old man gives him a lesson which all of us could use.

Being honorable is only a fifth of what one has to be. . . . Most of them are, but not all. That is only the first phase of the screening. Then courage is necessary also, and that is not given to everyone. Furthermore, brains are needed. We have seen plenty who had courage but who brought the very idea of criticism into discredit by their foolish clamor. Finally, even those who are honorable, courageous, and shrewd may be prisoners of established formulas. That is another hitch for you. The same Avdiyev—professor, doctor, a traditional authority—may tell a man of that sort that Lopatkin's idea is no good and that Lopatkin himself is an imposter, whereupon this honest man will honestly and with a consciousness of doing his duty beat Dmitri with a wagon-tongue until he turns up his toes.

Handy as this short sermon is for its practical sense, it is more valuable for its wisdom. It rejects a holier-than-thou interpretation of human action and questions the right of the moralist to pass excessive judgment on the "way of the world," or on anything else for that matter. It credits men less for their righteous outrage than for their desire to understand how complex are the causes of what one has to be indignant about. One can accept the point more readily because it is made not by an apologist but by someone whom the author in tender joking calls a philosopher of antiquity.

Yet Busko is fatally wounded, and by now there is more than a touch of the paranoiac in him, so that it is hard to tell whether the blows dealt him have made him what he is, or whether he provokes his own delusions. After Nadia's first visit to the house in search of Lopatkin, he hides his notebooks under the floorboards; when she sends money to Dmitri without disclosing her identity, he suspects a plot from abroad. Even at the opera he sees enemies and rival inventors in the boxes and balconies.

Busko's delusions are, of course, symptoms of mental disorder. There are also, however, Dudintsev's way of symbolizing the Professor's misprizing of the average human, his readiness to discover weakness in all but the creative or innocent, and the inward-directed drive of his harsh disdain of others. Only when one of their fellow lodgers, aware of these straits, leaves a stock of potatoes for the inventors, will he admit that an occasional commodity-minded "first story" person may climb to the second flight of imagination. Then: "He is no savant, but he will understand everything!" Here his fire for some permits him to retain his composure for too many.

The Professor tells Lopatkin that they were both born too soon. Better to hitch one's talent to a less selfish time. But his own nobility is a quarrelsome, egocentric virtue for which society is little more than a cold or neutral decor. In this sense, he is outdated, his eyes on the future, his angry heart in the past. He urges Lopatkin to fight but knows he can only destroy himself. When the engineer Galitsky says to Dmitri, "You have not turned savage like some inventors," he is of course regretting Busko, whose pride was too intransigent toward a new world which still had some of its old skin to shed. But Busko was more than a savage. He is the all-too-human creature whom Drozdov wanted to be, and his sweetness will remain on earth long after he and his life and invention are consumed.

IT SHOULD be apparent by now that Busko is a buffer for Lopatkin. By having the latter escape, though narrowly, the fate of his friend, the author seems to have anticipated the criticism that was directed against him, nevertheless. He admits that Lopatkin might have become a Busko, but then gives him qualities that should belong to "the soul of man under socialism."

Lopatkin is a lone wolf by circumstance rather than preference. A war veteran and physics teacher in a small Siberian town, he does not fit into the routine expectation of the men in the central institutions to whom his invention (a machine for the automatic centrifugal casting of pipes) is presented. So his position, not his character, is the first obstacle to their recognition of him. This, and the fact that one of the big shots of technical research in Moscow, Avdiyev, has been working on a related problem. When his defender Galitsky deplores his hermit-like behavior and his refusal to participate in fruitful collective work—the cross-fertilization of thought, as Galitsky puts it—Lopatkin answers that Avdiyev had denied him the opportunity for such an exchange. While he resists the idea that a collective opinion must be right just because it is collective, he would have sprung at an invitation which the cabal around Avdiyev never offered him. He makes no virtue of his solitary position nor boasts of his lonely nature. At one moment he says explicitly that he is being unjustly branded as an individualist. Here Dudintsev is warding off the critical eye. On the other hand, without exalting the professional "outsider" of contemporary Western literature, he does call for a less censorious view of deviations from conventional ideals of conduct and a franker welcome to human variety. His hypocrites flourish in the beams of propriety, while Lopatkin is forced to explain his quirks to their derision.

Lopatkin is close enough to Busko in temperament for the latter to shout to him in the middle of an argument: "Look at me as much as you like! Make what faces you choose! What you see is your own future. And I look at you and make a face. Because in you I see my own damn-silly past!" The old Balzacian is mistaken. It is true that Dmitri's intensity is so great as to make him seem pathologically obsessive; his concern for his country is almost reduced to a point of personal honor. (Dudintsev is aware that this may occur to the reader, for he makes Lopatkin's earlier filing of his patent an obstacle to the machine's being built, no matter who—say Avdiyev—gets credit for it. Thus, any doubt of Dmitri's selflessness is taken care of by a rather technical device. On the other hand, Lopatkin's desire for personal

recognition is not ignoble. What counts is not that one wants fame, but what one thirsts to be honored for.)

But Lopatkin is endowed with just enough self-awareness to permit him occasional ironic looks at his situation, his friend, his own low boiling point, and generally the surprising attraction of the serious for the comic in life. Offered the chance, he simply refuses to become a tragic figure or even a terribly unhappy one. It would never occur to him to revenge himself on his—and society's—enemies by displaying his failure like a wound. His favorite image is a long road which he is prepared to travel. Nor does he see enemies where the Professor does. That is why he can think what he would not say to the old man: "It is very good that I found you: I can turn the rudder away in time—away from your old chest, closer to my fellow men, even if they are only these ones here, with their bell buttons on the door. I will look for kindness and fidelity in them to the end; they are here and I cannot live without them."

Lopatkin's hatred toward Drozdov, and toward Nadia until he has ceased to identify her as her husband's wife, springs from his contempt for all those whose loyalty to socialism depends on its supplying them with the commodities which they might well have under capitalism. Under true Communism, he feels, "some objects of crazy luxury" may even disappear since they are nothing but products of idleness. Lopatkin is no political economist, and one gains nothing by arguing with him that socialism must satisfy many more material needs, and for many more human beings, than capitalism can fulfill. In any case, he is a champion of productivity and he enjoys the good things of life as much as anyone, when he can get them. Yet he will readily give up his pleasures if they impede his work. Furthermore, he believes that creativity, the human jewel, is common ore; that is the source of his faith in ordinary people and in socialist society. "Man must be a comet," he thinks as he listens to a piano concerto, "shining brightly and joyously, not afraid to burn up his precious material energies." If that is a little high-flown nineteenth century as Drozdov would say, remember that Lopatkin is a man whose energies have been released and who feels the joy of the liberation.

The reader may recall the resourceful battle which Dmitri wages in a Siberian small town, provincial capital, Moscow, and prison labor camp against the clique which wants his invention suppressed. Some local critics have found the story tedious; they would probably think David Séchard's trials with his father, Petit-Claud and the Cointet

equally tiresome. The amount of technological detail is noteworthy, reflecting as it does the author's confidence that the principles at least will be grasped and interest his Soviet audience. (Our American counterpart is James Gould Cozzens' flair for the settlement of estates and the administration of trusts. The writers' choices are appropriate for their respective societies.)

Lopatkin wants to see his machine put into production, hell or high water. Beyond that, however, he is out to break the hold of the "invisible bureaucracy" which he believes has replaced the wreckers of the earlier Soviet novels. Unless Dudintsev and other writers like him are persuaded to drop this theme, one may expect a considerable and perhaps more subtle expansion of it. (No condescension is implied. This is the author's first novel; and in any event certain problems have to be attacked bluntly before their human and political complexities are examined with greater delicacy.)

Since Dmitri has staked so much on his faith in people, he cannot bear to think that there are strategically placed individuals who are not only unworthy of confidence but who spread a poison of distrust wherever they walk. He does not ask that socialist society justify itself by providing special freedoms for inventors—or scientists or artists—on the ground of their practical or basic value. He does demand that creativity be honored as part of the general respect which men should share for one another, irrespective of their social tasks. He is fighting for the quality of Soviet life.

Lopatkin may remind one of Daniel D'Arthez. Balzac's identification with that figure suggests a similar indulgence on Dudintsev's part. But there is this difference between the royalist writer and our inventor. D'Arthez' integrity exists in a small circle of truly lost illusions and a lost cause. Lopatkin's valor has a future.

Now for a negative note. Of Dmitri's relations with women, one can only say that he behaves like a wet sock. The fault is not his but the author's, for the latter does not even suggest that Lopatkin's preoccupation with his work might account for the contrast between his creative intensity and his passive, almost absent-minded dealings with the woman who loves him and the girl he thinks he loves. Nor is his conflict about Nadia and Jeanne Ganichev convincing; on the contrary, it is full of false notes and juvenilia. There is nothing wrong with his sexuality, except that it has no ambition. He must be lead to pleasure like a horse to water. He is moved by Nadia's devotion rather than by his passion for her. Almost at the very end, after vacillations that would enrage a

masochist, he asks: "But do I love Nadia? . . . Yes, I must have got used to her. But is that the right thing?"

Then who is Dmitri's true love, his flame, for whom he is tempted to give up Nadia? A young student on whom he had a crush when she was in her last year at the Muzga high school, who rejected him because he was not a success, and who now in Moscow reproves him because he doesn't do things as others do. It is distasteful to hear the scarred survivor of battles grow maudlin over his Jeanne, his pretty little philistine, having pangs because he hates to see her perish (spiritually, of course) in the arms of a rather complacent young army captain. One's almost tempted to believe that the translation stands in the way here. Could all this have been written for comedy? Only once, after telling Nadia that he has been holding hands with Jeanne, does a "sharp inner voice" warn him: "You are trampling on something with your clumsy boots again." Nadia herself tells him that it only occurred to him to ask her to marry him because his childish rival had left town.

MEANWHILE the sacrificial tolerance imposed upon Nadia becomes her poorly. It turns a normal, responsive woman into an incurable mother. For that she has the author alone to thank. Otherwise, she is portrayed as a person in whom instinct and principle must unite for her to live. Some people find the reconciliation easy, but that is usually because they accommodate their principles to their desires, or because their desires have always been weak. Neither is true of Nadia. When we see her first she is enjoying the sun and snow of Muzga and the mink coat which Drozdov bought her in Moscow. The mink is not an object of conspicuous display to her, but one of nature's gifts to please her with softness and warmth. She went to live with Drozdov, in love with his vigor which reminded her of a Jack London hero. There is an element of submissiveness here, but it is more reasonable than sick. The proof is her quick disenchantment, once she discovers how purely manipulative is her by-then-husband's mastery of men. It is characteristic of her that she should become physically ill when she denies her true feelings, as when she speaks against Dmitri in the school where they are both teaching. Also typical of her is that her increasing wrath at Drozdov's treachery toward Lopatkin should find expression in her utter sexual revulsion for him and a welling up of passion for Dmitri. Immediately after Nadia is reproached by her unsuspecting friend Valya, herself in love with Dmitri, for her callousness toward him, she has a long quarrel with Drozdov and forces him to cry mercy. In the course of this scene, she shouts at him: "Do you respect any human

being at all—except yourself?” When in self-defense he calls himself a descendant of the common herd, she answers: “The common herd is not necessarily the same as the poor. On the contrary, the poor think a great deal and speculate about their own fate, or even about the destiny of mankind. . . . The common herd is something quite different, don’t you think?” Those who have read Dudintsev’s book will understand in what way Nadia uses the phrases “the poor” and “the common herd.” The first she uses as John Reed did when, writing of the show of grief at the Brotherhood Grave of revolutionary fighters, he said: “The poor love each other so!” The “common herd” has an old fashioned ring to it. (Nadia, too, is a devotee of *Lost Illusions*.) It is intended to represent the loosely defined mass of conformists in bourgeois society, enemies of art, science and the human spirit. Since the conception of the herd arose during an early period of intellectual revolt against bourgeois convention, mediocrity and meanness, it inherited an aristocratic tinge, a tendency to associate cultural exclusiveness with those who did not dirty their hands with trade or labor. However, the great writers who shared the prejudice and expressed it in their polemics and in some discursive passages, were realists enough to abandon it in the body of their novels. In Nadia it exists as a literary echo, no more.

In fact, Nadia’s affection and confidence in ordinary people—workers, clerks, lesser technicians, all those who are still liable to the insolence of office and the spurns that patient merit takes—is one of her most engaging traits. Even before her acute quarrel with her husband, she has begun to distrust him. By then she has visited the worker Sianov’s family, where Lopatkin is a boarder, and noted their tender care for the struggling inventor. Similarly, her concern for Lopatkin and her avoidance of Drozdov’s attentions are related to the hospital scene in which she has refused to be placed in a ward by herself at the expense of the other patients’ comfort.

What makes Nadia so attractive is the way in which her whole body responds to her convictions, the mingling of her belief and her sexuality. She will take any risk for the joy of acting out her love, as when she sells Drozdov’s present, the mink coat, to Mrs. Ganichev, and sends the money as an anonymous gift to Lopatkin. Preparing herself to visit Lopatkin at Busko’s house, she answers her husband impatiently when he asks her jocularly where she is rushing to. Arranging her hair, powdering her flushed cheeks, she attempts to “understand the strange and crazy woman who had appeared in her mirror in recent days and who had frightened her.” It is she who assumes the initiative with Dmitri

when the Professor has left them alone on some pretext. And as she takes him to her, she remembers the words of her friend Valya: "For one moment of happiness with him I would give up everything." But it is she and not Valya who wrests that happiness for herself.

She has no shame of her gratified body. When the military prosecuting officer asks her whether she has slept with Dmitri, she hesitates only because she senses a threat to the man she loves in the question. (Lopatkin has already denied their intimacy, a lie which condemns him more than her honesty does.) Her love now radiates into her thoughts about everything. Thumbing through foreign technical journals, she suggests the application of Lopatkin's invention to double-layer pipes adapted to various industrial purposes. She has achieved a perspective denied the defeated and dried out Busko, to whom she says: "You must carry on the work the country needs, even when it rejects your achievements. Even when it condemns you out of the mouth of those of its servants and judges who pronounce unjust sentences in its name. Your service will carry weight only if you can achieve what now appears impossible." She, too, is defending the quality of life.

I don't want to belabor the matter of Nadia's endurance of Lopatkin's insulting inertia. Whether such self-infliction is of interest in general is not in question. Here it is incongruous, inadequately prepared for and clumsily handled. For otherwise she is very intriguing to us. I would not try to say how typical she is of the new Soviet woman. But she does represent the value which a Soviet writer places upon mutuality in sexual love.

DUDINTSEV'S skillful treatment of his cast of minor characters has been ignored. Most officials and employees of the unidentified Ministry and the two technical institutes in which the intrigue against Lopatkin is brought to a head with his imprisonment and frustrated on his return. On one side are the members of the cabal; on the other, the men who have kept alive the aims of the Revolution or whose personal loyalty and decency make them rise to the inventor's defense. Communist Party members are on both sides, although those in the "conspirators' group" are rarely designated as such and then only by implication. Dudintsev makes it clear that he considers these to have sullied their allegiance. Between these groups are a few figures of the passive bureaucracy, men of no imagination, no curiosity, and no more will to set things right than to harm anyone if it requires the least effort to do so.

The narration of the struggle between the supporters and the ene-

mies of Lopatkin, and the conflicts that break out within the official faction, is extremely important because it enables us to see the *how* of injustice in a socialist society and the maze of motives that lead to the fateful verdict. The frameup of Lopatkin is accomplished in self-defense and out of malice, but the chief judge's decision is made final though inertia. The range of responsibility mitigates no one's blame. It does suggest a healing process other than puerile righteousness.

The peculiarity of Dudintsev's lesser figures is more pronounced than that of his hero and heroine. Here he shows his flair for crazy gestures and broad comedy in the old style. In his gallery is the Deputy Minister Shutikov, who advises Lopatkin to drop his campaign against Avdiyev: "The scientists are scientists. They are an iceberg that has sunk many a *Titanic*. . . . You are a salmon! The trouble is only that the most stubborn salmon, you know, those five-foot specimens, once they have discharged their roe, sometimes float away to the sea stone dead. . . . It's time you were out of short pants. . . . I should be glad to entrust you with responsible work." Walking to the door, "he shook Dmitri's hand, held it for a moment in his own and suddenly put on his beaming golden smile, the smile of a man who loves children." As Galitsky says of him ironically, he is an expert in establishing relations between people.

At the other end of the hierarchic order is Shutikov's assistant, "the ministerial barometer," from whose manner toward them petitioners can read their fortune or doom. He informs Lopatkin that he, Vadia Nevraev, has drafted the decision to try out Lopatkin's machine before the conference which has been called to arrive at any decision whatsoever. When Lopatkin is ready for the kill, he no longer knows him. When Dmitri is restored and it looks as though repercussions will be felt in the Ministry, he immediately asks Shutikov for a transfer. Dmitri's comment is the best that can be said of him: "It is impossible to be angry with the man." The best is the worst. He is beneath anger.

The designers Maxiutenko and Uriupin are birds of a feather. The first is indebted to Drozdov for getting him out of scrapes due to his amorous vagaries. He has designed Avdiyev's defective pipe casting machine. Uriupin, a disappointed "originator," offers to work with Maxiutenko on Lopatkin's superior device. The latter catches them concocting an amalgam of Lopatkin's plan, a long discarded machine, and a few superfluous gadgets of their own. These two are the sinister clowns who, in concert with Drozdov, bring about Lopatkin's arrest. An infuriating retribution is visited upon Uriupin. He has burned the

classified material relating to Lopatkin's invention on the orders of the military tribunal which convicted Dmitri. The Minister has given his tacit consent to the destruction of all other papers in the file. This is apparently accomplished by Uriupin. When the tribunal, pressed by Nadia, wants to know what has happened to the remainder of the file, the Minister, a general, passes the buck to Urupin who is saddled with responsibility and powerless to bite back.

Then there are the scientists Tepikin and Fundator, whose relation to Avdiyev resembles that of Rosenkrantz and Guildenstern to King Claudius.

And lastly, the Academician Saratovtsev, "our great man," who opposes Lopatkin in a fit of senile abstraction and approves the specifications for Avdiyev's wasteful casting method. This innocent becomes the center of one of the book's finest comic scenes, which takes place at the reception given him on his eightieth birthday. He is presented with a working model of Avdiyev's catastrophic failure which some respectful factory manager out in the sticks, not having heard what has transpired, had prepared for the occasion.

The model carried on with its work; it turned the drum and aimed each of its six barrel at the platform in turn. The academician grew crimson, looked askance at the machine, then gave Avdiyev a glance full of venom, the tips of his mustache quivering with emotion. Drozdov smiled faintly but applauded. Avdiyev clapped his bulky hands, leaned toward his neighbor, and said something to him, nodding angrily in the direction of the glittering little model and shaking his yellow-white curls. But in general very few people, perhaps only eight or nine, understood what was going on. . . . The whole hall thundered with ovations.

Here Lopatkin's comic streak shows most vividly in that he cannot see the humor of the situation. He acts as if it were the final thrust of the conspiracy.

The short sequel to this scene is a remarkable accomplishment. After the jubilee banquet, Lopatkin's friends and the "invisible empire" have gathered as separate tables and proceed to "tease each other, as the fighters did in old days." The exchange ends when Avdiyev approaches Lopatkin to embrace him, only to have the "barometer," Nevraev rush to meet the great scientist with an ancient song: "And secretly and maliciously my hands grope for a weapon." "Avdiyev shuddered."

Much in the account of Lopatkin's experience at institutes and Ministry—even the banquet—suggests the newspaper and theatre milieu.

of *Lost Illusions* with its Dauriats, Lousteaus, Blondets, Rastignacs and De Marsays. An even more caustic reference is made when the men in the designing room compare the inventor to an inmate of Ward Number Six. Do they mean the martyred doctor, Andrei Yefimich? But there is this difference—and let no one forget it. Avdiyev shuddered.

The process of Soviet judicial reform which has been under way since the 20th Congress* lends special interest to Dudintsev's picture of the manner in which abuses could take place in the preceding period. Even more significant is his account of the kind of man whose courage made such reforms an immediate concern.

Lopatkin's first brush with the law is a light one. He is called to the Moscow district prosecutor's office to defend himself against a complaint of the cabal that he has become not only a public nuisance but an enemy of Soviet science. The severe lady who interviews him seems finally to realize what's up. Cracking a smile, she asks him to write out his side of the case and he, and we, see no more of her. We are more or less able to place the date of this interview from a remark of Dmitri's in the course of it: "One man doesn't like my machine, so at once they try to label me as some sort of Weissmannist-Morganist." Dudintsev being no biologist, the comment has not to do with the merits of the positions in the famous controversy, but with the manner in which it and other scientific polemics were conducted at the time.

The second encounter, this time with the military prosecuting officer and tribunal, is a horse of another color. Captain Abrosimov, though somewhat of a dandy, is not a bad egg and he senses there is something fishy about the claim that Lopatkin has violated security by making Nadia his partner in the revised version of his invention. (She called his attention to the possibility of two-layer casting. The device may be a little naive, but it serves to underline Lopatkin's simplicity in such matters. It is also Dudintsev's tribute to sexual equality.) However, the captain is not above frightening Dmitri by placing on his desk a huge dossier of another case—an old investigator's trick. He is reassured by the fact that men of prestige like Avdiyev and Shutikov are complainants. True, he is sardonic about the round-robin denunciation of Lopatkin by a whole school of doctors and candidates of science attached to the two big sharks. Nevertheless, he suppresses this "characteristic document" as having no bearing on the case, although it inadvertently reveals the

* The America reader is referred to Leon Josephson's "The Individual in Soviet Law," which appeared in the May, 1957 issue of *Mainstream*, as well as to his similarly titled pamphlet published by New Century. He will also find occasional articles translated from Soviet publications in *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*.

spuriousness of the charge. He does this on the orders of his chief, an easy-going boor who always spoils the captain's delicate interrogations by coming in to browbeat the accused.

In fact, some of the major's coarseness has rubbed off on the captain. Having drawn from Nadia an admission of intimacy with Dmitri, he is moved to some adverse comments on co-education: "If they are brought together they begin to think of co-inventorship too early." The joke is contemptible, and yet the man is not. He is merely someone who has attained enough refinement for such remarks to occur to him but not enough culture to reject them. The time for that will come soon enough, surely for his successors; then later certain thoughts may not arise at all and the world's oldest jokes will no longer be understood.

The same is true of him as prosecutor. He is not malicious, no framer of blameless people. But tool he is, sharpened or blunted as his job or expediency requires, and as such he will improve or be replaced eventually, like the instrument he has allowed himself to become.

The conference of the three judges of the military tribunal preceding Lopatkin's conviction is a fine piece of compression. In little more than four pages Dudintsev shows how Lopatkin is condemned and why he will be vindicated. One judge, a captain, says nothing and is not even described. His third vote is decisive, however. The issue is debated by the chairman, a lieutenant colonel, and a young major apparently of worker or farmer background. For the chairman there is no problem. Lopatkin revealed a state secret; he should never have let Nadia know that it had become one. That they had discussed this "secret" day and night for months before makes no difference to this upright but not quite honest man for whom the form of law is at least as real as the content of daily life.

Major Badyin is not convinced. He points out that the secret was as much Nadia's as Dmitri's, since the idea of the double-layer pipe was hers, and there are officials and material evidence to confirm this fact. When the chairman tries to override him in the name of orderly process, the prestige of the accusers, and the interests of the state, Badyin announces that he will submit a minority opinion. To the argument that public opinion is watching and will be perturbed, he answers "Public opinion is watching? We must examine what sort of public opinion it is and whether it has the right to consider itself public opinion. 'Interests of the state'? One should find out first whether the interests really are those of the state, and a scientific big shot, or even three scientific big shots are not science." After Lopatkin has been sentenced and shipped

to a labor camp, he has the procedure reviewed by the Supreme Court which commutes the sentence and dismisses the case.

Badyin is a Communist. Lopatkin's supporter, the engineer and factory director Galitsky, says of him: "A genuine Party man cannot tolerate an injustice. He can sense it however carefully it is hidden. And he cannot tolerate it!" We may remember that when Professor Busko, the Soviet version of the outsider, urges the bedeviled Dmitri to ask Galitsky's advice, he adds: "I have never seen him, but judging from what you have told me about him, he is what I imagine a genuine Party man should be." Later Galitsky, refusing a decoration for his role in the Lopatkin affair, writes in explanation: "I did what any decent person would have done, and still more any Communist." The remark is neither casual nor diffident, and attention should be paid to it.

Among Lopatkin's friends at the institute where his design had been projected are the young engineer Kolya, who expresses his knowing what the score is in strange gusts of insolence, the elderly, externally hostile Ararakhovski; crack designer and engineer Krekhov, who fancies himself a shrewd man and trusts Avdiyev like his own good father; and lastly the meticulous Antonovich, a proper butt of Krekhov's penchant for practical jokes. A humorless, that is unobservant, visitor would take the somber banter of the designing room at its face value, deciding that its denizens were vile parodies of the new Soviet man. Yet each of them helps Lopatkin, either by warning him, taking his side in technical disputes, or working with Galitsky to recreate Lopatkin's designs from the papers which Antonovich, in fear and trembling, had hidden against burning in the institute furnace. Antonovich, unknown to Galitsky, comments on the latter's rejection of his medal: "It is not the custom with us to let the spoon pass the mouth." Yet it is this cynic, risking punishment for the crime perpetrated in the institute cellar, whom Galitsky swears to recommend for Party membership.

SOME Soviet and progressive critics of Dudintsev's novel feel that he has ignored the role the Communist Party would have played in righting the situation of which Lopatkin was the victim. I would question the justice of their criticism. First of all, one must recall that, according to the major reports of the 20th Congress, the Communist Party was—in the period described in the novel—itsself prevented from functioning adequately to combat unjust practices in the state apparatus. Would it not have been untypical for it to have acted swiftly and perceptively here? We now know that the artificiality of many of the

Soviet novels of that time was due to the disparity between the wished-for and the fact.

Secondly, even if all had been well with the Party at the time when the novel's action takes place, Dudintsev indicates a perfectly normal difficulty which might arise in a case like Lopatkin's. The latter, threatening to expose Shutikov, says he will write to the Central Committee of the Party. Whereupon the Deputy minister mocks at him: "So what? Do you imagine that everyone who writes to them gets satisfaction? Only those who are right get any satisfaction. And your problem is an eminently specialized one which cannot be decided without expert advice. The experts' opinion will be taken. And we both know already what that opinion is." Obviously, only someone familiar with the processing of complaints such as Lopatkin's could judge the validity of Shutikov's answer. I want just to make the point that the author suggests a genuine "contradiction," not a deliberate failure of the Party to provide recourse.

Thirdly, every author has to be guided by some principle of organization in his work. In this instance, Dudintsev had to choose whether he wanted to portray a dispute within Party circles as complex as the one which he developed on the state official plane. Anything less than full dramatization would hardly do; a perfunctory solution involving some wise political decision, due restitution and punishment, would have had as stodgy an effect as the appearance of Stalin's entourage in the film *The Fall of Berlin*. The larger task would have called for formidable lengthening and changes of proportion in the book. One can say at what point in planning or writing the author decided against this risk; but as the writer of a first novel he had very good reasons for doing so. Instead, he settled on a few individuals whose cast of mind and actions would stand for what hundreds of thousands of Communists are and all ought to be.* As literary characters they are no more distinguished than the space allotted them permits them to be. Nevertheless, their existence is vital to the book and within the limits consciously imposed upon them they are adequate to the purpose Dudintsev had in mind for them.

I have already mentioned Major Badyin. The only other figure of consequence is Galitsky. We first see him at the technical conference where Lopatkin's machine is rejected by the assembled engineers and scientists. He is the one man who when Dmitri answers a technical

* I've tried to deal with the problem, insofar as it was met or evaded by American novelists, in a two-part article entitled "Communists in Novels," in the June and July issues of *Masses and Mainstream*. Space limitation forbids my taking it up at this time, though the events of recent years call for a renewal of the discussion.

objection of his, as well as his attempt to lecture him on his isolation, becomes confused, says nothing (a silence taken advantage of by the others to defeat Lopatkin), and then is won over to his cause. (It may be recalled that on an early visit to Muzga he had already indicated his dissatisfaction with Avdiyev's machine, a dangerous enough step for him to have taken.) Assigned to an important post in another Ministry, he keeps Dmitri in mind, though it would be easy and excusable to forget him.

To say that Galitsky's thesis is that "idealism" pays off would be to vulgarize him. For when he makes fun of the practical foxes whose strategy has resulted in a loss of several million rubles to the country, he has in a quite matter-of-fact way dismissed self-aggrandizement as an example even of mistaken practically. Is this naiveté? Not at all. It is simply that he is both himself—that particular kind of unselfish man—and Dudintsev's conception of what a Communist should be: one in whom social goal and personal aim have merged. This is quite different from Drozdov's confusion of the two ends, to the advancement of the latter. In Galitsky the achievement is so far underway that it would never occur to him to boast about it. He will just not be self-conscious, as we in a divided society expect, indeed insist, that he be to interest us. Another welcome consequence of his taking the unity of thought and action more or less for granted is that he is free of sanctimony, which shows its head whenever people are anxious about the chasm between their ideals and their deeds or real thoughts. So that when he uses the phrase "and still more a Communist," he is not thinking of himself as a member of any kind of elite, ethical or otherwise. He is saying: "The great Communists of history have thought more deeply than anyone about a truly human society and how to attain it for *all* of mankind. A true Communist must act according to their lights."

IT IS no part of a critic's job to grade books like school homework. I would differ, however, with the somewhat condescending evaluation even sympathetic critics are inclined to give Dudintsev's novel. I have tried to indicate its most serious defect: the unaccountable botching of Lopatkin's love life, if one can call it that. But an estimate such as Mark Gayn's in the *Nation* (December 21, 1957) is malicious. The book is "melodramatic and awkwardly constructed. Its heroes are dazzlingly white, its villains black." This judgment is imbedded in an attack on the "task-masters of Soviet culture." How familiar. The reviewer wants it both ways: the Soviet critics are philistines, but the book is lousy anyway. It is interesting to see how fastidious a man can become in the service

of his prejudice. And how forgetful; for if Dudintsev is melodramatic, what is Dostoyevsky? And if Dudintsev is awkward, what is Dickens? Or a hundred masters with whom Mr. Gayn is presumably acquainted? As for the heroes being dazzling white, etc., that is quite simply untrue as the reader can test for himself.

There is another more serious opinion which has to be dealt with because it raises the issue which has made the novel so controversial. "If Drozdovs are the end result of the Communist regime," writes Marc Slonim in his Sunday Times Book Section review of October 20, 1957, "then Dudintsev's social novel is more than a customary denunciation of the 'little defects of the mechanism.' In fact it questions the basic structure of the system. . . ." In fact it does nothing of the sort, any more than a sore throat calls into question the integrity of the human body. We may cough, run a fever, be put to bed; the internist may look for other than local sources of infection; but no one questions the patient's right to live. Besides, how can Mr. Slonim speak of end results when the enormous rapidity of the transformations in the Soviet Union since the overthrow of Czardom and capitalism are penetrating even the mutonheads of the State Department and other quite non-bureaucratic agencies of the government of the United States? And when other changes, which some fear and hundreds of millions wait for, are visibly in the near offing? After all, even the sputnik is not an end result.

How readily the Doctors Pangloss of our society "question the basic structure" of socialism, starting from such situations as are sheerest commonplace under capitalism. Are there not hundreds of thousands of Drozdovs and Shutikovs in New York and Washington alone? And no Lopatkins? Not even one buried in some corporation to which he has sold his brains, to be used or shut down as the rate of profit dictates? Was there not a scientist called Oppenheimer?

By happy coincidence, a signed story in the *New York Times* of January 8 tells us that "a sampling of 500 competent inventors showed yesterday that one-third had defense ideas they had not submitted to the government. Their reason for not doing so was 'an unfavorable picture of both the reception and the rewards.' . . . The average inventor feels that the area of defense invention is very unproductive because he thinks he is not going to get paid, and he believes . . . that the military doesn't want new ideas.'" And this in the most sacred corner of our national life, the war racket.

But perhaps inventors were better off when Americans breathed the fresh air of an "open" society. For example, William Thomas Green

Morton of Charlton, Massachusetts. Having demonstrated the use of ether for major operations on October 16, 1846, Dr. Morton, who was innocent enough to share his patent with a prominent scientist, C. T. Jackson, soon found himself thwarted by "a public torn between recognition of the statements by a well-known academician and of a man who was only a dentist; by a legislature subjected to all kinds of political pressures and by a President of the republic, Franklin Pierce, who could never arrive at any clear conclusion. Morton's patent was invalidated, he was persecuted by creditors, his farm and furniture near Wellesley were sold at public action, and he himself was hanged in effigy by his fellow townsmen."* Think of what one might have concluded from this about the basic structure of free enterprise!

By this I don't mean that one could conclude nothing. Nor, on the other hand, intend that the Soviet Union should play the kettle to Mr. Slonim's pot. If one is to make sense of history, he must see that the fact that something happens or someone behaves like a god or monster, or an Antaeus or Hercules, is subordinate to the context in which things occur and men act. Does this make the historian an apologist? He is so when his explaining is synonymous with explaining away. He is not, when he helps us understand why two phenomena which may have a strong outward resemblance—like the fate of Morton and the fortunes of Lopatkin—are in reality quite different in significance as they are in outcome. He must prove to us that this fate and these fortunes were both examples of necessity, which does *not* mean that they were unavoidable.

The distinction is vital for any personal morality (as well as for common sense), and the refusal to make it is responsible for much whitewashing of policies, errors and crimes that the devil himself could not excuse. Further, the distinction is essential to Marxist thought, guarding it against a crass empiricism by which anything that turns out well justifies every step that has preceded it.

There is a deeper sense, though, in which the great Marxists have kept the difference in mind. The phrase "Freedom is the recognition of necessity" implies that human desire, to be fruitful, must pay respect to material and social circumstance; and that no matter how often the philosophers defined the Good Life, men could not even approach achieving it until their economic progress had put the question "on the agenda" for them. (Naturally, we do not mean the good life led by the Roman emperors, Louis XIV, King Farouk, or the ruling families

* Quoted from *The Origins of American Science*, by Dirk Struik. Cameron Associates. \$6.00.

in the United States. Good as such lives may be, they are irrelevant to history as they are to the millions who have suffered under those fortunes who pursue them.) Marx and Engels had first to prove that what men yearned for was either an historically conditioned illusion (like religion) or an aim made attainable by what men themselves had created. They then concerned themselves with the dynamic means for bringing about what had at last become possible: the advent of Communism. In Lenin the sense of necessity was so finely developed that he was able to narrow the time of the spectre's haunting down to the very hour at which the Revolution had to begin. He heard the music of the spheres in the cries: Bread, Land, Freedom, Peace.

Did these men, do Communists despise morality? They observe it in at least six ways. First, they recognize that it has something to do with the simplest age-old wishes of men embodied, as Lenin put it, "in the observance of the elementary rules of social life that had been known for centuries and repeated for thousands of years in all school books."

Second, they want to see morality applied to the whole of mankind, unlike the hypocrites who have discovered an eternal double standard: one ethic for the white and sensitive privileged of the earth and another for the coarse creatures around the corner or on the underside of the globe.

Third, by concentrating on the *human* content of morality, they propose a continual extension of men's mental and physical power to live better and longer, and with greater intensity of passion and pride (seeing themselves mirrored in each other's faces).

Fourth, they know that ethics must bow to man before man can bow to morality. Therefore, they insist that the limits of justice be observed with a view to widening them as soon as, and to the degree that, men's social productivity, and consequently their resources, make that feasible. Marx, alert to the misunderstandings and even conflicts that might arise over this aspect of unequal development, warned that the period immediately anterior to communism would still be one of relative injustice, since men would have to be rewarded according to their various abilities rather than with the total satisfaction of their needs. Surely, this awareness is closer to a responsible morality than is the rage of Parson Dulles and the scorn of sundry advocates of the toothless transition to socialism.

Fifth, they do not disdain the thinkers of the past who envisioned a new Atlantis, the City of the Sun, Utopia. That such fantasies could not come to flesh in their time is no reflection on the longing to realize

them. As men shed the grim traces of the past, they will be better able to see what in these visions was lasting and now within reach. Then the dreamers will come into their own in a real world for which their true heirs had to labor and to fight.

Finally, Communists still hold to the apparently naive hope that human nature can be changed. I have mentioned Galitsky as a man in whom social and personal satisfaction are almost identical. Is it inconceivable that at some future time this should be the sign of a mankind free of constraint, free to be intelligent, free to love? Although this hope, or the expectation of its fulfillment, has been pushed back a good while, is there more reason to abandon it than we had to drop all thought of flying because wax wings melted in the sun? Conversely, why do those who asserted that one could never improve human nature now crow because it has not altered greatly in forty years?

WHAT has all this to do with Dudintsev and his book? All this is what his book is about. If he handles it with more passion than canniness, showing us the stew but not the way to digest it, that is his prerogative as a novelist. He should not be expected to solve a problem which others created and still others have had to deal with. He has described the effects and that is enough for one raconteur. Besides, let us not underrate description. Many whose job it is to find solutions do not even see the problem until its urgency is called to their attention by the creative writer. The latter is one link in the social chain; he is neither the lock nor the key, though—to mix images—he may be the catalyst. According to Ralph Parker, the latter possibility is what worried the Soviet leadership. (Could one suppose, too, that their chronic anxiety is a relic of the recent past, when any cultural manifestation might become the object of hydraulic press treatment: a sad little poem crushed by Zhdanov, the admonishing of the tuneless composers Shostakovich, Prokoviev, Katchaturian, and Myaskovsky; academic art enforced under the mask of socialist realism; the Yiddish writers felled in 1952)?

Yet the subject of bureaucracy was bound to appear in Soviet literature as it had in life. Along with other manifestations of a society in transition: the existence of the state as a repressive force prior to its withering away, the over-centralization of power and industrial management, the freezing of the government apparatus, the emergence of bureaucracy of a special type had been anticipated by the scientific founders of socialism. It is one of those contradictions which, as Mao remarks,

many people refuse to admit still exist in a socialist society, so that, confronted with them, "they become timid and helpless."

Lenin had first-hand knowledge of the official mentality under Czarism, within the ranks of revolutionary parties, and in the state he helped to found. But being a fighter who wanted to win, he could harness his hatred to a patience which some more uncompromising natures cannot muster. I want to requote his thinking on the matter from Ralph Parker's *Mainstream* "Letter."

"You write," Lenin told a correspondent, "Spontaneous activity by the masses will be *possible* only if we wipe from the face of the earth that abscess known as bureaucratic central boards and centers.' . . . You cannot 'cut out' an abscess of that kind. You can only heal it. It is absurd, *impossible*, to apply surgical methods in such a case; only slow cure—all the rest is pure charlatanism and naivete. . . . Cut out the central boards? That's nonsense. What are you going to put in their place? You don't know. You cannot 'cut out,' you must cleanse and heal, heal and cleanse ten, a hundred times. And not lose heart."

It is clear that bureaucracy neither began nor does it end with the arrival of socialism. However, since its chronicle has not been written—we pass the research assignment on to some inexhaustible historian—we can here ask only whether Dudintsev convinces us that there is a "way out." (Since the division of labor still exists, *what* that way is, is not the novelist's business.) Keeping Lenin's observation in mind, I see irony but not cynicism in Dudintsev's having a few little fish made victims of the showdown while Drozdov replaces Shutikov and the latter is kicked upstairs to another ministry. More to the point is that no one has accused him of concocting a happy ending in having Lopatkin triumph over his detractors. Might it be because they know deep down that such things have been happening? Lopatkin is no Lucien de Rubempré. Something has been won as it was bound to be and many things remain to be done as they were bound to, for that is what history is like. It satisfies some of men's wishes, disappoints them in others, promises to answer many, perhaps when they are gone. History is not morality, but it holds out the possibility of fulfilling man's nature in due time, when it can and through his own ardor.

IN *Not By Bread Alone* we have followed the adventures of one Soviet inventor. We know that if his experience were universal, the recent achievements of Soviet science would be unthinkable. How then can one say the book is typical? It is so because it deals with a situation

which was sufficiently prevalent to be a source of discontent among Soviet people. But, some friends of socialism will say, the book does not represent the magnitude of the accomplishments. That is true; but one book—a first novel at that—cannot do everything. And yet it *is* representative after all. In its own special blend of realism and romantic spiritedness, it reveals such magnanimity as to make one realize how far the people who express it have traveled toward the truly human. Dmitri, Nadia, the Sianovs, Galitsky, Badyin start with or acquire the healthy folk knowledge that not all those who ride the waves of power are gods of the sea. Yet if they have lost their illusions, they have advanced instead of retreated from them. They do not *dream* of a return to capitalism; in fact it is just the persistence of property-mentality in sectors of socialist society that disturbs them. For them, each according to his needs" implies, not a glut of possessions, but the attainment of a level of productivity that permits everyone to think of and to make creative tasks a normal part of his existence. For only when this stage of men's history is attained can they begin to confront each other with full respect, in their daily life neither hostile nor envious, not jockeying for some predatory advantage, in their affection generous, and free of the itch to control another person through the love that streams toward them in response to theirs.

But what of state power which is needed to bring all these fine things within reach? Isn't it all attar of roses if you can't enforce what you must to bring about what you want? What if the people you claim to love are still not ready to assume the administration of things or even the rotation of offices? Isn't it just as frivolous to place an unrealistic trust as it is tyrannous to feel no confidence at all? Leaving aside the slippery insinuation of lack of sincerity—that jack-in-the-box of political diletantes—would not this question trouble any man or angel in a position of leadership?

I suspect that behind the official agitation over Dudintsev's and subsequent books and stories is the fear that they may call into doubt the validity of state control when its continuance is a matter of life and death, whether one views it as a positive good or a necessary evil. Having divorced power from the private ownership of the means of production, the Soviet leaders find they must still use it to safeguard what the people as a whole has produced for itself, for its children, and for its brothers, still oppressed and deprived in other countries. They do not see why they should be asked to renounce power in a world where a Dulles is permitted to wield it.

It is true that nowhere in his book does Dudintsev treat power as a problem in this sense; we might almost assume that he regards it as a menace and so disposes of it. Again, I plead for him the rights of a contemporary novelist at least, to refrain from exposition apart from his narrative (a right which may have to be abandoned in the "West" unless more thoughts are put into the mouths of most characters).

Actually, power-in-itself is not his target. It is needed to free Lopatkin. Galitsky, who hints to Dmitri it is time he went into politics, must exercise it equally with the general of the Ministry. Dudintsev's concern is about those who are so absorbed by the pleasures of power that they have forgotten it is the aim of Communism to abolish it altogether. His book is also an attack on the little foxes who imagine that the earth will always need officials and see the future as a golden ladder up which thousands of their own sort climb and climb and climb. In short, he warns us that Communism should not be thought of as a simple extension of the benefits of capitalism, such as they are, from the few to the many, while the inhuman traits which money and commodity production have inflamed in us are allowed to fester unheeded by the future administrators of things. Even that devoutly wisher-for event, the last gasp of the state, will present men with a thousand quandaries undreamt of in their philosophy. Among these will be the gap between their mastery of nature and the social order, and the skill to erase the inner scars which centuries of half-brutish life had left on our ancestors and on us. Yet we—humanity—will have walked an immense distance, as the Soviet people have come a far, far way in four decades. Will Dudintsev's novel be remembered then? It will have been surpassed by works which continue the great tradition of Russian literature as he and others have begun to revive it. Intense and wise as these books may be, they will not put his to shame. Whoever brings man closer to his fellow man is a friend of liberty and reminds us what freedom is for.

LITTLE TOO SMART

PHILIP STEVENSON

MICKEY sat and thought as long as he dasst. Then he was afraid Mom might bang on the door and scold him for staying too long, so he got up and pushed the handle. The valve whistled like a siren as the tank refilled.

Accompanying the dying-down whistles was a vision in Mickey's mind of a sleigh and reindeer whizzing off in a long arc across the sky. The valve-noise dying away was the noise of their whizzing away as the sleigh diminished to a speck flecking a big full moon and then vanished altogether in the dark places between the stars.

Then, the moment the valve stopped whining, Mickey was back in the really-truly world, where things released did not soar off to the stars but fell plumb to the ground—like the blob of spit he now pushed from his lips and smeared into the linoleum with his shoe. He now had a different vision—sleigh and reindeer falling pell-mell through space, Santy Claus separately falling, arms and legs up helplessly, fat bottom down, beard flying, falling toward a far-off ball with North America on top.

Mickey opened his eyes at the last second because he couldn't bear to see fat old Santy land and bounce. He had a moment's blank; then he shut his eyes again, and he could hear the ambulance-bell and see two white doctors carrying Santy on a stretcher like they'd carried Mr. Pesek the window-cleaner that time when Mom and he were coming home from the grocery.

Seized with a sudden mysterious fear, Mickey unlocked the door and returned to the front room, to his own carpet near the window where'd left his little red car from the dime store. Mom still sat at the old machine, her back turned, her feet rocking up and down on the pedal; Mickey waited till she stopped. She pulled away the cloth she was sewing and bit off the thread. Then he went over and said:

"I know it now, Mom."

"That so, Mickey?" Mom spoke in her go-and-play, 'm-too-busy voice. "Know what?"

"You know, Mom. What I said."

"Lord, Mickey, you say so many things."

"O Mom, you remember." Why couldn't she leave that old cloth alone and listen for once?

"I don't," she said. "What was it?"

"Yes, you do. About animals."

"Let's see, now. What about animals?"

"Well, gee, don't you remember *now*? I only just said it, Mom. Only just about a second ago—or I guess about two days ago."

"Now let's think." Mom pretended to be trying, but she wasn't, she was mad at the cloth because it wouldn't sew right. "I give up," she said.

"I said they couldn't fly!"

Mom quit sewing, leaned back in her chair, pushed the hair away from her face and laughed. "Oh! ain't you the funny little tyke! Still thinking about that!" Mickey felt like there was a window between him and Mom and she was laughing at him from the inside.

"Well, it's true, Mom," he said angrily. "They're heavy. They'd fall."

Mom looked at the clock, whistled, got up and went to the kitchen to start supper. Mickey followed her.

"They *are* heavy, Mom. And Santy Claus is so heavy he's fat!"

"Yes, Tykie, I know."

She patted his cheek, but he jerked away.

"You don't either!" he whined. "You won't *listen*."

He wanted to tell her how Santy Claus couldn't go down a chimney—he was too fat, and anyway, lots of kids didn't have chimneys, only stovepipes or radiators. But Mom didn't give him a chance.

"Now, Mickey, don't be mad at Mom. Pop'll be coming in to supper in a minute, and you wouldn't want him to see you mad at Mom, would you?"

"But—oh, darn it!" Mickey gave up.

Pop dripped all over the floor while he blindly groped and found the towel. "Looks like hell to pay," he said, wiping his face and hair. "All you hear nowadays is about a fourth round—before they slap freeze on. Yaketty-yaketty-yak—day and night—on the crates and of Drive you nuts."

"Hell for who to pay?" Mom brought the stew-pan to the table dragging after it a ghost of steam. "Not you?"

Pop threw the towel in the sink, pulled a chair between his legs

The furrows in his face dug deeper as he stretched his mouth with his hand. "Might be. You take a chance any way you figger it."

Mom fetched Mickey's milk off the fire escape, poured most of it into a bowl but left some for Pop's coffee. "Why? How can you lose?"

"How can I lose!" Pop looked surprised, like Mom had talked baby-talk or something. "Who do you think is pushin' for this?"

"Who?" Mom took a tiny helping of stew and pushed the pot back over to Pop's side.

"The red boys, that's who."

"Why, that's funny. You said you got rid of 'em all after the convention."

Pop looked up with a frown, and Mickey held his breath.

"How do you mean—funny?"

"I ain't talking Greek, Mike. You said they was all cleaned out of the union. So how do you know the ones pushin' for a raise are reds? How could they be?"

"I have to spell it for you? Okay." Pop had a forkful of stew waiting near his mouth, but just as he tried to poke it in the stew fell off the fork and splashed back in the gravy on his plate. Pop's mouth closed on nothing. Mickey laughed, but Mom and Pop didn't pay no attention. "Would anybody else start raisin' hell in the middle of a national emergency? That's commie stuff. Just raise hell so *nobody* gets a raise. An-
tagonize the boss, is all."

"I'm a lap behind," Mom said. "What do *you* aim to do?"

Pop talked with his mouth full. "Fella got do bes' thing 'cordin' how he figgers. No good get blacklisted f'r red." He swallowed, washed it down with coffee, and the words came clearer. "If I was just only by myself, that'd be one thing. A fella could take a chance."

"Is it me and Mickey you're worried about?" Mom looked in the stew-pot, decided not to take any, broke a piece of bread and wiped up the gravy on her plate. "'Cause we wouldn't want to interfere with you no way, would we, Tykie?"

Mickey shook his head because Mom wanted him to, and took a big mouthful of bread and milk. (*His* didn't fall and splash. . . .)

"You mean I ought to shoot my mouth and get in the books?"

"I ain't sayin'——"

"You want a strike—or what?"

Mom looked off at the window. "I don't want a thing ain't the best for you, Mike—and that'll be best for us, too."

"Nobody wants a strike—hell."

"God no," Mom said.

"If it wasn't only for Exmas comin' on, and Frank and Angie comin' to stay."

"Well, gee, Mike, they're only eighteen miles on the Interurban. We can just tell 'em not to come."

"It's a shame. You don't hardly ever get to see your sister as it is."

Mom raked up some crumbs and put them in her mouth. "So I'll see her in the poorhouse—what's the dif?"

"Look, are you hintin' around for me to get tagged? You know what it means nowadays? Man gets to be forty, you can't get a job no place—even war-plants beggin' for men. Fella's good as dead."

"Which fella?" Mom said—then changed her voice. "Look, I don't want to put my two cents in," she said, watching the stew-pan as Pop scraped it clean. "Do just like you would if you didn't have me and Mickey, is all."

"I see how you mean," Pop said, swallowing the last mouthful. "We could do with a fourth round, all right—and still we wouldn't be back to where we were before prices went *Boing*. Only thing—maybe we'll get it anyway if we're smart."

"Yeah? You didn't tell me that part." When Mom got up to take the plates away Mickey saw her mouth jerk down like when she found his pants wet; and he shivered and cautiously felt of his pants, but they were all right.

"I figger Mr. O'Neill's been doin' all right for himself on that garden truck deal, so why shouldn't he cut us in on it? I look for a raise all around, from foreman to grease-monkey."

"From Santy Claus to truck-driver," Mom muttered. She slopped some coffee as she refilled Pop's cup.

"What's that?" Pop said.

"I'll wipe it up," Mom said.

"Aw, Mom, there ain't any Santy Claus!" Mickey said.

Gosh! he was some surprised at himself. He'd been trying to say that to Mom all day. As long as they were alone and it was a secret and terribly important, he couldn't say it; but now that he'd stopped thinking about it, all of a sudden it had popped out.

"What's that?" Pop said again.

Mickey was happy that Pop wanted to listen, so he told Pop about it—how reindeers didn't have wings so they'd fall, and Santy Claus and about chimneys and all. Pop laughed.

"Where'd you get all that at, Mick?"

Mickey was very proud. "I thought it up," he said.

"I guess you been talkin' to that Abie Stein," Pop said. "He been with that Jew-boy again, Mary?"

"Why no, he hasn't," Mom said, "Just the Morley twins, is all."

"Hell, they're only about half as big as a minute," Pop said. "They didn't tell you all that stuff, did they, Mick?"

"No," Mickey said. "I thought it up my own self."

"I believe it, Mike. He's been talking about it now for two days. He's pretty smart."

"Maybe little too smart," Pop said. "Way I see it, kids ought to believe in Santy Claus. It's only natural. I believed till I was going on eight, and I was just a normal average kid."

"I was too," Mom said. "About Mickey's age my brother told me. But I'd started wondering, though."

"Well, I was just a normal average kid. I believed much longer than that. Did you ever read that editor's letter to the little girl that asked——"

"Sure," Mom said.

"Well?"

"Have some more coffee," Mom said.

On Saturday when Mickey came in from playing in the yard, Mom and Pop were hollering back and forth while Pop shaved.

"So that's the way it is, Mary. No strike."

"Uh-huh. And no raise."

"Not for the time being, no."

"Well, that was the way you wanted it."

"For the time being, yeah."

"Did they consider reporting sick?"

"Like the railroad guys, you mean? No percentage in that—they'll only just get tagged. I can't see what's the use battlin' for something you can get without."

"Is that what you told the boys?"

"Well, I didn't hardly put in my two cents at all—only for that one run-in I told you. I just stayed with the leadership. So I don't see as they can say I'm responsible."

"Still you said some of the boys is sore."

"No call for 'em to be sore at me. It's a free country. Man got the right to speak his piece."

"Uh-huh." Mom sighed. "Well, we'll get by," she said.

Pop stepped out of the bathroom. "Now just what do you mean by that?" he said, holding out his razor.

"I'm not complaining, Mike. It's just that prices keep goin' up out of sight, and—wages ain't."

Pop went back in the bathroom and turned on the tap and yelled over the noise it made, "Wouldn't be too sure wages ain't. I got a hunch maybe they will. Mr. O'Neill's pretty tickled over the way things turned out. I heard he told somebody—or maybe somebody heard him tell his stenog—I forget exactly—anyhow the scuttlebutt is he's gonna make it an Exmas present—and I figger it won't hardly be less than ten percent. Might be as much as fifteen, but I wouldn't figger on more than ten for sure."

When Mom didn't answer, Mickey looked at her. She was darnin' on one of his stockings, and her head was bent low over it, her mouth stretched thin.

"Did you hear me?" Pop yelled and turned off the tap.

"I heard you," Mom said. "Then it's all right for Frank and Angie to come like we planned?"

"Sure it's all right. And tell Angie to bring the kid. Mickey can go back to his laundry basket for just one night, and Marilyn can sleep in his crib."

"Do I know Marilyn, Mom?" Mickey asked.

"Of course. You used to be great friends before they moved. You used to say you were going to marry her," Mom said.

Mickey frowned. "Aw, I did not," he said.

"I expect you don't remember," Mom said. "You were only just about old enough to talk baby-talk. You'd say, 'I'm going to maww Mawilyn.'"

"Aw, I did not," Mickey said. "I bet she's awful. I bet she's a stink pot." But really he was excited about Marilyn. He bet she'd be keen. "She doesn't believe in Santy Claus, I bet."

"Well. . . ." But Mom didn't finish because Pop put in his two cents.

"Now see here"—Pop came out of the bathroom shrugging into a clean shirt—"none of that smarty stuff with Marilyn, understand? Don't you try and spoil her Exmas."

Mickey was some surprised. Spoil Marilyn's Christmas? Gee! what did Pop ever think!

"Oh, for Pete's sake," Mom began, when all of a sudden Pop yelled:

"Mickey! Understand?"

"Yes." Mickey hadn't expected a scolding, and he had to work hard to keep from crying.

"You're not to talk about Santy Claus with Marilyn at all. You start anything smart, you'll be sorry. Understand?"

Mickey nodded. He looked at Mom through a blur of tears, but Mom didn't pay no attention, just kept on darning.

"You do you'll get a hiding," Pop said.

Mickey couldn't hold in any more. He let go and bawled.

Well, Marilyn *was* keen. Mom said she took after Aunt Angie. Aunt Angie was smaller than Mom, with a high soft voice; when she laughed she squeaked like a mouse; and she was keen to Mickey and brought him a sucker for an *un*-Christmas present. And Marilyn squeaked up high like a mouse too when she laughed, so Mickey tried to make her laugh lots, and she did. He'd make faces so she'd squeak, and they would both laugh till they couldn't stand up.

Once he made cross-eyes and pretended he was a crazy man and chased her and she squeaked and ran to Aunt Angie, and Aunt Angie caught Mickey and pretended to spank the crazy man only it didn't hurt she really hugged him instead, and Uncle Frank was keen too, he lifted Mickey up, up till his head touched the ceiling and he was pretty scared but didn't dasst to let on because Marilyn was clapping her hands and squeaking, gee. . . .

It was all different when Pop got home.

He was awful late—holiday traffic, he said—and Mom had been waiting supper quite a while. Mickey and Marilyn had finished their bread and milk and prunes, and Marilyn was sleepy and not much fun any more. Pop talked loud and acted like he hadn't known the others were going to be here. "Look who's here!" Pop roared. "Angie, you're gettin' to be a big girl now." Aunt Angie squeaked. "Merry Exmas Eve, Frank! All the way from the big city and beat me here! And look at my girl Marilyn!" Pop picked her up and gave her a big smack, and Mickey was pretty disgusted—she *wasn't* his girl. "Be right with you!" Pop rumbled Mickey's hair and rushed to the sink like he was running away.

"Reason we beat you," Uncle Frank said, "we keep banker's hours on *our* trucks." He winked at Mom. Pop made a lot of noise washing, but Uncle Frank went on. "Course, we ain't lucky like you stiffes. We had to hit the bricks to get our raise. We don't get Christmas presents from the boss."

"You don't, eh?" Pop puffed and snorted a lot in the water. "Who does?" he said, toweling his face. "That's what I want to know. Who does?" And he laughed very loud.

"Mean to say you didn't?" Uncle Frank asked.

"Looks like rain but tastes like soup," Pop said. "Dish it out, Mary I bet you're all hankerin'."

"All right, kiddies," Aunt Angie said. "Skip to bed now."

For once Mickey didn't mind going to bed because he had someone to go with. "See who can be first," said Aunt Angie who was helping Marilyn. So Mickey undressed in a whizz and beat Marilyn all to smithereens. Marilyn squeaked and hid behind Aunt Angie and cried "Mommy! he'll see me!"—but Mickey didn't, darn it, he couldn't on account of Aunt Angie in the way.

Mickey's old laundry basket was too little for him now, so he hoped after Aunt Angie had said good-night and gone and it was dark, Marilyn would ask him to come over and sleep in the crib with her. But she didn't. Instead she whispered:

"Mickey, let's stay awake and see Santy Claus."

Mickey started to say, "Aw, there ain't any——" But he didn't dare when he thought of Pop. "All right," he said. But he was pretty disgusted that Marilyn didn't know.

That was the last he remembered till he woke late in the night, stiff and hot in his basket. Pop and Uncle Frank were making a big noise in the other room.

"Not me!" Uncle Frank was yelling. "Pinnin' the red tag on me ain't gonna scare me! I ain't no weasel!"

"You can't call me a weasel!" Pop yelled back.

"Who's callin' you a weasel?"

"Well, all right, then!"

"All right, that's what I say! You let the boss scare you out of a rail with a two-bit word, I say you got it comin'!"

"I say there's union men and then again there's reds!"

"I say there's union men and there's rabbits!"

"You can't call me a rabbit!"

It went on a long time, till finally Aunt Angie told them, "Shush the kiddies." Mickey was just about asleep again when the door creaked. He peeked and saw Mom and Aunt Angie come in and put some packages beside his basket and Marilyn's crib. Mickey meant to get up and pinch the packages to make sure he'd got the boxing gloves he wanted but he just—couldn't—stay awake.

Marilyn had asked for a compass to draw circles with, and Mickey never seen one before, and it was swell, so they played with it lots. Then when they got tired of just old circles and Marilyn wouldn't box w

the gloves and they couldn't think of what to do next, Marilyn said, "Mickey, I got a secret."

Shucks, girls always had secrets and got you all curious and then told you something silly like "Today's Christmas" that everybody knew. So Mickey said, "Aw, I bet you haven't."

"I have too, hope-to-die," Marilyn said. And when Mickey went to her she whispered:

"Guess what. I saw Santy Claus last night!"

Mickey's mouth dropped right open with surprise.

Marilyn squeaked. "I saw him come down the chimney and leave our presents."

Mickey went hot with shame for Marilyn. "You did not," he said. "That's a whopper."

"Why?" Marilyn looked a little scared. "How do you know?"

"'Cause . . . I can't tell," Mickey said.

Marilyn acted mad, poked her lips out. "I did too," she said. "I seen him."

"You didn't," Mickey insisted. "You *couldn't*, Marilyn."

"Why? Why couldn't I?" Marilyn was forgetting to whisper now. "Tell me, Mickey!"

"I can't. It's a secret."

"A secret!" That made her so happy she squeaked. "O Mickey, you *got* to tell me! Don't be so *mean*!"

Marilyn was so excited she was yelling, and Mom called from the kitchen, "Mickey, don't you be mean to Marilyn!"

"I'm not!"

"He is, Aunt Mary! He's teasing!"

"Don't tease her, Mickey," Mom said.

Gee . . . Mickey didn't know *what* to do now. . . .

"Make him tell, Aunt Mary!" Marilyn called—then she whispered to Mickey again: "Mickey, *please*. If you don't I'll tell on you. Why couldn't I see him?"

Mickey's heart was racing terribly fast. "Cause he's not true," he said at last. "He's make-believe, like brownies."

Marilyn's face went white all over. "Oh! Mickey—that's wicked," she said.

"Aunt Angie put your presents, 'cause I was awake and seen her. You told a whopper."

Marilyn shivered like she was cold, and there were tiny drops of sweat along her lip. "How do you know?"

"You said he come down the chimney. Well, there ain't any chimney in here. So you better not let on I told you about Santy, or I'll tell on you about that whopper."

"Mickey!"

Marilyn was terribly scared now, so Mickey thought it was safe to tell her his secret—all about how reindeers couldn't fly and all. But all of a sudden Marilyn couldn't stand it any more; she burst out crying and ran to Aunt Angie.

"Mom-mee! Mickey says there's no Santy Claus!"

Gee . . . the last thing he ever thought she's do. . . .

Standing there alone, hearing Pop say, "How's that?" Mickey started wetting his pants. Couldn't stop. Wet his stocking, too, all the way down into his shoe. He knew what was coming. A hiding on Christmas—gee. . . .

After he finally quit crying, Mickey just said Yes to everything Pop told him.

"All right, then, do it right now," Pop said.

Mickey went to Marilyn and looked at her shoes. "I'm sorry I told a whopper Santy Claus is true I'm a bad boy," he said.

Marilyn still acted awful scared, but she said, "That's all right I'm sorry too."

Marilyn was keen. He knew she meant she was sorry she'd gone and told and made him get a hiding, because afterwards she was keen, and just before she went home she whispered with Aunt Angie and then—gosh!—gave Mickey her brand new compass!

That night, putting him to bed, Mom said, "Well, Mickey, do you still want to mawwy Mawilyn?"

Mickey laughed. "Nah," he said. But he did, he did!

Mom hugged him and blew in his neck till he screamed with the tickle of it. She put out the light, then whispered:

"Tykie, can you keep a secret?"

A secret with Mom! "You bet!" he said.

She said it right into his ear: "You're right—there is no Santy Claus."

"O Mom!"

She put her fingers over his mouth, so he didn't dasst to say any more, but he hugged her fiercely. He'd never been so happy.

When she'd gone he took his boxing gloves to bed with him. Now they were Mom, now Marilyn. Pop had a flying white beard, and he was falling plumb toward a ball with North America on top.

DO NOT STARE AT ME

Do not stare at me from your window lady
do not stare and wonder where I come from.

Born in this city was I lady
hearing the beetles at six o'clock
and the noisy cocks in the morning
when your hands rumple the bedsheet
and night is locked up in the wardrobe.

My hand is full of lines
like your breast with veins lady
so do not stare and wonder where I come from.
My hand is full of lines
like your breast with veins lady
and one must rear while one must suckle life. . . .

Do not stare at me from your window lady
Stare at the wagon of prisoners!
Stare at the hearse passing by your gate!
Stare at the slums in the south of the city!
Stare hard and reason lady where I come from
and where I go.

My hand is full of lines
like your breast with veins lady
and one must rear while one must suckle life.

MARTIN CARTER

FOR MORTON SOBELL

It could have been my name and not your name.
She could have been my wife and not your wife.
They could have been my children Morton Sobell
thinking of me locked up in Alcatraz.

I too live in a prison Morton Sobell
in prison where the night is black and solid.

Where days are made of hours each one numbered
by blows of courage on a metal sky.

We all live in a prison Morton Sobell
and only what stays clean will reach to freedom.
You said you would not "soil those hands of yours"
I promise you I will not soil mine either.

MARTIN CARTER

WHO IS THIS STRANGER?

(Paul Eluard on his death bed)

Who is this marble stranger
stretched out on a sheet,
and is his bed a tree
that he has a hanged man's feet?

It never was part of your magic
this make-believe not-to-be,
hurrying to leave behind
nothing but an effigy.

You have turned a mask of iron
into a face of clay
and left your body a rock
where the sea breaks into spray.

All this room discloses
is a thief's footfall,
and a shadowy ladder leaning
against a phantom wall.

Death has pulled a fast one,
but even as he is caught
he runs off with your real face
and leaves the mask he has wrought:

Jealous of those that live
and knowing the careful way
you brought us life-giving waters
he has taken your hands away.

JEAN COCTEAU

(translation by Walter Lowenfels)

SPECIES OF AQUINAS

*"For since God's image is, according to its essence,
impressed on the very nature of the angel, the angel
knows God inasmuch as he is the image of God."*

Summa Theologica—Thomas Aquinas

The mind of angels,
Aggregate of essence,
Fed on crystals, pomegranates, and sweet infinity,
Not mine,
Not known.

Nor what conjugation of burning and planets
Achieved me—me precisely, and no other harried being
In this instant which I with five mirrors inhabit.

Death is a dizziness

And the candor of two people, knowing each other, greeting each other
As incredible as angels.
I know this.

Being practical among primroses, I am content with conventional calling;
Trust two and two are four; see matter couples, making other matter;
Hold the scientific method
Our only hope of solving what slides off, leaves us dizzy, confronted.

Though the scientific method deals scantily
With that which nestles beneath the bright wings of angels.

Go sideways; if we do not learn by labyrinths, we shall not learn.

Being practical among nightingales
I am vexed at the leap into the domain of angels.
I shed my wings.

MARGUERITE WEST

Right Face

Inexpensive Miracle

TOKYO.—The first member of the United States Congress of Asian extraction said today that he hoped to undo at least some of the Communist propaganda in Asia by his mere appearance on the scene.—*The New York Times*.

At 18,000 Miles per Hour?

ROME.—Authorities of the Roman Catholic Church are informally considering selection of a patron saint for space travelers, a Vatican official said today.

It was believed that the most likely patron would be St. Joseph of Copertino, a seventeenth century Italian Franciscan friar. According to tradition, he floated in the air during religious ecstasies.—*The New York Times*.

Come Now, Hawks or Doves?

A small combat force that operates without any fixed base 3,000 miles from the United States and covers 1,000,000 square miles of sea is the principal shield of the Western world in the Mediterranean.

The United States Sixth Fleet under Vice Admiral C. R. (Cat) Brown "lives, eats and breathes with the idea that the big game is tomorrow morning."

The "big game" is a seagoing simile for nuclear war and the Sixth Fleet works and trains primarily for one purpose—to live long enough in the first critical hours of war to deliver its nuclear strikes before it is destroyed.

This somber motivation shadows even the sparkling seas and bright sun of the Mediterranean. But the fleet has another and more hopeful reason for existence. It is, its officers believe, a deterrent to war; the "great gray diplomats" of the Sixth Fleet represent the military might behind United States diplomacy.—*The New York Times*.

Progress from Hunger

Dean Dunning warned that a "drastically new outlook" was necessary to answer the challenge. "The right spirit alone is not enough," he said.

"The sacrificing of human values or the liberal way of thinking, and possibly the lowering of the standard of living, may ultimately be the only way to combat Soviet progress," he said.—The *New York Times*.

Word from On High

"A friend of mine Jack Walsh, is both a trapper and a jeweler," explained Haynes, who hadn't known that Victor Purse, former State Dept. protocol officer, was transferred to a new assignment last week amid a clamor that his wife has accepted a \$3,000 car from King Ibn Saud.

"Well, when Mrs. Eisenhower wore that inauguration dress, all shimmering in pink rhinestones, Jack sold all his rhinestones. He ordered more rhinestones, and sold them, too. I said to him, why couldn't we get her to wear beaver?

"Well, the fur market got worse. So last December we took it up with Mrs. Eisenhower through our Senator, Margaret Chase Smith. Mrs. Eisenhower turned it down. Then last March I had a dream. I could see Mrs. Eisenhower very clearly. I heard her say, 'I have reversed my decision. I will accept the coat.'"—The *N. Y. Post*.

Don't Overdo It

I do not think myself, therefore, that the current cry that young Prince Charles, the heir to the throne, should be given a more intensive and comprehensive education than has been customary for British sovereigns has much relevance to the real problem. What is the point of straining away to sharpen the boy's intelligence when his grown-up function will make an active intelligence more a liability than an asset? —The *New York Times*, article by Peregrine Worsthorne.

High Class Ethics

BY LOVE POSSESSED, by James Gould Cozzens. Harcourt, Brace. \$5.00.

FAR AND away the most interesting thing about Cozzens' latest novel is the enormous furor it has raised in critical circles, and the place it holds on the best seller list.

Always a careful, competent and literate writer, James Gould Cozzens seemed in his first novel, the *S.S. San Pedro* (1931) and even more clearly in his second, *The Last Adam* (1933), to be speaking, albeit with careful indirection, of some core of toughness and indestructible vitality in the human spirit. Many readers in those depression years looked forward hopefully to his development into a major artist whose interpretation of life would be all the more authoritatively expressed for the patience with which he had practiced handling the tools of his craft.

But by the time his seventh book, a war novel called *Guard of Honor*, had appeared after six year's silence, it was clear that he had chosen to use his energies cultivating a series of courtyards plainly marked "no thoroughfare." The still stirring and troubled temper of those early post-war years prevented any extravagant over-estimation of that book's only real virtue, its unusual craftsmanship, despite its selection for a Pulitzer prize award and it was ranked far below such

imperfect but meaningful first novels: *The Naked and the Dead* and *From Here to Eternity*. Few readers or critics specifically noted that it was almost the only war novel which used an incident of racial tension (segregation and anti-Negro discrimination in the Air Force training program) purely in terms of the administrative difficulties it created for the hero—a brigadier general—with no apparent consciousness of any further implications at all, but there was a general sense of the book's curious detachment and irrelevance which persisted unaffected by its author's obvious grasp of practical top detail.

Cozzens' current novel, *By Love Possessed*, is far more remote and quiet, explicit in its lack of democratic concern or social awareness, but the climate of opinion is today so changed that many of the same critics now would give a Nobel prize as the only commensurate recognition.

It is difficult to summarize the book's profound, untroubled snobbishness without an effect of parody. Perhaps the only way to convey its quality is the somewhat lengthy one of quotation. For example, the author thoroughly approves of the few respectable grocers in Brocton, who are all descended from a single escaped slave helped by abolitionists to settle in a small New England town in 1780. He introduces one of them:

With an ease of familiarity, his face brightly shining, Rodney Re-

who wore a sport shirt of many colors and a pair of tan sharply creased slacks, approached the halted car. . . . Rodney was to be, was now within months, another year, of being, a professional man, a duly licensed dentist; but if Rodney was home and available, Rodney's Aunt Em, who worked for the Winners, had only to speak to Alfred (Rodney's grandfather). Rodney would be directed to go and give her any help she thought she needed. Rodney had been all week doing, with energy and no apparent feeling that he was demeaned, those parts of a house cleaning that Em (she was as strong as a horse) held to be too hard for her now that she was getting on. After a conscientious eight hours of intelligent toil, Rodney hung up his work clothes in the garage lavatory, washed up, donned garments suited to a social evening, and drove off cheerfully in his second-hand but newly painted and brightly shined car. Mr. Woolf's not-unnatural mistake would lie in his supposing that Rodney, because he gave service, was somebody's servant.

The Mr. Woolf referred to is a New York lawyer, the only Jew in the book, who has been grossly insulted during a legal hearing earlier in the day by Arthur Winner's eighty-two-year-old law partner. To make amends Winner has reluctantly invited him to drive out to his summer home for dinner. During the ride with his host and his host's friend, Judge Lowe, Mr. Woolf takes an occasion to say: "Are you an Episcopalian, Judge? So am I. I attend St. Bartholomew's in New York." Cozzens continues:

By the blink of an eye, Arthur Winner could see that Judge Lowe had involuntarily composed, then voluntarily put away, a question that Arthur Winner, too, had asked himself when, earlier, Mr. Woolf had felt called upon to declare this religious affiliation. . . .

The blink, the second's silence, must be not unfamiliar to Mr. Woolf, for his handling of it showed practice.

The judge then obliquely approaches the topic of old Noah Tuttle's rudeness at the hearing. When Woolf responds ". . . I have every respect for his abilities" he rebukes him, saying:

We who know him can go further than that. We have every respect for his character. A man of complete probity, of absolute integrity, Mr. Woolf. He may differ with you; and he may even be unpleasant about it; but you can trust him—you need never fear anything even faintly smacking of trickery, of underhandedness. We must both, I think, admit the painful truth that that's not invariably the case in our profession.

Woolf is clearly embarrassed by this home thrust, and it is he who hastens to apologize, saying: "I couldn't see quite what I'd done to make the old gentleman so angry. He said some things I'm sure he didn't mean; but I suppose I must have provoked him. I'd be glad—I'll say this to you, too, Mr. Winner—to express regrets, if you think that would help matters tomorrow. And if I knew what to express them for! I mean, I'd be happy to show Mr. Tuttle there're no hard feelings on my part."

Glimpsing Mrs. Woolf's face in the mirror again, Arthur Winner could see his lips form a smile, deprecatory, intentionally ingratiating. Was there something of the bated breath and whispering humbleness? Were you right or wrong, were you fair or unfair, to guess the kept account? Had you been warned? Did you forget at your peril the ancient grudge that might be fed if Mr. Woolf could catch you once upon the hip?

In more general terms Winner's younger partner, Julius Penrose, explicitly presented as the most penetrating thinker in the novel, says two hundred pages later:

Still, in passing, I'll confess I wonder, as one of them, why the only people who may be openly criticized, found fault with, and spoken ill of, are those of white, Protestant, and more or less Nordic extraction. . . . Not only may each bumptious Catholic freely rate and abuse me if I reflect in the least on his faith; but each self-pitying Jew, each sulking Negro, need only holler that he's caught me not loving him as much as he loves himself, and a rabble of professional friends of man, social-worker liberals, and practitioners of universal brotherhood—the whole national horde of nuts and queers—will come at a run to hang me by the neck until I learn to love.

Although this and several other anti-Catholic comments seem to be based on something of the same contempt for the poor Irish immigrants which created T. S. Eliot's "Ape-necked Sweeney," Cozzens' attitude is one of more serious theoretical opposition. One of the few realistic social discussions in the book is initiated by Julius Penrose, whose self-centered, neurotic and irresponsible wife is on the verge of joining the Catholic church. There are over a dozen pages of closely reasoned arguments on the matter, extending through some three or four chapters. Winner as well as his partner express strong opposition to the Church's attempt to dominate education, impose censorship on non-Catholics for the protection of Catholics, and act as a political force on many non-religious issues. There is also a vivid chapter dramatizing its now fashionable appeal to disorientated, functionless, middle

class converts who have lost or never achieved self-respect. It is curious to note that not one of the many prominent reviewers who lavishly praised the book so much as hinted whether in agreement or disagreement, at its deliberate maintenance of this important thesis.

When we turn from these incidental though significant, aspects of the novel to its central story we again find ourselves baffled to summarize without seeming to parody.

We are evidently supposed to accept Brocton as a fairly typical small New England town, and our central figures—Arthur Winner, his two partners, his secretary, his wife, and a few others—as reasonably representative of the time and place.

The physical background, obvious psychological interpretations, and the simple but complexly related actions of some twenty people during a few summer days are plausibly presented; a number of rather lengthy flashbacks are skillfully interwoven; the prevailing tone of dry realistic observation predisposes us to accept this as a polished factual account; and if we were newly arrived from Mars with a good reading knowledge of English and other information about earth, nothing would prevent our believing it.

But every major premise is false and almost every conclusion misleading.

We are asked to accept a fairly large group of lawyers—including almost all those in the town, and whom we actually meet except the non-indigenous Mr. Woolf—who have not only never themselves transgressed the highest possible standards of professional ethics but who have hardly ever had any personal knowledge of lawyers unworthy enough to do so!

Winner's firm, for example, refuses to take the case of an enormous corporation because the company may have been guilty of "pretty sharp practice" although "All they want is what the law, as I (Winner himself) read the law, would award them—the defeat of certain claims against them."

These unworldly New England lawyers are wealthy and in great demand in larger cities but they have, apparently, never stooped to any sort of compromise or dulled the keen edge of their scruples. Yet when Winner's son, old Noah Tuttle's grandson, has deliberately entered government service in the Federal income tax department, served long enough to learn the ropes, and resigns to set up practice as a Washington consultant for oppressed corporations and wealthy individuals seeking tax relief, Winner indignantly refutes Noah's idea that such schemes may mean "Work with cheaters! Not really law. You're peddling influence, or pretending to. Your business is bribery in one form or another."

He persists in his request that Noah lend the boy the money he has requested to set up an impressive office, replying: "I don't think so. I'm sure what they plan to peddle is simply special legal knowledge. The fact that they need money seems pretty good proof there's nothing irregular."

With a similarly unsullied and, Cozens implies, justified, faith our hero supports the nomination to a judgeship of the district attorney. He has been shocked by the fact that the man, the son of an Irish saloon keeper from Water Street, plays cheap politics and is not above implying to his ignorant foreign-born factory worker constituents that he may "fix" a case in their behalf.

But he is sublimely certain that "Jerry won't bring any politics on the bench . . . because he has to get away from Water Street. He's tried everything else; so the saloonkeeper's boy *has* to be a judge. . . . His judicial conduct will be beyond reproach, his integrity above suspicion."

An equally honest but more skeptical member of the bar association with whom he has been arguing is so profoundly overcome by this insight that he hastily puts away the unworthy suspicion he had momentarily harbored, a suspicion that Winner was influenced by his desire to have the D.A. drop a fabricated rape case against his secretary's brother.

Incidentally both men and a number of their lawyer friends agree that no lawyer, not even the politically motivated D.A., would even sink so low as to tamper with evidence. The more cynical of them merely feel that he might be overwilling to accept it as presented to him by the girl's uncouth immigrant family—"Pole; Hungarian; or something."

The denouement of the book, which gives it its title, and leaves its ethical system as inconsistent as it is fantastic, arises out of Winner's last chapter discovery that, as Julius Penrose has known for twelve years, old Noah Tuttle had over a generation before embezzled the entire capital of a huge trust fund of which he was sole executor. Since then he has paid its income regularly out of the funds of the many other estates he similarly controls, and has falsified their accounts to prevent discovery.

Needless to say, the old man derived no profit from all this juggling, used much of his private fortune in paying all incomes as they fell due, and un-

dertook the entire maneuver solely to prevent serious embarrassment to some of the town's best people who had invested in an electric trolley line on his advice and might have been ruined by its bankruptcy.

After much soul-searching Arthur Winner, possessed by love, decides to accept Julius' advice, continue juggling the accounts, prevent old Noah's exposure and the ruin of many reputable families, including his own.

It would be as meaningless to decry this decision as to applaud it. The absurdity is not in the solution but in the terms of the problem. They simply have nothing to do with life in the United States today or, one suspects, with any life that ever was on land or sea.

The only serious question raised by the book is then the reason for its cordial reception. There are, I think, three or four contributing causes. The first, not necessarily in order of importance, is its genuine, effortless, old fashioned snobbishness which is self-assured enough and detached enough from any twentieth century reality to be unhysterical, non-violent, and free from any tinge of fascism, war-mongering or witch-hunting. This must, I think, have gone straight to the heart of many a respectable kindly conservative. Such conservatives may also have shared with liberals considerable gratitude for the outspoken, reasonable arraignment of recent encroachments by the Catholic church on traditional American freedom from clericalism.

Another aspect of the work, stressed in much of its advertisements and, we may be sure, in the word of mouth recommendations of lending libraries and their matrons, is its treatment of

specific sexual incidents. There are two lengthy detailed descriptions of two acts of intercourse. One of these is a ugly episode in the back seat of a car, unusual only for the form of cross-examination in which it is described and the dry legal attitude shared by Cozzens and his hero. The other is a more exceptional treatment of the act of love between Winner and his second wife. This is by no means extraordinary or frank for 1957, but it is unusual in its non-naturalistic tone, combining a step by step report of the physical action with a feeling of the romantic love, respect and intimacy it expressed. Such concrete treatment is not rare today but it is seldom found in the women's magazines, Book-of-the-Month Club choices, or other similarly genteel fiction whose readers make up a large part of Cozzens' newly won public.

Finally the book presents a reasonably suspenseful story, with a number of interesting sub-plots, in a high literary, superficially realistic, prose. It seldom attains the level of second-rate Arnold Bennett or third-rate Galsworthy, but it need do neither to provide an oasis in the desert of most current American fiction. It is easy to see how any educated and insensitive reader, compared it with such neighbors on this week's best-seller list as *Peyton Place*, *Alfred Hitchcock's Strangers on the Train*, and the inanities of pseudo-historical romances might feel he had discovered an honest, workmanlike, neglected writer. But leafing through 570 nicely written, plausibly detailed, so largely meaningless pages, one can help exclaiming with bluff Prince Hal: "O monstrous! but one half-penny worth of bread to this intolerable deal of sack!"

ANNETTE T. RUBINSTEIN

Search for Kicks

ON THE ROAD, by Jack Kerouac.
Viking Press. \$3.95.

"THEY rushed down the street together, digging everything in the early way they had, which later became so much sadder and perceptive and blank. But then they danced down the streets like dingedodies, and I shambled after as I've been doing all my life after people who interest me, because the only people for me are the mad ones, the ones who are mad to live, mad to talk, mad to be saved, desirous of everything at the same time, the ones who never yawn or say a commonplace thing, but burn, burn, burn like fabulous yellow roman candles exploding like spiders across the stars and in the middle you see the blue centerlight pop and everybody goes 'Awww!' What did they call such young people in Goethe's Germany?"

This from page eight and the dust wrapper.

That particular question may not seem relevant. But one can admire the "dingledodies" and the verve, and the passage as a whole is a fair sample of the style and attitude of this book—a somewhat exasperating mixture of dropped stitches and found objects.

A synopsis of the book is difficult, because it is without conventional plot. Briefly, it is the story of the wanderings of a young writer round about the country. In the course of his travels he "educates" himself in most of the usual and some of the unusual ways—sex, drink, dope, poverty, etc. Aside from the narrator, the central character is one Dean Moriarty whose ramblings around and whose drive toward new experience, whose ecstatic digging of all scenes, draws the other characters along in his wake.

The book itself is hard to get hold of. In structure (if that is the proper word) the book is a picaresque novel, a series of incidents strung together without real dramatic development; but to look at the book as a novel is likely to cause us dismay and sidetrack us from the real interest which the work has for us. Better to read it as a kind of free biography, legitimately elaborated—a kind of wants-to-be prose-poem of a piece of the times (the late 40's) as they were felt by a young bohemian anxious to "dig everything." Now the dust-jacket would have us think of Thomas Wolfe, but *On the Road*, while it is continually promising to break into great song, never really gets off the ground. (This is, I think, the main weakness of the book; it is always signifying, but the prose never quite does get to the level that Kerouac's real and powerful feeling about the country needs.)

Better to think of Floyd Dell's *Moon Calf*, maybe, because *On the Road* is a naive and charming book in many ways and it has—or wants to have—for its narrator a kind of Holy Fool. (It's being whispered at the tops of people's voices that the "beat" in "beat generation" is short for "beatific," you dig?). Consider: At the beginning of the book the narrator is hitch-hiking west. Gets to Bear Mountain and it rains bloody murder, and he stands by the road, soaking and cold and miserable. Sounds like something out of the literature of social protest? Or like something that happened to everybody a few years back? (Some people are *still* standing there probably, it being possible to remain stony broke all these years). Does our hero sweat it out there? Hell, no. He gets the

bus back to New York and then to Chicago and *then* hitch-hikes west. It's this kind of pratfall (with its odd echo, almost parody, of Depression experience) which gives the book its charm.

"CHARM" may seem to be precisely the wrong word. Certainly there will be readers of this book who will take Kerouac for a monster, in which case to call the work charming is to invite damnation. People who *do* object to the book will do so, probably, not so much because of incidents which they may find sordid—there is so much literary lowlife around that it's pretty hard to shock any longer—but because of what they feel as the moral neutrality of the author. But moral neutrality generally proceeds out of a feeling that humanity is composed of a bunch of unregenerate bastards. (One of Steig's characters: "People are no damn good," as strong as Schopenhauer, but more poetic). Kerouac's feeling is just about the exact opposite; he loves people—all of them it seems—maybe a little too much; and there is another body of readers who will toss him out as a weepy sentimentalist, the Uncle Toby of bop literature.

This would be a convenient view, but I don't think it is the correct one. No, the "moral neutrality" comes out of what can only be called acceptance. Kerouac is a great Yea-sayer. What is confusing is that the objects of the writer's affirmation and his way of presenting his experience seem so flushed with naivete that a reader is likely to peg him as a juvenile delinquent (second generation) or sentimentalist and let it go at that. After all, there is so little writing that says

yes to anything at all these days that an attitude of general affirmation seems very queer indeed. And the style doesn't help. Here is a moment of vision:

It made me think of the Big Po vision in Graetna with Old Bull. And for just a moment I reached a point of ecstasy that I always wanted to reach, which was the complete step across chronological time into timeless shadows, and wonderment in the bleakness of the mortal realm, and the sensation of death kicking at my heels to move on, with a phantom dogging its own heels, and myself hurrying to plank where all the angels dove on and flew into the holy void of uncreated emptiness, the potent and inconceivable radiancies shining in bright Mind Essence. . . . I realized it was only because of the stability of the intrinsic Mind that these ripples of birth and death took place. . . . I felt sweet swinging bliss, like a big shot of heroin in the mainline vein; like a gulp of wine in the afternoon. . . .

The body of this sounds like Buddhism at the level of an early morning inspirational program on the radio; a conclusion like pure corn; but it is meant as a joke. (This same problem with style has led some readers to the conclusion that Kerouac's feeling about these states—which I take to be genuine—is nothing more than chauvinism or the "space sickness" which grips the Easterner once he gets across 14 Hudson.)

If the passage above is not a joke, what does it mean in relation to the book as a whole? The central technique (Mind Essence) is Buddhist. In Zen Buddhism, the goal of thought discipline is the achievement of *Satori* or Enlightenment—a flashing end-instant of insight wherein one sees the true nature of Reality, becomes at home

in the world for the first time, where—in *everything* becomes pure joy. For a man who has achieved *Satori*, everything becomes an act of praise.

Is Kerouac's affirmation of this sort, and are we looking at the Great (Buddhist) American Novel? Some will say so. If we agree, it puts immediately into the best possible light Kerouac's heroizing of Dean Moriarty and the other dingbats, junkies, etc. For the post-Satori man, the twice-born, is beyond good and evil—beyond these masks he sees the essential Reality and it is good. Everything becomes a subject for praise.

But praise, of course, is the wrong term. *Nothing* is required—no act of praise or love—recognition or seeing is itself praise and love; and it is just here that we find the fly in Kerouac's Dharma. For if he *were* the twice-born man, the Enlightened, he would not find it necessary to insist on the values of Moriarty. The Enlightened Man is at peace—he does not find it necessary to race about the country; he has learned to sit still. It is just this peace, the mark of the Enlightened Man, which Kerouac and his characters lack. Praise though they will, they continue hunting for kicks, the stronger the better, and eventually they wear out.

Is the book then just one more saga of the Romantic's dreary search for exotic experience? Or is it simply a compound of pretentiousness and naïveté? I don't think so. For all the weaknesses of the book, and for all the spots that are downright ugly (I am thinking here of the narrator's abandonment of his Mexican girl early in the book and the frequent failures of love and comradeship on the part of others) there is a surprising sweetness here,

an off-beat attitude (as if something of Satori did exist in the writer) which, for me, gives the book value.

Kerouac is "the spokesman" for the Beat Generation—one of a dozen or two such spokesmen. So they say; but I think that Kerouac is a maverick in that herd. Most of this "new literature," or "West Coast School" or what-have-you is characterized by simple and hysterical negation. It attacks society ("the social lie") on an all-out basis, or so it says it does; but since it snuggles up to various joys of the lumpen it is really not very far out and can even be contained by the "system." The attack thus remains pretty callow and ill-considered; although one has to sympathize with the motives. The lack of any political orientation leaves these writers with the feeling that they live in a permanent hell.

Kerouac is different in that he is affirmative. The affirmation may seem to many not much better than the negation, and perhaps it is bizarre, young, ill-directed. But in these times to love anyone or anything is almost a revolutionary act.

N.B. *Go*, a novel by Clellon Holmes—a more conventional book and, as a novel, better in the conventional sense—makes use of the same milieu and some of the same characters: Allen Ginsberg, who appears here as Carlo Marx, Dean Moriarty (as Hart Kennedy in *Go*) and, apparently, Kerouac himself. The interest, in *Go*, is more documentary, but there is some of the same fascination for the Moriarty-character as in *On the Road*. This character, who digs everything and who is willing to go to the end of the line for his kicks even if it means addiction, insanity or death is an old Ro-

mantic icon. I think Kerouac may be able to see around it.

Shantih, Shantih, Shantih.

THOMAS MCGRATH

Freedom in Literature

LITERATURE AND THE IMAGE OF MAN, by Leo Lowenthal. Beacon Press, Boston. \$4.95.

FROM a professor at the University of California in Berkeley has come a short and profound book examining the European society of the past three hundred years through the medium of its great writers. The wisdom packed between these covers gives us a hopeful view of the kind of teaching going on at the universities. A reservation to be made is that Professor Lowenthal is a teacher of sociology, not literature. His view of the firm ties between literature and society, and the illumination that each throws upon the other, is one not generally accepted in the literature departments.

The theme is the middle class concept of freedom, from the time of its rise in the Renaissance to its collapse under fascism. The author starts with the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the period of the rise of unified and independent nations, and the breakdown of the feudal world. Out of this period he selects, for study, Lope de Vega, Cervantes and Calderon from Spain; Shakespeare from England; Corneille, Racine and Moliere from France. He then leaps to the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth, the period of the great bourgeois democratic revolutions

and the fight for parliamentary democracy. The figure selected from this period is Goethe. The next stage he chooses is the late nineteenth century and early twentieth, when "middle class" or capitalist economy is dominant and all society is pervaded by its throat competitiveness. The figures selected from this period are Henrik Ibsen and Knut Hamsun.

The author's aim is primarily sociological: a study of society through literature, not of literature through society. He does not intend these essays to be taken as rounded estimates of the life-work and artistic greatness of the writers he studies. His premise is that a student of society must know not only how people live and what they do but how they thought; what their views were on human relations, human possibilities, freedom and progress. And this, the deepest insights are found in the great writers, the creators of works of art. As he says, "certainly other sources describe the occupations and preoccupations of the bourgeois at the time of Moliere; but only Moliere reveals what it was like to live this experience."

The book is as penetrating a piece of literary criticism as it is of social thought. He says, "Whenever a scholar looks down below the surface of a subject, he comes up against a bedrock of problems which lead him outside his field." They demand that he bring to his study the perspective of the whole view of life. And it is this bedrock problem Lowenthal is interested in. What he treats is the relationship of the individual to society from the rise of the bourgeois society out of the feudal world to the time when bourgeois society is torn apart by its contradictions.

Thus the author comes up directly against a central problem of literary theory, and, for that matter, of all art theory. It is that of the so-called "universals," such as love, death, fear, sickness, hunger, which some theorists refer to as the essential and eternal problems of the arts, outside of time and place. Lowenthal disposes of this in his opening essay, *Social Meanings in Literature*, which to this reviewer is a classic of literary theory. What he asserts is that these so-called "eternal problems" go through constant transformations, and that the very way in which a problem is posed rises out of society. "Most generalized concepts about human nature found in literature prove on close inspection to be related to social and political change. . . . Man is born, strives, loves, suffers, and dies in any society, but it is the portrayal of *how* he reacts to these common human experiences that matters, since they almost invariably have a social nexus."

He follows this up brilliantly in the essays on the individual writers. The first writers he takes up live in a period when individual freedom finds its "self-realization" in society. The very upheavals in society, with the "middle class" beginning to erect its own institutions on the debris of feudalism, open up new avenues for human activity, and new vistas of thought and knowledge. One of these new institutions is that of monarchy, breaking the power of the big, independent feudal nobles and creating a national state. It is in Spain that this monarchy is most absolute and authoritarian, putting a check upon further middle class and mercantile-industrial progress. Lowenthal contrasts in this respect, the

thinking of Calderon, who accepts this authoritarian kingship completely and Cervantes, who is far more critical. It is Cervantes, he shows, who is far closer in touch with real life.

This difference affects both the philosophy and style of the two writers. Both project an "ideal world" in their writings. But Calderon's "ideal" is a refuge from reality, an opposite to it; Cervantes' is a vision of human possibilities. "In some of Calderon's plays, ironically enough, there is a quixotic element of doubt about reality, and wherever we encounter it even the courtly pomp with which in his own life he was surrounded seems to take on a dream-like quality. But such ambiguity with regard to reality is far removed from the phantasy of Cervantes, whose idealism does not prevent him from acutely observing the world around him."

In England, where the throne fosters mercantile progress, there is a far greater "enthusiasm for the distant corners of an expanding world." In a brilliant analysis of the opening, shipwreck scene of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, delving into not merely the events but the images and language used by the various personages, the author shows the sharp contrast between the sailors, the "artisans"; whose grip is on reality, who know exactly what they can do in the emergency, and the feudal nobles, who are helpless and become utter hindrances. This is his conclusion. "The feudal lords emerge as stupid; they do not know what the relations of science, work, technology and human skill really are. While the boat, so to speak, sails to the new world, the old lords are suffocating in an out-

moded and completely senseless state of mind."

Such illuminations are due to the fact that Professor Lowenthal, sociologist though he may call himself, uses a method at the opposite extreme from customary sociology. It is a sensitive, cultured and genuinely aesthetic approach, one that literary critics might profit from. It seeks out the views of the writer, not in what might be taken as his bald statement of belief, but in the living human portraits he creates, how they talk and act, and how this relates to the turbulent demands of social life. The climax of this penetrating study is reached in the two figures closest to modern times, Ibsen and Hamsun. Now the problem raised in the Renaissance reaches its most challenging contradiction. Bourgeois society, which in its revolutionary growth opened up such vistas of individual progress, now, in its brutal, incessant competitive war appears as an enemy. In discussing Ibsen, the vulgar sociologist might seize upon the statement of Dr. Stockmann that ends the play, *An Enemy of the People*, "He is strongest who stands alone." Lowenthal looks deeper into what Ibsen says through his actual people and through what happens to them. "Although Ibsen states in various forms the view of Dr. Stockmann that he who stands alone is most powerful, nevertheless his dramatic work illustrates again and again that the enforced self-dependence of man leads to solitude and loss of vitality. The pursuit of special self-interest spells ruin, and not fulfillment." Such a method of analysis is especially fruitful in respect to Ibsen, for as Lowenthal points out, he rarely dealt with "specific social, political or economic

questions." His scenes are usually "in the home" and the problems raised seem to be those of private life. But, again Lowenthal shows that personal conflicts are, if understood correctly, also social conflicts. "The characters themselves explain these conflicts on the grounds of inner necessity: they cannot change their nature. This explanation, however, leaves out account the social connections which are clearly established. Ellida, the wife from the Sea, finds life unbearable as she recognizes that her marriage actually rests on a sales transaction, the tawdry yet expedient middle-class marriages of Bernick, Tesman, Alving and Borkman signify that we are concerned with something else than innate human nature. In other instances man problems develop which seemingly do not have any connection with material questions or broader social relationships, yet they are described in almost the same language as that which is used to describe instances of business and professional competition."

Ibsen, if he found only frustration in bourgeois society, retained a sense of hope and of human dignity. While Knut Hamsun, however, the individualist rage against the obstacles surround him turns into fury against all people, democracy, humanism, himself. He accepts fascism. And Lowenthal offers a deep insight into the relation between reactionary politics and reactionary views of life. "In the twenties and thirties his (Knut Hamsun's) work not only enjoyed an excellent international literary reputation but also was regarded—even by liberals and socialists—as politically acceptable. However in his act of joining Quisling's party during the Sec-

World War he expressed in practice the authoritarian themes and moods that had long been implicit in his novels: the pagan awe of unlimited and intelligible forces of nature, the mystique of blood and race, hatred of the working class and of clerks, the blind submission to authority, the abrogation of individual responsibility, anti-intellectualism and spiteful distrust of urban middle-class life in general."

This is a challenging thought which demands to be discussed wherever there is interest in literature and life. Lowenthal is not implying that writers who reveal such turns to irrationality, racism, and contempt for people should forthwith be described as fascists. What he is saying is that in any adult approach to literature, the battle of ideas is crucial, and that the recent experiences of fascism have given us enough to go on as to what kind of thinking leads to human progress and what kind leads to human destruction. There is no doubt that such a realistic approach will raise cries of horror in the university and literary circles where T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound are still worshipped, and around them is built a holy sepulchre dedicated to the mysteries of "art form."

Lowenthal of course does not take up matters of form, except by implication here and there, for this is outside the limits he has set himself. It can be shown that literary or art form is quite different from a certain, precious finessence with raw materials of words and phrases; that it too, in its strength and weakness, follows certain patterns of the artist's relation to society and his fellow human beings; that Eliot and Pound are artistically most expressive when they reveal most honestly their

own desolation of spirit, and that when they try to erect this desolation into a grandiose structure of philosophy, history and religion, the art form they create is as collapsible as their views of life are bleak.

The evil however of this "mystique of form" is that it proclaims the utter unimportance of ideas and thought. These are presumably trivia, playthings, a game, an arbitrary starting-point for an exercise in word sounds. The writer must never be a thinker. If he seeks any content at all, it must be found in the realm of primitive mythology. He must put the mind to sleep. Thus students are taught never to weigh ideas rationally against their relevance to life. And the importance of Professor Lowenthal's book is that it is in every paragraph both an appeal for a rational, scientific and humanist way of thought, and an example of a rational, scientific and humanist mind at work.

One last question raises itself, the relation of Professor Lowenthal's thinking to a Marxist view of literature and society. There can be no question that any Marxist will learn a good deal from him. The main difference lies in the Marxist view of class struggle as a motive force both in history and the conflict of ideas. Certainly Lowenthal is aware of the existence of social classes themselves. They are beautifully delineated in, for example, the analysis of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. However it is especially true of the nineteenth century that one cannot discuss bourgeois thought adequately without discussing working class thought, and the fact that every move of the middle class to broaden the base of democracy for itself was tempered by its fear that this would give more power to the

working class. Lowenthal does touch slightly on the working class, in discussing Ibsen, but here it becomes the take-off for a wonderfully perceptive analysis of the place of women in capitalist society. He quotes Ibsen: "The reshaping of social conditions which is now under way out there in Europe is concerned chiefly with the future position of that of the workingman and of women." He adds, summarizing Ibsen's views: "Women fare badly in a society where economic and social functions are almost exclusively male prerogatives. . . . They must not only suffer from the pressures of society, they must also seek the approval of men. . . . But the disenfranchisement of women has positive as well as negative results. Thanks to the fact that public life is ruled by men, women retain traces of another kind of existence; they are at least capable of expressing true human traits. . . . The clash between the self-seeking world of men, and love and humanity, represented by women, is crucial in Ibsen's drama."

Yet it is not women as women, but the working class of men and women, since it must cooperate even under capitalism for its own protection, which will also carry through the transformation of society that will end the war of "all against all," bringing about a new expansion of humanist possibilities. There is no intention here to suggest that Professor Lowenthal should have selected other literary figures than he did. Had he however touched on nineteenth century France, where after each successive revolution (1830, 1848, 1870) against the right, the middle class turned savagely and murderously against the working class

left, fearful of the left demand for a truly democratic republic, he would have come directly up against the main theme of class struggle. It is revealed in the great French writers, in Balzac, Hugo, Stendhal, De Maupassant, Zola. Had he turned to England, to Dickens, he would have found the voice of the small artisan bitterly criticizing the rich bourgeoisie. Had he turned to the great writers of nineteenth century Russia to Turgenev, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Gorky, he would have come up against a different class problem; a powerful movement of the exploited peasantry taking place in a period when capitalism was itself far advanced in the world, so that the movement engendered a criticism both of the hangovers of feudalism and of capitalism. That it ended by joining hands with the working class and moving into socialism.

All that this means, however, is that Professor Lowenthal's book represents the penetrating kind of thinking that immediately suggests a host of further thoughts. In its area, the book is a classic.

SIDNEY FINKELSTEIN

Thinker Unchained

THE OPEN MARXISM OF ANTONIO GRAMSCI, translated and annotated by Carl Marzani. Cameron Associates. \$2.00.

ONE is tempted to say of this slender volume that it tells us more about the social-political thought of Carl Marzani than it does of that of his countryman, Antonio Gramsci.

is to the credit of Marzani, the publishers, and Liberty Book Club (with both of which he is associated) that the attention of the American Left is called to the courageous life and death and creative thinking of one of Mussolini's most distinguished victims and one of the most fertile Marxist thinkers of the first half of the twentieth century. We place Gramsci best, perhaps, when we realize that he died in prison half way between the Russian Revolution and today. Marzani believes that we understand him best when we recognize that he "is concerned with the problems of transition from the old society to the new, the problems after socialist state power is established: the role of intellectuals in such a state, the dilemmas of freedom versus security, all the problems which are today so much to the fore." (p. 7.)

Antonio Gramsci gave up the prospect of a significant academic career to throw himself into the struggles of the working class. The newspaper he founded in 1919, *Ordine Nuovo*, issued a revolutionary program for the Italian workers whose "workers' councils" were that same year seizing big factories in the Turin region. With Togliatti and others, he was one of the founders of the Italian Communist Party in 1921. In 1924 he founded the long since famous *Unita* and was elected to parliament. Two years later he was arrested and sentenced to twenty years imprisonment. Although he died in prison in 1937 he had already filled thirty-two notebooks with what amounted to nearly 3,000 closely written pages on Marxist philosophy, historical materialism, the class struggle, and the problems of the revolution in Italy in particular. These writings were

first published in Italy between 1947 and 1955, running to some eight volumes, with one reaching ten editions and most of the others four to six different editions.

None of these works of Gramsci has appeared in English, although another volume of selected writings has just been published in England under the title: *Antonio Gramsci: The Modern Prince and Other Writings*. This is a larger and more comprehensive work than the one under review and it is to be hoped that International Publishers will follow through its present plans to re-issue it in this country.

By the phrase "open Marxism" Marzani means that kind of Marxist thinking, and the application of Marxist principles and methodology to given countries and times, that has long been distinguished, without always too much justification, as "creative Marxism" as opposed to "dogmatic Marxism." That Gramsci was this kind of original and creative thinker appears even from the meagre selections contained in this volume. Unfortunately, Marzani persists throughout—in interpreting Gramsci through copious and often little relevant notes of his own—in reading him not from the standpoint of the Italy and the world of Gramsci's times but of the world of de-Stalinization, of Poland and Hungary and the crisis in the Communist Party of the United States. This method must unavoidably make the reader question whether the excerpts from Gramsci contained herein really represent the essence of his thought or are simply those the editor found most congenial at the present moment.

All in all, this is a strange way of presenting a serious thinker. In 59

pages of selections from the author, at no time is he given more than two pages without a lengthy note, averaging roughly half a page, by the editor. And in these 59 pages of selected bits there occur a total of 26 such interruptions by the editor—interruptions designed to insure that the reader doesn't miss the meaning of Gramsci's ideas for American Marxists today. This method of presentation is not improved upon by the placing of words and phrases of Gramsci in italics. Of course, the editor adds that the Italics are his own, but he has already slanted the text in his direction. Finally, there are no indications whatsoever of the volumes from which the scanty excerpts are taken, no page references, or any other indication by which a scholarly reader could check the translated selection against the Italian original.

There is enough in this little book, nevertheless, to enable the reader to draw two conclusions. The first is that Antonio Gramsci would undoubtedly prove extraordinarily worth reading—comparable, perhaps to Mao Tse-tung. He employed and developed Marxism in the process of seeking to understand the social processes in which he immersed himself and to move the masses towards socialism through that understanding. The second conclusion is that Carl Marzani appears to have many insights into the present crisis of Marxism in the United States and considerable of value to say about it which we can well hope he will find adequate occasion to say. One wishes that the present book had given the reader more to satisfy either of these two worthwhile objectives.

HOWARD SELSAM

God Is Not Enough

LINES OF LIFE, by Francois Mauriac
Farrar, Straus and Cudahy. \$3

FRANCOIS MAURIAC, who has been called "the outstanding novelist of the Catholic literary revival in France, has in *Lines of Life* written a novel one longs to re-write. With very few changes, it could be made into a story—still deeply Christian in inspiration—whose theme would be "The love of money is the root of all evil"; through its theme it could become the study of the effects of deprivation of love in childhood, and truly those who love money cannot love anything else—not even their own children.

We have here the story of a doubting and yet smugly religious young man. Pierre Gornac is the son of an unloving, formally religious middle-class woman of the province of Bordeaux, above all attached to her family farms and vineyards. The novel tells how, out of good intentions and yet, so complicated, truly, are human emotions, also out of jealousy Pierre breaks up an engagement which could have resulted only in an unhappy marriage. By so doing, he directly causes the death of the charming young profligate (also the son of money-loving parents) Robert La Sesque, and lovely Paula's even marriage to an older, wealthy man whom she does not love.

Mauriac sees the world in which we live and its money-bred evils clearly, but among the complex of human evils, he finds the love

and the only refuge. Pierre, whom he never attempts to characterize as anything but an unhappy young prig is it, because he is a mystic, for Mauriac intimately the man who is capable of salvation. Pierre is saved—he becomes a missionary priest, going out to Africa to preach, no doubt, a doctrine of passivity. For Mauriac clearly states the moral he intends:

"Pierre . . . saw, with the eyes of the spirit, God fastened with three nails, motionless upon the cross, incapable of doing anything for men who have shed his blood. Thus must His disciples do: intervening only by the way of sacrifice and blood-offering. He can change nothing in human beings, nor can human-beings change themselves unless it be by the Creator's will operating in each one of them. They must be ransomed as they are, with all their load of propensities and desires; they must be taken, ravished, loved, with all their sins still on them. All one can do is bleed and obliterate oneself for them."

It is unfortunate that Mauriac's intelligence and sensitivity do not lead him to the opposite doctrine—surely also acceptable to Catholicism!—the doctrine of salvation through works. For it is love in action—a stern and healing love—which will destroy the cancer of possession and make man's good manifest—greater than his evil. But to know this, one must be a socialist, and that, as is well known, Mauriac is not. ..

MARGUERITE WEST

Engels, and Lenin, by Stanley W. Moore. Paine-Whitman. \$4.50.

PROFESSOR MOORE set himself a very worthwhile task in this little volume; he summarizes the teachings of Marx, Engels, and Lenin on the State and their critique of the nature and limitations of capitalist democracy, or democracy under capitalism. He also touches on some questions of economics and philosophy that are pertinent to the understanding of the Marxist theory of the State its origin and role in society.

The purpose of the book is not a popularization but rather a synopsis of the Marxist teachings directed to the serious student who wants to find out for himself what Marxism 'really' has to say on such topics as, democracy, dictatorship, the role of force in history, the nature of capitalist exploitation, problems of peaceful transition to socialism, etc. etc. For that kind of student this volume can be very helpful. The bibliography and references are very thorough and they offer a guide to reading in Marxism which can save a person a great deal of time and effort.

The book can be very helpful particularly at the present time when the whole question of the Marxist theory of the state is being reexamined in the United States as well as in the rest of the world. The Marxist theory of the state bears reexamination not because it has been proven false by history, but because, on the contrary, the last forty years since Lenin wrote, *State and Revolution* have confirmed the correctness of the Marxist theory of the state. The theory has to be reexamined because as capitalism decays and socialism

Guide for Marxists

THE CRITIQUE OF CAPITALIST DEMOCRACY: An Introduction to the Theory of the State in Marx,

advances on a world scale some aspects of the theory become outdated. To follow an outdated theory means to become dogmatic and to lose touch with reality. Unfortunately in the process of reexamination it is also possible for some people to throw doubt on the whole theory and to distort its fundamental principles. This seems to be happening among the Left in the United States where the problem of transition to socialism is discussed and conclusions arrived at without due regard to the difficulty of the problem and the need for a scientific approach and methods of study. The student of Marxism who wants to find his way amidst the bewildering claims must first make an effort to understand the theory as formulated by the founders of scientific socialism. In studying the classics it becomes possible to judge who is developing the theory and who distorts it.

Professor Moore might have been more effective in this volume if he would have used a simple method of notation. The method he uses is so complicated that it takes a certain amount of time to master it, and in my attempts to check some of his references the need to count the para-

graphs from the beginning of a chapter or section makes for very tedious work and I wasn't always sure that I had made a mistake in counting the paragraphs. Where the references are voluminous a new method of notation must improve on the old one and I don't think professor Moore's method is an improvement.

On the role of force in the development of capitalism the author sees a difference of opinion between Engels as stated in *Anti-Dühring* and some of his writings, and Marx. I checked the references and I did not find any difference of opinion concerning this stance. It would be strange to find substantial differences considering that Engels sent the manuscript to Marx and also that Marx wrote chapters of part II, the part that deals with economic problems. It seems reasonable to suppose that Marx might have noticed a difference of opinion.

In general I think this little volume is an example of good scholarship, a good grasp of Marxism. The explanations of theoretical questions and the bibliography will be welcomed by all serious students of Marxism.

MYER V.

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