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Walther League

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NOVEMBER, 1945

THE

# CRESSET

Will Men Be Wise?

The Lesson of  
London

Philatelic Philosophy

By H. H. Umbach

Some Treasured  
Recordings



A REVIEW OF  
LITERATURE,  
THE ARTS, AND  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Vol. IX

No. 1

Thirty Cents

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# THE CRESSET

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# THE CRESSET

VOLUME 9

NOVEMBER 1945

NUMBER 1

## Notes and Comment

BY THE EDITORS

### Will Men Be Wise?

WHILE the war was raging in its terrible fury, many serious-minded men and women throughout the world thought more than once that all culture and all promise of culture would be smashed to atoms. Mankind was concentrating on destruction. Fabulous sums of money were being spent day in and day out to maim, kill, burn, and wreck.

The war had produced its own type of literature, as wars invariably do. It was a literature founded largely on hatred. The performance of music had worked its potent magic in the belligerent nations. In fact, concerts featuring works of genuine worth flourished in wartime more than ever before. What about the composing of new music? Many songs dealing with some aspect of war-

fare came into being; but few, if any, of them had any intrinsic or lasting merit. Stalin-minded Dmitri Shostakovich wrote two widely discussed symphonies; but more than one budding composer went to his death on some battlefield while the carnage continued, and more than one discovered to his sorrow that the tedium and the brutality incident to war-making thwarted and crushed all hope of inspiration and growth. Science made impressive strides to the fore while the nations raged at one another; but progress in science was pointed mainly toward destruction. Medical science alone had healing in its wings. Radar, the smashed atom, and other far-reaching discoveries were used to tear down, not to build.

If the world is wise enough to concentrate on the ways of peace

rather than on the ways of war, there can and will be a mighty revival in science and in the arts. But such a renaissance cannot and will not come about if mankind continues to be disturbed by bickering among the diplomats and by unseemly haggling in the domain of industry. In all probability, there will not be the slightest disposition to spend on science and the arts even one-tenth as much money as was poured so lavishly into the greedy maw of war; but even far less than one-tenth would produce results which would render notable service to progress and well-being. The potentialities of atomic energy are almost beyond imagination; the possibilities in music, painting, sculpture, literature, architecture, and other important fields are vast. Needless to say, the prospect would be infinitely brighter than it actually is if would-be diplomats, vote-hunting politicians, and so-called statesmen could, by some miracle, be induced to devote their brains, their tongues, and their physical energy to something different from spheres of influence, balances of power, and petty bickering. If, as some eminent scientists fear, the world is not yet ready for the unheard-of power inherent in atomic energy, it is because altogether too many pygmy-minded men in all parts of the

globe seem to be convinced that they must keep themselves in the limelight by sowing seeds which, sooner or later, are bound to spring up into war and frightful destruction.



### The Lesson of London

AT last America is emerging from its dream-world and is beginning to learn the facts of life in the post-war world. The London Conference was a fiasco; even Secretary Byrnes made that admission, and he should know. But it could not be otherwise if the supine American policy of appeasement toward Russia was to come to an end—as it had to, if our nation was to retain its self-respect and its position in the post-war world. Commissar Molotov berated Messrs. Byrnes and Bevin for rejecting his “compromise.” What he really meant was that for the first time the western democracies did not let Russia completely have her own way. The London Conference simply brought into the open the cleavage between two fundamentally opposite ideologies—democracy and totalitarianism. In that respect, the London meeting served a constructive purpose, after all.

Slowly the grim facts about the Russian policy in eastern Europe

are coming to light. Harrowing reports come from the hapless Baltic nations—Lithuania, Latvia, and Esthonia—which have been ravished by the Soviet invaders to whom the Anglo-American appeasement policy had given the green light. The brave little Christian democracy of Finland, about which we used to wax so sentimental before it became fashionable to be enamored of Russia, is now ground under the Communist heel, while Finnish patriots are branded as “Fascists.” Conditions in Bulgaria under Russian domination are frightful beyond description, and American military personnel are subjected to galling indignities at the hands of the Soviets which are borne only to avoid an international incident. Poland, Rumania, and Yugoslavia are shackled with the iron fetters of totalitarian Communism.

The Atlantic Charter has become a scrap of paper and the “four freedoms” are an unknown quantity behind that “iron veil of secrecy” which, as ex-Prime Minister Churchill declared, shuts off eastern Europe from the outside world. Former President Hoover, in a recent address at Wilson College, inveighed against the regime of slavery which the victorious Russians have instituted, stating: “Now we find hundreds of millions of human beings breathe less

independence, less liberty, less freedom from fear than before we started on this crusade. Their successful rescue at that time was the justification for our first crusade. Can we honestly say that we have not surrendered these peoples on the altar of appeasement?”

The name of Munich is infamous because of its association with the fatal policy of appeasement—appeasement of a totalitarian dictator. Future historians may well consign Teheran, Yalta, and Potsdam to the same category of infamy, and for the same reason.



#### M.V.A.

CONSERVATIVE estimates place the unemployment figure in the United States for the coming year at between six and eight millions. At the present time there are hundreds of thousands of persons in our rural areas with standards of living so low as to make us wonder whether or not UNRRA shouldn't begin at home.

This is not a pretty picture; but there are many things which can and will be done to erase it. One of these steps would be the immediate construction and operation of the Missouri Valley Authority. This undertaking, which has been in the blueprint stage for some time, could afford a partial answer

to many reconstruction problems.

Much criticism has been leveled at the TVA, after which the Missouri Valley Authority is to be patterned. But a careful reading of the facts concerning the Tennessee Valley project, facts which have appeared in some of our leading magazines, seems to indicate the following:

1. The Authority has greatly increased industry and the gains from agriculture in the Valley.
2. Education and better health standards have followed in the wake of the TVA-created prosperity.
3. TVA has afforded to the rural areas cheap power and conveniences never before known to these people.
4. Its series of dams have done much to prevent floods.
5. It is not a political organization or machine; it has done something which private industry would not do—or could not afford to do.



### Let's Be Humane!

A CARTOON in one of our leading dailies a few days ago effectively portrayed the tragedy of our post-war policy toward Germany. A clean-cut American soldier is standing amid the ruins of that defeated country, holding by the hand a tow-headed little tike, clad in rags and bitterly weeping. The child's figure is la-

beled "Future Germany." On the other side of the Atlantic a long-haired, frenetic radical, waving a banner inscribed "Hatred—Revenge—Fear—Savagery," is screaming, "Don't you dare help him!"

This picture aptly points up the cruel anomaly of our present occupation policy. Is this the expression of that idealism and that superior righteousness in whose name we allegedly fought and won the war? What kind of people are we, that we should treat the helpless women and innocent children of a defeated enemy nation with less humaneness than we exhibit to the most depraved criminal awaiting execution in an American penitentiary? It is one thing to hate the evils of Nazism—as every advocate of the free and democratic way of life assuredly does. But it is something altogether different to hate and execute vengeance upon those who by no stretch of the imagination can be held responsible for the iniquities of the German militarists or of the Nazi leaders. When even so hard-bitten a soldier as General Patton sees the wisdom of pursuing a policy of humanity and moderation toward the prostrate foe, that should give us pause. But it is significant that General Patton was promptly sacked for his attitude by General Eisenhower.

Are we so devoid of human sen-

timent that we can take pleasure from the shocking reports emanating from Germany—the reports of thousands of corpses hanging from the trees in the woods outside Berlin; of the death of 90% of the infants born in a German town during a given month; of the death by starvation of one out of every three German refugees? Is this the post-war policy for which America is to be remembered? Are we to imitate the methods of Hitler, against which we fought at so great a cost?

Why are our occupation authorities in Germany so blind that they do not see that the "hard peace" of which they prate will only sow the seeds of undying hatred toward America in the hearts of the German people, which in the course of time may well flower into a new and ghastlier war? Why do they not take a leaf from the magnificent record of General MacArthur in the occupation of Japan? MacArthur has shown that a nation can be thoroughly subjugated, humiliated, and divested of all its war-making potential without recourse to brutality and sadism. MacArthur's primary consideration is justice and humanity rather than "hardness." Let General Eisenhower take note.



### Cancer Research

ONE of the most encouraging of the new signs of the times is the recent announcement, made by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, of a fund to be provided for cancer research.

Certainly, this is a step in the right direction by one of the largest industrial groups in the nation. During the past four years we have spent billions to kill. Now a few million, at least, are to be pigeon-holed for the relief of suffering.

Americans are strange people. Statistics, which, it is true, may prove anything, reveal that we spend more each year for tooth paste or cosmetics or amusement than we spend for scientific research in the field of medicine. In spite of this fact, science has seen to it that many diseases have ceased to be the killers they were in the past. Heart disease and cancer the exceptions.

Now, by means of research carried on by some of our leading scientists and directed and administered by the methods of modern business—the same force which worked our miracle of war production—cancer may soon be isolated and controlled. Remember, there was no prophylaxis or cure for tuberculosis or malaria a half-century ago.



### Back to Nature

AS rationing is ended, and once more country roads and state and national parks come close, like extra rooms, to our homes. And once again, too, we realize that these lovely places will stay beautiful only as long as we conserve them. Each visitor must realize that when the single flower he picks or the one paper wrapper he leaves is multiplied by hundreds or thousands, the countryside or park will no longer be delightful.

The superhighways projected for the "world of tomorrow" will be of great convenience, but Americans will not want to overlook the charm of narrow woodland and mountain lanes. The building of the one should not mean the neglect or loss of the other.

In addition to such magnificent parks as the Skyline Drive in Virginia, Dunes State Park in Indiana, Glacier National Park in Montana, the Grand Canyon in Arizona, there are in every state small parks and game preserves. Perhaps as part of their postwar planning many communities will arrange to conserve for public relaxation some acres of wooded ground, some swimming hole, some old farm or fine hilltop.



### A Long Career of Service

WITH the recent retirement of the Secretary of War, Henry L. Stimson, a rich career of public service came to a close.

Stimson did not enter public life until he was 40. After that he served the country almost uninterruptedly in various public offices for nearly four decades. President Theodore Roosevelt appointed him United States District Attorney, and as such he gained recognition as a courageous and successful fighter of trusts. President Taft selected him as Secretary of War. Under President Coolidge he served as Governor General of the Philippines. This position gave him an insight into Asiatic affairs which caused him to take a definite stand with respect to United States foreign policy in Asia at the time Japan invaded China. President Hoover appointed him as Secretary of State in his cabinet. Under President Franklin Roosevelt he became our nation's able Secretary of War. As such he will be remembered especially as the man who built and trained the greatest army our country has ever mobilized. Now, at the age of 78, he has retired from public office, and President Truman has appointed Robert Patterson as Stimson's successor.

Henry L. Stimson stands out as a man who was above party poli-

tics. While his political tenets were Republican, he was willing to serve his country also as a member in the cabinet of a Democratic administration. Devotion to duty caused him to see beyond party politics.



### Ten Years of Social Security

**I**N observance of the tenth anniversary of the Social Security Act, Paul V. McNutt, Federal Security Administrator, recently made public a Social Security Board report showing that 4,250,000 men, women and children in all sections of the country are now receiving cash benefits that aggregate \$111,000,000 a month.

The report, transmitted to Mr. McNutt by Arthur J. Altmeyer, chairman of the Social Security Board, pointed out that since the act became law with President Roosevelt's signature on August 14, 1935, social security payments to individuals have approximated \$9,000,000,000.

These payments are made under five complementary programs which form the Social Security Act's five-way attack on insecurity—the Federal system of old-age and survivors insurance, the State-Federal system of unemployment compensation, and the three State-Federal programs of public assist-

ance to the needy aged, dependent children and the needy blind.

The 10-year total is made up of \$900,000,000 under old-age and survivors insurance, \$2,237,000,000 under unemployment compensation and \$5,779,000,000 under public assistance. State funds, as well as Federal, are included.

The "short-term" insurance system, designed to replace approximately half the wage loss of insured unemployed workers during a limited number of weeks, is considered by the board as the first line of defense for the families of approximately 36,000,000 insured workers during the reconversion period, and was designed primarily to tide families over between jobs in times of relatively full employment.

At the start of the current fiscal year, the employment funds of the various states amounted to \$6,679,000,000. The country is much better prepared to meet the shock of post-war transitional unemployment than was the case at the end of the last war when no unemployment compensation system was in effect.

The long-term family insurance program of old-age and survivors insurance is the only completely Federal operation under the act. This provides monthly benefits to retired workers and their families, and to the widows and chil-

dren of insured workers who die.

About 65 per cent of the monthly beneficiaries are women and children, counting some women who have retired and claimed benefits in their own right, rather than on account of a retired or deceased husband. The program of Federal family insurance, although

in its infancy, is beginning to serve its real purpose: To prevent destitution and to provide a basic minimum assistance for American families in which the breadwinners die at any age or stop work because of old-age. It supplements other resources, such as life insurance and savings.



### Thanksgiving

It seems a little thing,  
 Dear Lord, to make word poems  
 On days like this,  
 When clouds race whitely  
 Across an endless blueness,  
 Like Wedgwood loosed to motion,  
 And things immediate are washed in sun.  
 It seems a trifling occupation  
 To pattern words for other hearts,  
 Dear Lord, when You are writing lines  
 In sun and cloud and wind  
 That are more poetry than mine.  
 Let every song I make, dear Lord,  
 Become a whispered thanks  
 For my own breath to sing,  
 But more . . . because of music  
 That You write into the world.

—HELEN MYRTIS LANGE

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# The



# PILGRIM

*"All the trumpets sounded for him on the other side."*

—PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

BY O. P. KRETZMANN

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## The Porch and the Hill\*

THE intellectual history of the Western world is the story of the conflict between Athens and Calvary. This war between natural man and his emphasis on the primacy of reason and regenerate man and his concern for the primacy of faith has touched all areas and levels of life and thought. Again and again it has thrown the world into catastrophes of terror and of hope. Successive ages have been profoundly affected by their ability or inability to believe in belief. Soon or late, every era has come face to face with the question: "Where lies the ultimate authority in life and time?" For the answer man may return to the porch or he may climb the hill, but he cannot be at both places at the same time. They are forever at war. Momentarily, it is true, there may be a truce brought about by the failure of men to work out the full implications

of their allegiance to one or the other, but in the long view there can be no peace between the porch and the hill.

Obviously, this perennial conflict between faith and reason is most clearly evident in the two disciplines in which their essential nature is most sharply expressed, in theology and philosophy. More specifically, the battle is joined most spectacularly in epistemology. For our immediate purpose in this discussion both theology and philosophy are ways of knowing. Both are concerned with meaning, value, ultimate purpose, and first causes. Both come eventually to the last *why* and the final *who* or *what*. Philosophy, in its highest sense, deals with the ultimate meaning of all reality and may be defined as the investigation of the whole of reality in as far as this reality can be known through natural reason unaided by divine revelation. Theology, on the other hand, begins and ends with God and the revelation of

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\*Reprinted from the *Seminarian*, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., October, 1945.

His mind and will concerning the nature and meaning of reality. Clearly, the conflict between the two disciplines is, as in all the wars of men, a dispute over power and boundaries. Do the answers to the ultimate questions of life and history lie in philosophy or in theology or in a synthesis of the two? Is the last and highest knowledge of earth to be centered in man or in God? On the answers to these questions the entire course of western civilization depends.

In the long and troubled history of Christian thought these questions have been answered in various ways, alternating between compromise and conflict. The years of compromise have been longer than the years of conflict. The serpent, the Sadducee, and the latest modernist are all in the dark tradition of compromise. Fortunately, however, there lies beyond the fog of words an area of basic agreement among all compromisers of the theology of the hill which is readily discernible.

In the history of Christian thought there have been only four answers to the question: "Where lies the ultimate authority for truth?" They are

1. Revelation and Reason
2. Revelation and Tradition
3. Revelation and Experience
4. Revelation alone.

The student of Christian his-

tory in the Western world will readily recall examples of each type of thought. In "Revelation and Reason" he will recognize the position of Calvinism from the moment in which Luther said to Zwingli: "Ihr habt einen anderen Geist." In "Revelation and Tradition" he will see the tragic story of Rome. "Revelation and Experience" is the modern restatement of "Revelation and Reason" in terms of the new emphasis on the emotional and irrational, the curious fusion of God and Psychology. It should be noted again that, as Dr. Francis Pieper was wont to point out with such eloquent insistence, all these approaches to Christian truth and ultimate reality, except the last, shift the center of thought and life from God to man. Subjectivity is the intellectual equivalent of pride. And pride is the first and last sin of lost man and exiled angels.

Theoretically, Lutheranism has always emphasized "Revelation alone" as the supreme authority for Christian thought and life and, as a necessary consequence, the primacy of faith in the acquisition of Truth. This was the secret of Luther. Equally wary of Plato and Aristotle, he returned once more to the Scriptural approach to epistemology, the mysterious, heavenly insistence that the way to wisdom and knowledge

lies through the low door of the mind of a child. For him this was a necessary and inevitable intellectual corollary of the doctrine of the justification by faith and the centrality of the Atonement. With Luther the road to the cross again begins in the valley of humiliation, also intellectually. Neither the Platonic idea nor the Aristotelian logic was permitted to play any role in the acquisition of divine truth. They might be valuable in the formulation of truth by a mind that had learned to be obedient to the discipline of the Cross, but they could never come between man and his God. The gulf between the mind of God and the mind of man had been bridged by the leap of God to a Cross, in itself an act beyond all logic and reason.

IT was inevitable that this resulted in an almost ruthless elimination of all approaches to Christian truth outside of the Divine Word. To Luther the Word was the only notice man had from God concerning what had happened to him in the person and work of our Lord. It was utterly beyond the reach of philosophy and reason. Furthermore, he completely identified the Word with the sacred, canonical Scriptures. There could be no quibbling about that. "Neither Church, nor

Fathers, nor Apostles, nor Angels are to be listened to except so far as they preach the pure Word of God." "Without Scripture faith soon goes." "To this wine no water must be added; to this sun no lantern must be held up." "You must take your stand as a plain, clear, strong word of Scripture which will then be your support." In his appeal to the Council Luther placed the Bible above the Pope. At the Leipzig Disputation he ranked Holy Scripture above any council. By their very nature, as divine revelation, its truths could be apprehended only by an act of faith generated by the powerful and effective operation of the Spirit of God.

Was there then no room at all for Plato and Aristotle in the dialectic of Luther? This theology came from the hill. However, in the *formulation* of the divine truths which he (or any miller's maid) had found there was a place for logic and reason now humiliated and illumined by the intellectual discipline of the Cross. After their basic conceptions had been given them by the Spirit of God men could systematize and formulate these truths under the laws of the Porch. Luther was neither an obscurantist nor an anti-intellectual. In fact, the very fervor with which he grasped the truths compelled him to state

them as clearly as possible, to draw out their implications for faith and life, and to systematize them into an orderly body of doctrine. Here was a problem great enough for any philosopher or logician. His task was not to make God reasonable before man but to carry a part of the wisdom of God in earthen vessels so that men might more easily transmit it from generation to generation. High religion required a high theology.

IT is obvious that in the hands and minds of lesser men this approach might easily become dangerous. In the forgetful years, beginning with Melancthon, theologians often forgot the hill in this concern over the porch. They turned again and again from the hard simplicity of the Cross to the glittering complexity of Athens. Nor has our own time been immune to the danger of reducing the warmth and fulness of the Gospel to the cold rigidity of reason. It is tragically easy for men to forget that the formulae of belief are not belief itself. The epistemology of faith has its own laws and they must be as binding upon the theologian bending low at midnight over forgotten tomes as for the child in the arms of our Lord. Perhaps the greatest indirect proof for the fact that Calvary is divine in its origin and essence is

the ease with which theologians continually wander away to Sinai and Athens. The humility of the mind before the hill is the last and greatest humility. "He that believeth!" These are the chains of the new obedience and the freedom of the new power which enables man to follow, however faltering and far-off, the mysterious way of the mind of God.

When St. Paul preached in Athens, the world was full of crosses, standing beyond city walls, bearing the bodies of slowly dying men. When Luther preached in Wittenberg, the world was also full of crosses, but now inside the city walls, soaring on high towers, lifted in processions, golden and jewelled—the marks of the most astonishing revolution in the history of the world. It was Luther's task to inform them once more with meaning and value and purpose. He did that.

Today the world is once more thronged with crosses, little and white, at Okinawa and Cassino and the beaches of Normandy, mute and eloquent witnesses of the fact that the Porch cannot save men from themselves. It remains for us at this late hour to follow Luther to the hill for light and reason and peace.



### Twilight of Genius\*

CASS TIMBERLANE is the selection of the Book-of-the-Month Club for November. . . . Sinclair Lewis has been around for so many years now that I must confess to a little start of surprise when another novel from his tireless pen suddenly rolls off the presses. . . . Far back in 1914, in another age and world, *Our Mr. Wrenn* announced the arrival of a new writer whose sharp pen and keen eye gave promise of an important and significant newcomer to the American literary scene. . . . Six years later he became a national figure with *Main Street*, and *Babbitt* and *Arrowsmith* followed during the next five years. . . . Although some of the hosannas with which these novels were greeted sound a little hollow and fleeting today, Mr. Lewis clearly had an eye, a tongue, and a mind. . . . Mercilessly and successfully he satirized an entire way of life. . . . The inane assumptions of a materialistic society, the deadly hatefulness of the upper crust in a small American town, the hollow pretensions of sections of the scientific world, were tagged as neatly as specimens in a laboratory. . . . "Babbitt" and "Main Street" entered our American vo-

cabulary as names for a pattern of life and thought which was stupid, ugly, and mean. . . . Sinclair Lewis had caught America in one of its recurring moods of self-examination and contrition and had made the most of it. . . .

With *Mantrap* in 1926 and *Elmer Gantry* in 1927 there was a perceptible diminution of his powers. . . . *Mantrap* was a potboiler and *Elmer Gantry* was a lewd caricature of the lunatic fringe of the Protestant ministry. . . . A caricature of a lunatic fringe, by its very nature, cannot be a good novel. . . . Although the prurient section of the American public, the followers of Hearst, the lappers-up of the latest scandal, hailed *Elmer Gantry* as a valuable help in their efforts to believe the worst about everything, honest critics recognized the fact that Lewis was skidding down-hill. . . . *Gantry* was a puppet designed to prove a thesis not worth proving and not a living, three-dimensional character like *Babbitt* or *Carol Kennicott* or *Arrowsmith*. . . . The master had lost his magic touch.

Mr. Lewis' products of the thirties can be reviewed rather quickly—and sorrowfully. . . . There were flashes of the old power—the uncanny ability to convey the essence of a character or the meaning of a situation in a few paragraphs—in *Ann Vickers* (1933),

\* A Review of *Cass Timberlane: A Novel of Husbands and Wives*. By Sinclair Lewis. Random House, New York. 1945. 390 pages. \$3.00.



*It Can't Happen Here* (1935), and *Gideon Planish* (1943). . . . The critics were kind. . . . They tried hard to find the embers beneath the ashes. . . . Each time a new novel appeared, the publishers rang all the bells and shifted the publicity boys into high gear. . . . Periodically we were informed that Mr. Lewis had done it again. . . . But he hadn't. . . . One by one, his books were resounding flops. . . . They just weren't the old Lewis. . . . He was still blowing the horns and beating the drums which had sounded so new and bold in 1920 and 1922. . . . But America had turned away from that sort of thing. . . . Mr. Lewis had nothing to say to the anxious world of 1933 and 1939. . . . He was still raising questions when men were looking for answers. . . . They knew all the questions, but Mr. Lewis, like the perennial bad boy, kept pulling at their coat-tails-with queries which were no longer important. . . . It was a sad business. . . .

And now, in 1945, we are witnessing a repeat performance. . . . *Cass Timberlane*, choice of the Book-of-the-Month Club, is trumpeted by the publishers in full-page ads: "Sinclair Lewis has written many great novels in his time, but none so frank as this one. It reveals with tenderness and relentless satire what is happening to

American marriage." . . . Well, he hasn't and it doesn't. . . . Note the effort, if you please, to raise a third-rate novel to the stature of a social document. . . . We are now to learn what has happened to an institution known as "American marriage." . . . That is quite a bite. . . . Of course, it might have been done. . . . The restlessness of the years of war, the inevitable problems associated with prosperity, long separation, looseness of morals, and women at work, might have been the theme for an excellent novel. . . . But there is hardly a reflection of our troubled times in *Cass Timberlane*. . . . Cass and Jinny's honeymoon happens around Dec. 7, 1941, and a few minor characters wander off to war somewhat haphazardly (war seems to be a good substitute for the "sudden death" device as a convenient way to get rid of inconvenient characters) but beyond that there is no reflection of the pain and anxiety of a world sick with war. . . . If someone objects that such a story was not in Mr. Lewis' purpose, I can only reply that in that case the publishers should not try to persuade us that he is telling us "what happened to American marriage." . . .

The story itself? . . . *Cass Timberlane*, a staid, mature judge in Grand Republic, Minnesota, a town in which modern industry

and the frontier meet, falls madly in love with Jinny, a young, slightly incredible vixen who is supposed to be the modern girl. . . . They mess around for 250 pages, at times almost neurotically, through sticky romantic scenes and fits of insane jealousy until Jinny commits adultery with a small-town wolf in New York, acquires diabetes and is finally taken back by a forgiving husband, sick and beaten, to start life all over again. . . . That might still be an acceptable story, if it were well done. . . . But the only character even remotely approaching the power and accuracy of the Lewis of *Main Street* and *Babbitt* is Cass Timberlane himself. . . . His quiet personality, his evident love for Jinny, his patience, his affection for Grand Republic and the majesty of the law, his attachment to his old, gloomy house—these are real and three-dimensional. . . . Everything else, however, is unreal, fuzzy, unbelievable. . . . Jinny never comes to life. . . . Often she talks like a wooden bobby-soxer. . . . She is so badly done that she makes you uncomfortable—like the feminine valedictorian at a high school commencement. . . . Mr. Lewis never was very successful with women (except Carol

Kennicott), but Jinny is a new low, even for him. . . .

Morally, the story is contemptible. . . . The publishers, you will note, use the word "frank." . . . Scattered through the tale are vignettes of the married couples in Grand Republic, somewhat in the manner of a cheap prose *Spoon River*. . . . They are beyond doubt the most neurotic, sex-obsessed, repressed, unhappy, stupid collection of alcoholics ever gathered in one town. . . . I have lived in towns like Grand Republic and these people simply do not exist, except in Mr. Lewis' curious imagination. . . . Only one or two, done with the old Lewis passion and tenderness, are of flesh and blood. . . .

So, I suspect, Mr. Lewis is done. . . . The band has turned the corner, the crowds have gone home, the long day is over. . . . Twilight has come for a man who was sensitive to only one passing phase of American life. . . . There was a time when America enjoyed the study of its gutters and sewers, but that time has passed. . . . The cheers of a few senile sympathizers, already standing in the shadows, will not change the situation. . . . We need a new voice, and that voice will not be Mr. Lewis. . . .



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*As winter comes—here is a hobby with  
international overtones . . .*

# Philatelic Philosophy

By HERBERT H. UMBACH

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THE collection and study of postage stamps, officially classified as philately, is a pastime which stimulates healthy interest in and friendly concern for people throughout the world. Better than that, it has a truly beneficial influence on the individual himself. A colloquial expression of this idea is the following set of verses by Silas Weatherby:

A feller isn't thinkin' mean,  
Collectin' stamps;  
His tho'ts are mostly good and clean,  
Collectin' stamps.  
He doesn't knock his fellowmen  
Or harbor any grudges then;  
A feller's at his finest when  
Collectin' stamps.

The rich are comrades to the poor,  
Collectin' stamps;  
All brothers of a common lure,  
Collectin' stamps.  
The boy—the joy the reprints bring—  
Can chum with millionaire and king;  
Vain pride is a forgotten thing,  
Collectin' stamps.

A feller isn't plottin' schemes,  
Collectin' stamps;  
He's busy only with his dreams,  
Collectin' stamps.  
His livery is a benzine pan;  
His creed—to do the best he can;  
A feller's always mostly man,  
Collectin' stamps.

What began as an obscure hobby which gave pleasure to a few persons has by now grown beyond that stage. Unfortunately for the “just for fun” collectors, stamp collecting has become a business and an investment field. On the other hand, philately has developed into a valuable educational medium and, to its own surprise, has become an influence in international affairs. The hobby of kings is the king of hobbies, but we wish to show its relation to mankind's first successful experiment in international cooperation and to suggest how it can contribute to a better post-war world. We shall here outline not so much

the role of the stamp *collector* (a project in itself) as emphasize the worthy work of that organization which controls the ultimate operation of postal privilege.

There is an inherent international possibility which includes not only collectors of cancelled and unused stamps, but all users of postage anywhere. Postage stamps, my father would correctly insist, are not really stamps; they are merely labels—the stamp is actually the postmark or cancellation. How often have you been impressed by the wording of domestic and foreign postage cancellation? Collectors of foreign postmarks readily see the possibility of influence through propaganda. Now consider the salutary control which regulates international mail service! Franked with adhesive or meter postage, our letters and packages ride the swiftest trains in the world, cross oceans in express liners, and go winging through the clouds over far-flung air routes. Thus the distant corners of the earth are reached, with en route facilities, not only in wartime by V Mail and emergency deliveries but particularly in peacetime by regular, ever-improving postal service.

Enlarge the radius and possibilities of your local post office; you find therein the pattern of The Universal Postal Union, a supra-

national institution with a record of tested achievement. We should know more about the UPU because it administers international justice so capably. Notably it has established a sound system of compulsory investigation or arbitration of disputes arising out of the interpretation or application of the constituent treaty or convention. It has effectively promoted the establishment and maintenance of international law and order. Would that The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace might interest itself more in the elements of such peace-stimulating service! (You can find technical information about the UPU by writing to the Philatelic Agency of the Post Office Department in Washington.)

### A Little History

WHEN you receive mail from abroad, or when you drop a letter for a foreign country into a mailbox, with 3 or 5 cents postage affixed, you have participated in the most civilized activity of your lifetime. A German, Heinrich von Stephan, is responsible. He was the first Director of Posts for the North German Confederation. When he took this job in 1866, the sending of letters abroad resembled the playing of flamingo croquet in *Alice in Wonderland*; namely, it was impossible to ascer-

tain the rules. If your grandfather, for instance, wished to write to someone in Berlin from New York, it cost him 90 cents to send the letter by German steamer or \$1.25 by British boat. If he lived in Mexico and received a letter from London, he paid the Mexican post office \$1.45 when the letter was delivered. A letter from Berlin to Rome cost 68 cents through Switzerland but 90 cents through France. Letters to Russia went by thirteen different routes, ten of which routings imposed varying charges. There were six routes to Australia, requiring postage that varied from a few cents up to a dollar. And all of this confusion in international communication existed less than a century ago!

Into this desperately muddled situation Stephan plunged, and found it wise to call an International Congress to consider his proposals. We shall see the results of these suggestions a few paragraphs later. The Congress met in 1874 in Berne, Switzerland, and at the end of 24 days adopted every proposal made by Stephan. Thus The Universal Postal Union came into being as a direct response to the most amazing one-man international agreement ever achieved. Today the same basic policy which Stephan wrote for Europe and the United States serves every country in the world.

Consequently, in this year 1945, whether you are in Tanganyika or in Titusville you can address a letter to any foreign land and be sure (provided military censors along the way do not delete the contents, a fault which is traceable to the writer and not to be attributed to the postal service) it will receive the same swift, respectful treatment once reserved for only the royal messages of a Caesar. Whether you are in Nürnberg or in Nome, the simple procedure is the same: affix a five-cent stamp or its equivalent, blue in color. The only exception concerns the three-cent rate between the Americas and Spain, which will be explained later. Who gets the five cents? Without exception, the office where you buy the stamp. Who records the transaction? Nobody. Every nation delivers free and uncounted within its own borders all the mail it receives direct from any other country.

Perhaps your letter is addressed to some remote province in, say, the Coromandel Coast country. No matter. There is a directory showing the location of every one of the world's 265,000 post offices; and another bulky volume prescribes exactly the route, by train and steamer and airplane, to each of them. Although your mail may have to pass through the postal services of half a dozen countries,

it is handled in peacetime unquestioningly by each, and even in wartime is passed swiftly on toward its destination.

### Money and Mail

ONLY once every three years does the subject of money invade this cooperative paradise. It happens then because of the necessity of carrying mail addressed by one country to another through a third. This is not strictly mutual service; therefore money must change hands in order to compensate the third nation for handling such "transit mail." To ascertain how much, four specified weeks are set apart, once every three years, wherein every bag or piece of mail sent to any country through a third is weighed or counted: by sender, forwarder, and receiver. The complete record of all these transactions then goes to the UPU's central office in Berne. Once all statistics are in, charges are computed by the Berne office on an annual basis. Four weeks—the Statistics Period—multiplied by 13 gives the annual charge which each country must pay during the next three years to every other country that handles its transit mail. Everything is computed in gold francs and is weighed by the metric system. French is the official tongue.

In the latest pre-war annual in-

ternational figures from Berne, Germany emerged as the biggest debtor all around: 1,600,000 gold francs. Her foreign mail went through many countries and on many foreign steamship lines. France got the palm for being the biggest creditor: nearly 2,000,000 gold francs. She carried more transit mail for the rest of the world than the world carried for her. In the same period, foreign nations paid the U. S. around \$800,000 for our work for them, which sum is a drop in the mail bucket. Incidentally, our foreign mail service—not domestic—cost us 47 million dollars and its total receipts were estimated at 15 million dollars.

The war has altered many things, of course, but some pre-war comparisons are significant. As a result of the uniform five-cent stamp, all the people of the world exchanged a billion and a half first-class items every year, cheaply and with practically no red tape. In this great, worldwide correspondence derby, our country led the field with 191 million letters. Next to us, the letter-writing countries were Britain, France, and Germany; Britain was out ahead, and the other two were neck and neck. Japan, Austria, and Italy followed. The single city of Singapore in the Straits Settlements mailed as many foreign let-

ters as did all the Russias: a half million a month. Belgium wrote three times as many as did Brazil. Noteworthy is the fact that the industrially developed countries sent much more mail, counting printed matter, than they got. The undeveloped lands and the colonies were the ones who got more mail than they sent.

THE Berne headquarters of the UPU has its seventieth birthday behind it. Is it effective? Its cost is nearly \$100,000 annually, of which amount the U. S. pays some \$2,000 as its fair share. Good will among men is cheap at many times that price! Eight Postal Congresses have been held. The present colors of our one-, two-, and five-cent stamps are the outcome of the Washington meeting in 1897 when these colors were made uniform in every postal service in the world. A little thing? Not to the overworked postal employees, in whose ordinary work there is much natural mix-up, as I know from personal experience.

Meanwhile, within the Universal Postal Union many lesser private agreements have been made. One of the most progressive is the Pan-American and Americo-Spanish agreement, signed by the United States, Spain, and the countries of the Western Hemisphere so that the domestic or 3-

cent rate now obtains on this whole continent and transit charges are abolished. There is no Statistics Period between the countries of the two Americas or Spain. Except in the air mail services, where accounts are still kept on an actual business basis, no money changes hands. Next time you write to Latin America, just be grateful that such freedom (almost as free as the birds) prevails. The abolishment of transit charges came about mostly because of the complaints of the Argentine. No countries lie beyond her—only the South Pole; and Argentina delivered twice as much American mail for us as we delivered for her.

The development of international airmail service is the most recent outstanding achievement. Think of its unlimited possibilities for spreading peace and tolerance in the post-war universe. Here there are no frontiers. Why? Mutual agreement has already made feasible the code of service as supreme, for the good of all. In peace, the airmail is again being flown, inviolately, over every land; and the world will soon be as familiar as our neighbor's back yard.

Where this winged mail service will end, no man can say. But one thing connected with it is crystal clear: The Universal Postal Union

is mankind's first completely successful experiment in international cooperation. The stamp collectors have long been aware of such important contributions to a happier world; we philatelists are ardent advocates of extending the UPU plan. Stephan died in 1896. The human race appears considerably less crazy because he once lived and displayed interest in an acute international postage problem which he helped solve not only for the hobbyist but for every sensible person.

One of the 1945 books on world problems is *An Intelligent American's Guide to the Peace*. I am pleased to find that the UPU is credited by the General Editor, Sumner Welles, our former Under Secretary of State, with having achieved more good than the only parallel international organization, the League of Nations, together with its supplements, such as the International Labor Organization. He writes:

The Universal Postal Union represents the first and as yet the most indicative and wholly successful example of international cooperation over a long period. Formed in 1875 [sic] by 22 countries, it has gradually extended to include the whole world.

The Union is based on a convention declaring that its members agree that for the purposes of postal communications, there is only one country: the whole world. Every nation

has the unlimited use of the communication facilities of every other nation for the conduct of the mails; and every signatory country must grant to the others the full use of any improvements in its postal service communications. Rates, weights, and the nature of services are internationally uniform for international services.

The agreement on ordinary mail was soon extended to registration of letters and then to money-orders and parcel-post, though these latter have not been made completely uniform. Many supplementary services have been arranged, and always on an amicable basis.

Postal conventions are held every 5 years when practicable, and every member state, whatever its size, has an equal vote. The Union clears accounts among its signatories, which requires the most extensive bookkeeping, since it must keep track of the 50,000,000,000 letters that annually crisscross over 114 postal jurisdictions. The International Bureau is now located at Berne, Switzerland.

The Union has managed to function through many wars and it has successfully adjusted to "blocked currencies." It is a sixty-year-old [sic] demonstration that when international cooperation *must* override "absolute national sovereignty"—and there is no other workable alternative—cooperation functions smoothly.

Robert Louis Stevenson once said, in *Pulvis et Umbra*, "Man is indeed marked for failure in his efforts to do right. But where the best consistently miscarry, how



tenfold more remarkable that all should continue to strive; and surely we should find it both touching and inspiring, that in a field from which success is banished, our race should not cease to labor." I think the ceaseless labor of philately, of the UPU, is not marked for failure.

Rather, philatelic philosophy deserves to flourish because of its

genuine altruism, its fostering of the permanent essentials. In the words of T. S. Eliot in his *American Prefaces*, "We cannot effect intelligent change unless we hold fast to the permanent essentials; and a clear understanding of what we should hold fast to, and what abandon, should make us all the better prepared to carry out the changes that are needed."



### Heritage

Tell me legends of my land.

I am the leaf shining in the sun.

Storm twists me under.

I am of the vine

Whose roots are Valley Forge

Or Alamo or Gettysburg.

I grow upward on Time's trellis

With flowers open near.

How deep my roots are struck!

Tell me of them.

Tell me legends of my land.

—HELEN MYRTIS LANGE

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# THE ASTROLABE



BY  
THEODORE GRAEBNER

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## MONARCH OF MOUNTAINS

 "We are billeted on a French peasant about thirty miles from Switzerland, and can see the white dome of Mt. Blanc, the highest mountain in Europe, on any clear day," wrote a CRESSET reader with the armies of occupation earlier in the year. The boy was lucky. There are few spots from which the *massif* of Mt. Blanc can be seen, unless you climb some of the surrounding heights, and that is a task for the expert mountain climber, with guides and equipment. Otherwise, the great dome is hidden behind its outlying giant peaks and a great mass of foothills. In the valley of Chamonix, at its very foot, you see nothing of the snow-peaked heights.

But there is a spot that presents Mt. Blanc's upper eight or ten thousand feet in one brief, breath-

taking glimpse. Few have seen it. I had the good fortune, while travelling by rail down the valley of the Arve River from La Fayette in the company of a few natives of Geneva, the starting place for Mt. Blanc (which, by the way, is on the French-Italian boundary). After leaving La Fayette, they suggested that I join them on the front platform of the car in which we were travelling. They promised me "a sight you will remember." They asked me to keep a sharp lookout into the strip of sky visible between this car and the next. I did as I was bidden and when one of the chaps shouted, "There it is!" I followed the pointing of his hand and there in a break in the clouds, almost directly overhead (for our train was travelling a steep grade downward), I saw the great slope of Mt. Blanc, clear to the peak, one mass of snow, show-

ing a dazzling white against the blue Italian sky.

The view is not to be compared with any other—unless it be in the Himalayas—because we were travelling at near sea level, and we saw the upper ten thousand feet in one memorable half-minute, if it was that long. You will understand this somewhat when I remind you that what counts in mountain scenery is the extent of the exposure. Usually, one is far above sea level when viewing the upper slopes of great mountains. In fact, there is in all the United States only one spot (in California—I think it is Lassen Peak) where one can see as much as 7,000 feet, and these are impressive only when clad in winter snow, while Mt. Blanc, with his 15,000 feet, is . . .

The monarch of mountains.

They crowned him long ago  
On a throne of rocks, in a robe of  
clouds,

With a diadem of snow.

(Lord Byron, *Manfred*)



### WHAT SOFTENING THE COURSES DID TO THE KIDS



I don't know whether the story I heard in Chicago from a sales manager is true, but he expected me to believe it and some business friends did not bat an eye when I retold it. It concerns the

remarks made by a new office girl to her mates when she was filing a stack of orders. The memorable query was: "Say, Mayme, what letter comes after Jay?" "What's so funny?" a teacher remarked when told about the incident. "They don't teach the alphabet to children who don't like to memorize."

But they are coming back to it. Also, the multiplication table is being restored. It came out in the replies to a questionnaire sent out by the *San Francisco Call-Bulletin* to groups of public school teachers and personnel managers of some of the large business establishments in San Francisco. The replies bring out completely and convincingly the all too frequent poor results of teaching in the last fifteen or twenty years in the grammar grades and in the high schools. These tests were very carefully carried out. Particularly important are the conclusions of the personnel managers to whom the questionnaires were sent. These personnel managers are responsible to their firms for the ability and efficiency of the boys and girls employed by them. Therefore, their opinions are highly important and valuable. They were three to one of the opinion that teaching today is poorer than when they were students. They rated penmanship, arithmetic, and spelling, in that order, as the most serious shortcomings. Several

of the employers indicated general approval of the following statement by one of their number: "The children of this generation have as much mental ability as those of other generations. They have been improperly prepared in grammar school, therefore the high school courses have had to be 'softened' in order to permit more of them to remain in school until eighteen to graduate."

Teachers of my acquaintance in St. Louis subscribe to the report from San Francisco: "Many present sixth graders are unable to pass a third grade reading test."

"Does the average applicant fill out an employment questionnaire to your satisfaction?" The most common complaint was: "Can't express himself."

The *Saturday Evening Post*, during the summer had a scorching exposé of progressive education. William Owen, now principal of the Consolidated School of Barryton, Michigan, was an enthusiastic supporter of the revolutionary movement known as progressive education. For years he believed in the new system and worked to advance it. Today he does neither. He believes that one of its most radical departures—and, as it later developed, its most tragic weakness—was the relinquishment of control in the schoolroom. "Boys and girls who had

delighted and awed us in the early grades, displaying ingenious capabilities for amusing themselves in the schoolroom, were not so attractive when they began emerging as ten and twelve year olds exhibiting unmistakable evidences of total insubordination. A child must never be corrected, we said, in such a manner that he might realize he'd made a mistake. It might inhibit his individuality." Corporal punishment was unthinkable. Carefully worded persuasion, substitution, timid efforts at undetectable guidance, noble examples—these were supposed to prevent growing children from forming obnoxious leanings toward outlawry. Progressive education has attempted to place the staggering responsibility in the hands of all youthful students, regardless of mental and moral equipment or home background. Adolescent development must depend upon either a strong and solid background of home training or absolute authority in the schoolroom.


The return of sanity is signalized, first of all, by a rediscovery of the value of discipline. Says Mr. Owen:

A young teacher of my acquaintance found, at the beginning of last autumn's school semester, that she could gain absolutely no control over her roomful of fourth graders. She suffered humiliation, muddling

through bedlam, for weeks, until one morning when she went to school early and covered her blackboards with examination questions. When the nine-o'clock bell rang and her students came whooping in, she informed them firmly that the examination must be written at once. During the ensuing riot, she quietly left the room and returned with the one directive her fourth graders appeared to respect—the threat of force. It was in the form of something they hadn't seen much of, in their important little lives—an old-fashioned willow switch. In a magnificent silence, the teacher walked across the room, nonchalantly swinging the switch in her hand. She laid it down on her desk in plain sight of all her pupils. She did not have to use it.



### GERMAN THOROUGHNESS

 The reports from Europe are more and more disquieting. There is stark starvation in parts of the Balkans, and in conquered lands held by Russia. In all of Western Europe food is scarce and the winter is expected to bring great suffering. In a general way, people will refer to the "devastation of war" and conclude that, naturally, with war ravaging a continent for four years, there will be shortages of grains, fruit, vegetables, and cattle. But a glimpse of actual conditions is afforded by a memorandum we found in a release of the United Nations Re-

lief and Rehabilitation Administration. It describes the conditions faced by Yugoslav refugees on their return to their homes:

The island of Solta has an even more interesting story to tell. During the German occupation the island was apparently one of their front lines of defense against an Allied attempt to liberate Split. Nevertheless the fisherfolk on the island worked hand in glove with the partisans and used their boats to bring supplies over to the partisans.

Eventually the Germans handled the affair with their customary thoroughness. They evacuated the entire population, but before they went, the people were made to dig extensive dugouts for the Germans. They were made to demolish their houses and use the roof timbers as supports inside the dugouts. Then they were sent away.

When the island was liberated and the people returned, they found the dugouts the best habitations on the island. Not only had their houses no roofs or floors, but the furniture itself had been used to make the dugouts more comfortable. The Germans had even used the fishing nets to camouflage their positions and now the nets are no longer usable.


Before they left, the Germans lobbed hand-grenades into all the fishing boats so that most of them cannot put to sea. And they took with them or destroyed every piece of crockery and every cooking utensil on the island. They butchered and ate all the sheep they could find and killed the rest when they were forced to leave.

Out of the 2,000 sheep that the people of Solta owned before the war, there now remain only ten—ten that somehow were overlooked and managed to live in the woods. Out of 800 draught animals (horses, mules and asses) only 350 are left. Nothing else was left. Nevertheless, out of the 3,400 people who lived on Solta, 2,000 have returned to build up life again.

Between Solta Isle in the Mediterranean and the North Cape there will be scant fare during the winter 1945-1946.



### ATOMIC BOMB, ASTROLABE, AND SOME DREAMS

 Readers of the *Astrolabe*—we say it with rare but highly becoming modesty—were prepared for the news about the Atomic Bomb. They remembered our story in this year's May issue concerning the astounding amounts of energy locked up in the water molecule. We told about an explosion in the shops of the Ryerson Co. in Chicago, involving only a few drops of water but causing the destruction of all machinery in a radius of fifty feet and the complete annihilation of the laborer who had carried the ladle full of molten iron. On another occasion we reported the experiment of the Germans with a chemical of which nine pounds would destroy the entire city of London. Our authority then did not call

it the "Atomic Bomb," but that is what it was.

Elsewhere we have remarked on the energy required for the revolutions of electron and their atomic orbits, equal to 2,000,000 volts of electricity.

Very promptly the bombs have given rise to dreams of the near approach of a new era in which, with a few tablets of vitamins in one pocket and a few pellets of power in another, one could go on an excursion around the earth or take a trip to the moon.

A bulletin of the American Association for the Advancement of Science reminds us that atomic bombs are extremely special things for extremely special purposes.

They are extraordinary concentrations of energy which can be preserved almost indefinitely and released at will in a thousandth of a second. It is this combination of properties that makes the bombs terrible instruments of destruction. All matter has subatomic energies; in fact, in the materials of which we ourselves are composed there is a million times enough energy, if it were suddenly released, to rend us into fragments. . . . Only the radioactive elements give up their subatomic energies and with one exception, uranium 235, there is no known way of influencing their rates of disintegration.

What gives the uranium 235 element such great military value is the suddenness with which its energy can be released. But it is

ridiculous to speculate on the possibility of applying this energy to ordinary affairs. Who would want an automobile that from a standing start would go a mile in the first two seconds?

This does not mean that dreams

about subatomic energies should be discontinued. Although they are frequently silly and almost always absurdly erroneous, on the whole they are harmless and they stimulate the support of scientific investigations.



### Order Form for Books Reviewed in the November CRESSET

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
# Music AND MUSIC MAKERS

*Some Treasured Recordings*

[CONTINUED]

BY WALTER A. HANSEN

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 It is no longer customary to speak of Richard Strauss as a reckless smasher of idols; but a few decades ago critics, shocked to utter bewilderment, and at times almost to frenzy, by the boldness which came to the fore in his craftsmanship, rendered a verdict altogether different. Strauss was called a prophet of cacophony and an apostle of ugliness. Hypersensitive ears recoiled in horror from many of his harmonies. Even some of those commentators who believed that there could and should be progress in music as well as in anything else shrank from the dissonances which Strauss wove into parts of the score of his *Salomé*. Such flagrant violations of sacrosanct laws! Such brutal assaults upon the eardrums! Such inexcusable flouting of what critical opinion had come to look upon as good, pure, and beauti-

ful! No, Strauss could not be regarded as a great composer. He was a renegade. He had committed unpardonable crimes. He was a nonentity. He was a flash in the pan. His music would soon be buried in the deep pit of utter futility.

Curiously enough, some of those very Straussian works which were subjected to the most venomous attacks when they came into being are now regarded as the finest fruits of the amazing Straussian skill. Think of the symphonic poem entitled *Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche* (*Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks*). When Strauss sent it out into the world, sticklers for absolute purity and righteousness in harmony threw up their hands in disgust. How could such a work have any hope of living? Today, however, *Till* does not cause the average listener to



think of it as the creation of a wild-eyed idol-smasher. The world still marvels at the remarkable cunning to be found in every phase of its workmanship, it is true; but there have been so many bold innovations in music since Strauss appeared upon the scene that, in comparison with them, *Till* seems utterly and completely tame.

*Till* remains my favorite among Strauss's symphonic poems. The story on which it is based is full of drollery and rough, saturnine humor. Read the account of the rogueries and the waggeries of *Till Owlglass*. Then listen to Strauss's adroitly scored music. Do you think that the composer has caught the spirit of the tale? "Once upon a time," the orchestra seems to say at the very beginning of the work. Then it proceeds, in its own subtle way, to recount a number of *Till's* escapades. But which escapades? Beware of being sure that you know the answer. Strauss himself says:


It is impossible for me to give a program to *Eulenspiegel*; were I to put into words the thoughts which its several incidents suggest to me, they would seldom suffice and might give rise to offense. Let me leave it, therefore, to my hearers to crack the hard nut which the Rogue has prepared for them. By way of helping them to a better understanding, it seems sufficient to point out the two

"*Eulenspiegel*" motives, which, in the most manifold disguises, pervade the whole up to the catastrophe, when, after he has been condemned to death, *Till* is strung up to the gibbet. For the rest, let them guess at the musical joke which a Rogue has offered them.

We know that *Till's* nimble, impish, and mischievous bones are rendered innocuous by the simple and somewhat formal process of hanging; but just what particular pranks are dealt with in the symphonic poem is left to our imagination. Toward the end of the composition we hear again "Once upon a time." *Till* has been gathered to his fathers. His bones are at rest.

The B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra, under Fritz Busch, gives a vivid reading of *Till* (Victor discs 11724 and 11725), and the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra, under Artur Rodzinski, presents a spirited performance of the delightful work (Columbia Album X-210); but the reading by Serge Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony Orchestra on the new nonbreakable De Luxe discs (Victor Album DV-1) is, to my thinking, preferable in every way.

#### Nonbreakable Discs

 For many years collectors of phonograph discs have been asking, "Will it ever be possible to manufacture nonbreakable discs?" The most of them, I sup-

pose, were sure that their fond dream would never come true. "It's utterly useless," they said, "even to think of a development so desirable and so wonderful." I confess that I, too, was one of the skeptics; but my skepticism was shattered a short time ago when I received, examined, played, and tested one of the new ruby-red, translucent discs made of vinyl resin plastic. One could ruin the record by mauling it with a hammer or by jumping up and down on it; but disc collectors do not, as a rule, resort to such queer practices. Eleven years of research have gone into the development of the material. The first album contains the Boston Symphony Orchestra's superb performance of *Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks*. Since the new plastic compound need not be reinforced with the metallic filler used in the making of shellac records, surface sound is almost nonexistent. Furthermore, the fidelity is higher than ever before, and the discs are much lighter in weight. Present facilities do not permit large-scale production of the nonbreakable discs. Therefore the shellac records will not be discontinued. The De Luxe pressings are comparable to particularly fine editions of books.

I have said that *Till* is my favorite among Strauss's symphonic

poems; but whenever I hear his *Don Juan*, a tone poem after Nicolaus Lenau, I begin to waver. Shall I vote for *Till*, or shall I incline my ears with greater favor toward *Don Juan*? At all events, *Don Juan* is an impressive work—a work filled to overflowing with Strauss's orchestral sorcery. Fritz Busch and the London Symphony Orchestra present what, to my mind, is an ideal performance of *Don Juan* (Victor Album 351); but the recording is far superior in readings by the National Symphony Orchestra under Hans Kindler (Victor Album 914) and the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra under Fritz Reiner (Columbia Album X-190).

After Strauss had conducted the world-première of his *Symphonia Domestica* in New York on March 21, 1904, the late William J. Henderson wrote that "the simple question now frankly discussed in the sacred circles of the inner brotherhood is just this, 'Is Richard Strauss a heaven-born genius, or is he merely crazy?'"

What kind of a work had the famous composer thrown into the lap of the public? To put it briefly, he had written a composition which undertook to give some glimpses of his family life. Mamma, papa, and the baby constitute the cast of characters of what Philip M. Goëpp has described as

"a close-woven drama in one act, with rapidly changing scenes."


When Strauss conducted the *Symphonia Domestica* in New York, he provided no specific explanations, no detailed analysis. "This time," he said, "I want my music to be listened to purely as music." But when the *Symphonia Domestica* was performed in Berlin nine months later, the composer pointed out the themes of the husband, the wife, and the child as they occur in the introduction and gave the following clues to the meaning of the other portions of the composition:

Scherzo. Parents' happiness. Childish play. Cradle song (the clock strikes seven in the evening).

Adagio. Creation and contemplation. Love scene. Dreams and cares (the clock strikes seven in the morning).

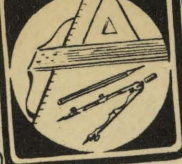
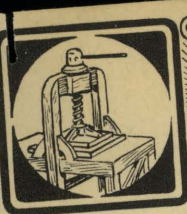
Finale. Awakening and merry dispute (double fugue). Joyous conclusion.

### Dumbfounding Skill

 Today we do not ask whether Strauss was crazy when he wrote the *Symphonia Domestica*. It is a foregone conclusion that he has won for himself a prominent place in the sun. In the *Symphonia Domestica* he shows us that his mastery of the resources of the orchestra and his command of counterpoint are dumbfounding; but when we have mentioned

these two characteristics of his art, we have pointed out the salient merits of the deftly made tone drama dealing with his family life. The *Symphonia Domestica*, fascinating and breath-taking though it is from beginning to end, does not reach the impressive heights which Strauss scaled so successfully in the symphonic rondo based on the escapades of Till Eulenspiegel and in his *Don Juan*. Some commentators declare that the composition contains unmistakable evidences of a sharp decline. The workmanship is amazing; but in other respects the fascinating adventure into the domain of tonal realism is, to their thinking, one of those works which cause critics to scratch their heads and say, "Richard Strauss used to be a great composer."

Eugene Ormandy is in his element when he addresses himself to the works of Strauss. In my opinion, there are at the present time few conductors who can match his superb ability to unfold the many beautiful thoughts and the numerous complexities of technical skill that are woven with such phenomenal cunning into the orchestral scores devised by the renowned Bavarian wizard. The exposition of the *Symphonia Domestica* as presented by the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra under Ormandy is mag-



## Living Art

*Carved with figures strange and sweet,  
All made out of the carver's brain.*

—Coleridge, "Christabel, Part I"

To go through a woodcarver's shop is always a cheering experience. The smell of the freshly-cut wood, the warm color of the seasoned boards, the sparks from the grindstone sharpening tools, the restrained thud of the bell-shaped carver's hammer—they all speak of a craftsman's joy and contentment such as are rarely found in these days of mass production, labor disputes, and wildcat strikes.

During the war most of these men with the artist's eyes and strong hands were pressed into the necessary and distressing business of war, but now they are returning to their chisels and their benches. The great boards of oak that were being diverted to crates, boxes, and less honorable tasks are now being returned to the loving hands of men who carve them into altars, statues, thrones and crucifixes. One has but to remember that these craftsmen would not lend their skill nor debase their art by using lesser materials for these glorious tasks, to be assured that their work now being produced and ready for the new churches of tomorrow will be of the highest order and the finest artistry.

A recent visit to Cleveland served to renew acquaintanceship with the men of the Liturgical Arts Guild. Rev. F. R. Weber, when he was stationed in Cleveland, introduced us to these able and conscientious workers. Since that time, the production of their workshop has found its way into many Lutheran churches throughout the entire middle west; but disaster overtakes good people, and since these able workers have rejoined the Theodore H. Kundtz Company in their fine establishment at 1275 Main Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio. There they are continuing that work which has made them famous as conscientious and earnest church wood carvers for the past twenty years. The following pages will offer a few examples of some of their work as it is set up in the shops in Cleveland.

ADALBERT R. KRETZMANN

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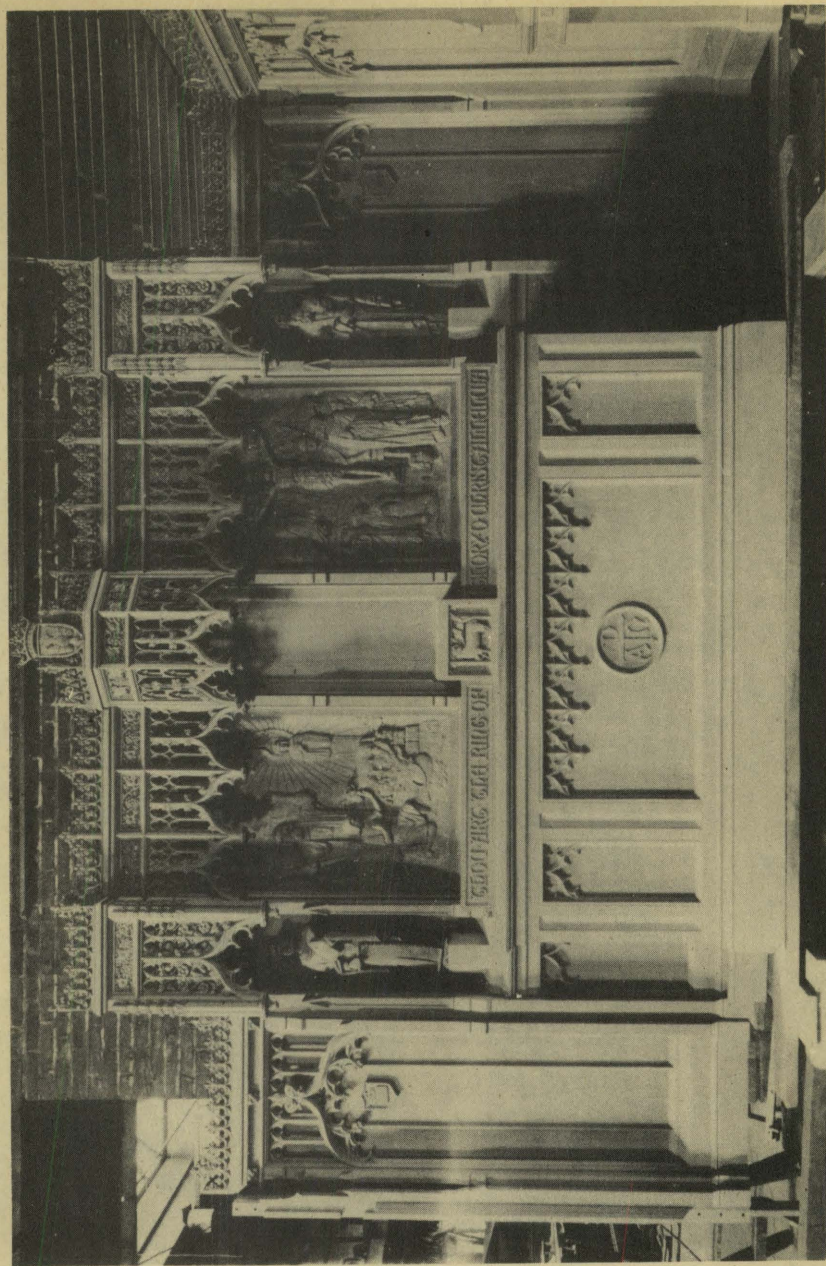
A crucifix prepared for a sacristy.



The sacrifice of Isaac. Detail of the altar of St. Paul's, Tremont, New York City.



The crucifixion. Detail of the altar of St. Paul's, Tremont, New York City.



The altar of St. Paul's, Tremont, New York City, with the two plaques in position on the reredos.





Reproduction in wood of da Vinci's painting of the Last Supper. Similar carvings were made for Nazareth and Bethlehem Churches in Baltimore, Md.



Statue of Christ, just under life size, ready for placement in the altar of a mid-western church.



Statuettes of Mary and Joseph with the Christ Child made of the finest Appalachian white oak and distinctive because of their simplicity of line and form.

nificent from every point of view (Victor Album 520).

*Don Quixote: Fantastic Variations on a Theme of Knightly Character* is a programmatic work to delight the hearts of all those who like to follow clearly outlined stories when they listen to music. There is an exemplary reading of this engagingly descriptive work by the Philadelphians under Ormandy (Victor Album 720).

I prefer Ormandy's excellent presentation of the autobiographical *A Hero's Life* (Victor Album 610) to the performance given by the Cleveland Orchestra under Rodzinski (Columbia Album 441).

There are pages of unforgettable magnificence in Strauss's somewhat philosophical *Thus Spake Zarathustra*—pages which are played with sumptuous beau-

ty of tone and penetrating understanding by the Boston Orchestra under Koussevitzky (Victor Album 257). I try to dismiss from my mind every thought of Friedrich Nietzsche and his Superman when I listen to *Thus Spake Zarathustra*.

Leopold Stokowski and the New York City Symphony Orchestra play *Death and Transfiguration* with great intenseness of feeling (Victor Album 1006).

To those who want to become acquainted with some of the delightful music contained in Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier* I recommend the Cincinnati Orchestra's admirable presentation of a suite arranged from that fine opera by Antal Dorati (Victor Album 997). Eugene Goossens is the conductor.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

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## RECENT RECORDINGS

JOHANNES BRAHMS. *Symphony No. 3, in F Major, Op. 90*. The Boston Symphony Orchestra under Serge Koussevitzky.—A superb reading of this great symphony. The recording is magnificent. Victor Album 1007. \$4.73.

ARNOLD SCHÖNBERG. *Verklärte Nacht (Transfigured Night), Op. 4*. The St. Louis Symphony Orchestra under Vladimir Golschmann.—Schönberg's *Verklärte Nacht*, originally a

sextet and later scored for string orchestra, is used for the Ballet Theater's presentation of Antony Tudor's *Pillar of Fire*. The music is filled with a powerful intenseness. Some declare that it represents Schönberg at his best. Mr. Golschmann gives an excellent performance. A beautiful Adagio by Arcangelo Corelli, as transcribed by Amadeo de Filippi, is included in the set. Victor Album 1005. \$4.73.

- GOLDEN MOMENTS OF SONG. Jan Peerce, tenor, with the Victor Symphony Orchestra under Maximilian Pilzer, sings Eduard di Capua's "O Sole Mio," Ernesto de Curtis' "Return to Sorrento," Gioacchino Rossini's "La Danza," and Ruggiero Leoncavallo's "Mattinata" with admirable artistry. Victor SP-8. \$1.58.
- FRANZ LISZT. *Liebestraum No. 3*. CLAUDE DEBUSSY. *Clair de Lune*. José Iturbi, pianist.—Iturbi fans will welcome this excellent recording of two ever popular compositions. Victor disc 11-8851. \$1.05.
- GEORGES BIZET. *Beat Out Dat Rhythm on a Drum*, arranged from the music in *Carmen* by Robert Russell Bennet. HAROLD ARLEN. *Right as the Rain*, from *Bloomer Girl*. Gladys Swarthout, mezzo-soprano, with an orchestra and chorus under Jay Blackton.—Naturally, the selection from *Carmen Jones* is far more fascinating than the somewhat trivial excerpt from *Bloomer Girl*. Victor disc 10-1128. Seventy-nine cents.
- NICOLAS RIMSKY-KORSAKOFF. *Hymn to the Sun*, from *The Golden Cockerel*. AMBROISE THOMAS. *Polonaise*, from *Mignon*. Patrice Munsel, soprano, with the Victor Orchestra under Sylvan Levin.—Miss Munsel's voice is beautiful; her technical skill is praiseworthy. Victor disc 11-8886. \$1.05.
- WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART. *Porgi Amor* and *Dove Sono* from *The Marriage of Figaro*. Eleanor Steber, soprano, with the Victor Orchestra under Erich Leinsdorf.—Sensitive singing and superb recording. Victor disc 11-8850. \$1.50.



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# The Literary Scene

READ NOT TO CONTRADICT AND CONFUTE—NOR TO BELIEVE  
AND TAKE FOR GRANTED—BUT TO WEIGH AND CONSIDER

*All unsigned reviews are by members of the staff*

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## Man's Inhumanity to Man

*ONE WHO SURVIVED: The Life Story of a Russian Under the Soviets.* By Alexander Barmine. Introduction by Max Eastman. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York. 1945. 337 pages. Illustrated. \$3.75.

IT is true that war abounds in grim realities; but it is equally true that war often keeps some of the grimmest realities beneath the surface. The suffering which the men, women, and children of the Soviet Union underwent in their life-and-death conflict with the Third Reich is beyond description. Our hearts went out to them. The German military might had come upon them like a thief in the night. Their homeland was in the gravest danger. The Russians sprang to arms with a will, and, in the end, they won a great victory; but they paid a terrible price. Alexander Barmine believes that their triumph over the Nazis would have cost them far less in goods, sweat, blood, tears, and lives if they had not been led, controlled, browbeaten, mulcted to the very bone, deceived,

and brutally harassed by one of the most unscrupulous tyrants of all time.

The name of the despot who holds in the hollow of his cruel and grasping hand the life of every human being in the Soviet Union is Josef Stalin. He has little book-learning. In fact, his use of the Russian language is exceedingly crude. At times his talk and his writings border perilously on downright illiteracy. Yet sycophants—and Stalin will tolerate none but sycophants—call him a master of letters, an artist, and a great man of science. Stalin's will is law. Everything and everybody in the U.S.S.R. is subject to Stalin's moods and Stalin's whims. The dictator is suspicious. He wallows in blood. He delights in absolute power. Woe unto anyone who crosses his path! Woe unto anyone who even seems to disagree with him!

The most of the teeming millions in the Soviet Union believe that Stalin lives a life of utter simplicity. They are sure that he shares with them the burdens and the privations which, according to the principles enunciated by the high priests and

the low priests of Soviet collectivism, must, of necessity, precede the day when milk and honey will flow in profuse abundance. Yet Stalin lives in luxury. The state funds of the U.S.S.R. are at his disposal. He does with them as he pleases. He uses them to satisfy his every desire and, above all, to keep himself in power.

Stalin is sly. He is vindictive. He is resourceful. He is stubborn. In a keynote speech which he delivered at a Congress of the Party the blood-thirsty dictator declared, "Of all the treasures a state can possess the human lives of its citizens are for us the most precious." Yet Stalin himself "once confided to Kamenev," says Mr. Barmine, "that his highest idea of pleasure was to plot a sweet revenge upon an enemy, spring it successfully, and then go home and peacefully sleep." Has any other one man sent more human beings to their death? History will undoubtedly brand Stalin as the greatest mass-murderer of all time.

Defenders of Stalin declare that the bloody purges in the Soviet Union were unavoidable. They assert that before the war the resourceful one-man ruler liquidated opponents and competent military men by the score in order to rid the land of potential fifth columnists. Barmine, however, is convinced that this is not true. Stalin, he is sure, sent many of the finest and bravest soldiers and officers of the Red Army to their death merely because he wanted absolute control of the state and the military from root to branch. Had he not done so, the sufferings of the Russian people would have been far

less severe during the war, and the final victory over Germany would have come much sooner.

At Stalin's nod many ardent comrades and co-workers—men who believed heart and soul in the tenets of Lenin and strove with all their might to translate those tenets into practical reality—were summarily executed. In fact, Barmine states explicitly that Stalin is by no means a follower of the principles of Lenin. The pock-marked little dictator with a withered arm and a halting tongue permits no principle under the sun to stand in the way of his consuming lust for power. No man and no woman who is not an out-and-out toady can work with Stalin.

**B**ARMINE, who is now a citizen of the United States, was an ardent Communist. He had, as Max Eastman says, "gone Bolshevik as a mere matter of growing up, and without any real knowledge of what the doctrine was, or at least what any other doctrine was." He endured hardships and fought during the revolution which took place in Russia toward the end of World War I. Later on he held important posts in the military, commercial, and diplomatic departments of the Soviet Union. The account of his career and his escape from the clutches of Stalin is exciting; but *One Who Survived* is far more significant as a document which unmask Stalin as a thoroughly unscrupulous tyrant and proves beyond any doubt whatever that communism has not worked in the Soviet Union. "The Soviet bureaucracy," says Barmine, "has be-

come in every essential respect an exploiting class," and the world can learn from Stalin that "*abolishing private property in the means of production does not abolish the exploitation of man by man.*"

Everyone should read *One Who Survived*. It shows convincingly that the communism about which the champions of Stalin speak with well-oiled glibness and out of the abysmal depths of appalling and tragic benightedness is but a synonym for man's inhumanity to man. Hitlerism, with its degradation of the individual, seems to have been crushed in Germany; but Stalinism, which, like Hitlerism, is the sworn enemy of freedom of thought and speech, seems to be riding high, wide, and handsome in the U.S.S.R. and in the mouths and hearts of many deluded souls in other parts of the world. How long, Marshal Stalin, how long?

In the introduction to *One Who Survived* Mr. Eastman declares:

To one who has watched, as I have, with sad amazement, the various forms of corruption and degeneration and awful intellectual debauch to which the debacle of socialism in Russia has given rise throughout the world, the steadfastness and courage and high persistence, the sense of an honorable obligation to mankind revealed by this shipwrecked Bolshevik [Barmine] have been reassuring.

The author himself once said to Mr. Eastman:

When I work on my book, I feel as though I were walking in a graveyard. All my friends and life associates have been shot. It seems to be some kind of a mistake that I am alive.

## Maine Novel

*STORM TIDE*. By Elisabeth Ogilvie. Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York. 1945. 350 pages. \$2.75.

BENNETT'S ISLAND off the Maine coast, "the great sundrenched world of sea and sky and tawny field, . . . the red-brown rocks that sloped from the soil of the Island into the sea and then went down and down and were still the Island . . . the treeless, rolling ground at the Western End where the wild strawberries carpeted the slopes in July, and the ripe raspberries trembled on the bushes in August, and where the gulls rested on the sheer naked cliffs at the very tip of the Island, and where the surf rolled even on calm days"—this was the home to which Joanna Bennett and her bridegroom Nils Sorenson returned with several other lobster-fishing families who were "game." The account of their life at the cove and in their sturdy cottages and their struggle against an unscrupulous rival group makes up the most interesting part of this novel. The other theme, Joanna's long refusal to admit the superiority of her husband's integrity to her own flashy daring and her hard lesson in human values, suffers from artificiality.

Miss Ogilvie knows at first hand the coast life of which she writes. Office workers will read with interest the details of the lobster-fishermen's outdoor chores—fishing for bait, visiting some 200 lobster traps in their "peapod" boats, "hauling" the trapped lobsters, "carring" the catch, and sailing to the mainland for gro-



ceries and mail. Inland housewives will wonder at the special tasks that the shore life entails, such as keeping the windows clear of salt deposits and knitting trap heads. The men's outdoor life puts extra emphasis on mealtime: "The beans were on, deep bronzey-brown, steaming and aromatic to blend with the perfume of hot yeast rolls; the chili sauce and the piccalilli glistened in their separate dishes, the apple jelly was a tawny jewel, the grape jelly was the color of garnet, and the cole slaw rested lightly in its blue bowl. . . . Joanna poured the coffee, and its pungence was the crowning touch."

But Miss Ogilvie fails to get far beyond the surface aspects of Maine life. What is absent from her novels is evident when one studies such representations of Maine life as the paintings of the late Marsden Hartley.

### Thought-Provoking Parable

*TWILIGHT BAR: An Escapade in Four Acts.* By Arthur Koestler. The Macmillan Company, New York. 1945. 104 pages. \$2.00.

THE only play to come from the gifted pen of Hungarian-born Arthur Koestler presents a thought-provoking parable. The scene of the play is An Island Republic, the time is any time. Alpha and Omega, investigators from a powerful Interplanetary Federation, have come to determine the Island Republic's "right to live." The Federation is overcrowded; its inhabitants need space for colonization. Therefore the population of one of the neighboring

planets is to be liquidated. Alpha and Omega want to be fair; they insist that, obviously, their choice must be

. . . the one which has no real claim to exist. The planet on which life has the least meaning. The one where pain outweighs pleasure. The one which lives for toil and not for leisure. Where hatred is stronger than love. Where wisdom yields to stupidity. Where value wanes before vanity. In other words, the unhappiest one.

For

. . . that planet has no end and no justification, no cosmic *raison d'être*, nothing to regret when it goes. Its only happy moment will be when the Delta-rays are switched on, its land and seas turn purple, and its unhappy breed relapses into eternal oblivion, while the live force of its atoms is released into the depths of space, to re-form into happier combinations.

The Republic has three days of grace in which to improve its "Happiness Quotient." This, Alpha decides,

. . . is a fair test. If the sickness of your race has gone beyond a certain stage, no amount of time will help you. If you are still viable, you can do miracles in three days.

This, then, was "Humanity's last chance to redeem its wasted millenniums. Three days to achieve the miracle, to organize human happiness—or be wiped off the face of the universe."

Mr. Koestler depicts the events of these crucial days with biting irony. The frantic and often ridiculous efforts of the Prime Minister and his Cabinet reflect the confusion, the injustice, and the political, social, and

moral retrogression of a tormented Europe in the years in which the baleful "isms" sent poisonous tentacles into every nation. *Twilight Bar* is a direct outgrowth of the author's personal experiences with, and reaction to, life under a dictatorship. Mr. Koestler began the first version of *Twilight Hour* on a summer day in 1933. Alone and unhappy, he sat on the terrace of the Café Metropole in Moscow. Inside the Café an orchestra played a popular song. The words of the refrain, the sentimental melody, and his own bitterness caused him to "escape into a daydream which took the shape of a play." Mr. Koestler finished the play three weeks later during a three-day train journey from Moscow to Budapest. Before it could be produced, fascism had spread to Southeastern Europe, and the author was forced to flee to Paris. When France fell, *Twilight Bar*, together with other unpublished manuscripts, was confiscated by the Gestapo. Mr. Koestler says:

I gave it no more thought until the summer of 1944. I again felt miserable, and again for good reason. I wrote the second version of the play in July-August, 1944, during the last and for me most unbearable phase of the war.

The author has not written a happy ending into *Twilight Bar*. Sorrowfully Glowworm reflects:

When the people of this Island were frightened, they decided to be happy, because they had no other choice. And they tasted happiness and found that it was good; they attempted the impossible and found that it worked. Then, when they ceased to be frightened, they said: Now that the danger has passed we can be

unhappy again; and with a sigh of relief they rushed back to their old misery. It's eleven now. In an hour it will be midnight.

Mr. Koestler is without doubt one of the important literary figures of our day. *Twilight Bar* points to, but does not achieve, the magnificent tragic irony, the superb dramatic power, and the brilliant literary style of Mr. Koestler's novels and essays.

### Dark Story

*THE WIDE HOUSE.* By Taylor Caldwell. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. 1945. 533 pages. \$3.00.

THIS is the story of Janie Driscoll Cauder, widow, who brought her four children to Grandville on Lake Erie in 1850; who hoped to wed her handsome cousin, Stuart Coleman, and who, failing, devoted the rest of her life to the ruin of Stuart and of her children. There was Angus, whom she made into a pious miser; Bertie, whom she drove to drink; Robbie, whose cold intellectualism she could not pierce; and Laurie, beautiful, soulless, wanton singer. Interwoven into the fortunes of this family is another tale of the intolerance of that era exemplified in the friendship of Stuart with Sam Berkowitz, Jew, and Father Houlihan, Catholic. The selfish provincialism and narrow greed of a small town in those tumultuous days provide a tempestuous background for the whole story. But in the end, when all the violence is over, all the deserving characters live happily ever after.

There is no doubt that Taylor Caldwell is a gifted writer. His de-

scription of an American town from 1850-60 is vivid and forceful. The individual characters are sharply drawn. Occasionally his descriptions become a bit monotonous, as though he could find no other expression than the one he had previously used, but in general he is able to provide a fine realism. In the chief characters he endeavors to portray both the white and the black, the weakness and the strength. He does not fail to illustrate adequately their weakness. But in their strength he becomes confused. This is most evident in the character of Father Houlihan. The priest's genial overlooking of profanity, his cheerful acquiescence of gambling, his belief that a man's generosity will cover up a host of adulteries, wastefulness, and blasphemies are a comfortable creed. Many who read *The Wide House* will nod with approval. Nevertheless, this confusion is one of its weaknesses, as is the unlimited profanity and the usual unnecessary intrusion of adulterous passages. So *The Wide House*, for all its literary promises, misses being great and lasting literature by a wide margin.

### D-Day

*THE FAR SHORE.* By Max Miller. McGraw-Hill, New York. 1945. 173 pages. \$2.50.

UNFORTUNATELY for Mr. Miller he relates the same story which Ernie Pyle told so simply and so well in *Brave Men*, and in an attempt at the same style. The huge undertaking of the D-day landing in Normandy lacks reality in *The Far Shore*; and in spite of the many incidents and con-

versations of the men taking part, the book seems more like a report by someone viewing the scene from a distance rather than the close experience of a participant. The author does not share his emotional experience because he does not know how.

However, the material scope of the invasion of France and the numerous navy teams, from the cooks and small-boat boys to the beachmasters and demolition crews, are described in a way which illustrates well the complexity and interdependence of all factors in the invasion. After reading the book, as well as the pictures, we found it an excellent background to be filled out by the personal experiences of navy men in the "amphibs." The author, who is a lieutenant commander in the naval reserve, was on a Liberty ship during the invasion of Normandy and took part in the invasion of southern France aboard an LCI. The reader will find that "the far shore" is the destination of a task force. He will also get a hazy picture of tired men aboard various amphibious craft, but he will not get that deep personal reaction which cannot be put into words.

The few samples of Mr. Miller's dry humor make good reading. Consider the small booklets issued to all the Yanks on how to make themselves pleasing to the people for whose sake they have left home and are fighting. And there is also the bewildered little sailor who viewed the destruction made by the American bombing in the peaceful land which the Germans left comparatively untouched, who said, "We sure liberated . . . out of this place!"

Fifty good reasons remain why navy-lovers enjoy this book. Nowhere have we seen a better collection of action photographs of the navy and its ships available to civilians. The book has an interesting format, and we can promise that more than one person will consider ripping out some of the illustrations to have them framed.

### Light Reading

*BEST SHORT STORIES OF O. HENRY.* Selected by Bennett Cerf and Van H. Cartmell. The Sun Dial Press, Garden City, N. Y. 1945. 338 pages. \$1.00.

*BEST SHORT STORIES OF JACK LONDON.* The Sun Dial Press, Garden City, N. Y. 1945. 311 pages. \$1.00.

THIRTY-EIGHT stories make up the latest edition of selections from the pen of O. Henry. And it differs very little from other similar editions, containing as it does tales from almost all of his books, those stories which are well-known in the field of the American short story and those that have been printed but rarely. Among the common stories, familiar to almost every high school student, are "The Ransome of Red Chief," "An Unfinished Story," "A Municipal Report," and "Mammon and the Archer." Then there are the less popular ones too, which, if they do nothing else, at least show the reader that O. Henry did occasionally leave his New York and his Bowery locale.

Reading these today, at a time when the American short story has reached an unusual standard of excellence, one is struck by O. Henry's

stilted manner, his self-consciousness, his use of the trite and stereotyped. Yet there is a certain atmospheric appeal in the tales, and his surprise endings are still there to bring us up with a jolt. As far as this particular volume is concerned it is probably no better—or no worse—than any of the others.

For a London fan the second book, which is advertised as "the first collected edition of the finest tales of one of the world's great story tellers," is adequate, containing perhaps most of his best. Though the stories are, almost without exception, examples of London's obsession—that of picturing man pitted against a cruel environment—the book does attempt to secure as much variety as is possible when dealing with the writing of this author.

It is somewhat difficult to understand why the printing of such collections is necessary in these times of paper and print shortages. One thing can be said, however: the books are cheap in price.

### Pot-Pourri

*THE BEST IS YET.* By Morris L. Ernst. Harper's, New York. 291 pages. \$3.00.

MORRIS ERNST, long known as a leading liberal and a prominent member of the New York Bar, is the author of several books and the co-author of others. Outstanding among his books is *America's Primer*. He is co-author of *To The Pure, Censored*, and *Hold Your Tongue*.

As a lawyer, Ernst has gained fame for his espousal of liberal causes. He

has appeared in practically every literary censorship case in the past decade, including cases involving Mrs. Dennett's *The Sex Side of Life*, Dr. Stopes' *Married Love*, Joyce's *Ulysses* and others. He is at present acting as counsel for the Dramatists' Guild, for the American Civil Liberties Union, and for the American Newspaper Guild.

*The Best Is Yet* is a pot-pourri of semi-biographical essays written on a considerable variety of subjects. As always, Ernst is a partisan. His likes and dislikes, which he never seeks to conceal, are always very definite and sometimes even violent. To those who do not share his opinions, he may appear unreasonable. Ernst's gods are always great and they include such men as Justice Brandeis, Heywood Broun, Henry A. Wallace, and above all, Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Ernst's scoundrels are always of the deepest dye, and they include movements such as the Zionist movement; the Communists; and personalities such as La Guardia, Krock, Dewey, and others.

*The Best Is Yet* is, however, not all made up of personality sketches. It is full of very interesting though rather loosely discussed observations on life. To Ernst, bigness is always a curse in business and industry as well as in the size of cities. New York City, for example, should be broken up into its component parts. Ernst believes that it is too big to remain solvent as it is. He believes that the American mind is now being cast into definite patterns by about thirty influential people who control radio, press, and screen. Ernst believes that

this situation presents a greater menace to democratic government than even State censorship, one of his pet hates. There is much more of this kind of material and all is written amusingly and well.

This is definitely a good book for light reading—provided you are tolerant, have a sense of humor, have no high blood pressure—and are not one of Mr. Ernst's victims.

H. F. WIND

### Enlightening Book

SCIENCE YEAR BOOK OF 1945.

Edited by John D. Ratcliff. Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., Garden City, N. Y. 1945. 224 pages. \$2.50.

JOHN D. RATCLIFF has gathered together the most important and amazing developments of science in the past year and grouped them under four headings in the fourth annual volume of this popular science series. Under "Medicine," "Physics and Chemistry," "Aviation," and "Other Sciences" he has chosen the exciting stories of penicillin, Tantalum, corneal transplants, electrons, DDT, the rocket ship, buzz bombs, the gas turbine, and a host of other items which will revolutionize life in the future. These articles originally came from *Time*, *Hygeia*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Collier's*, *Scientific American*, *American Magazine*, *Country Gentleman*, *Fortune*, *Science News Letter*, *Saturday Evening Post*, *Harper's*, and *Reader's Digest*. They were written by well-known men and women: Lois Mattox Miller, Waldemar Kaempfert, Frederick Graham, Holman Har-

vey, Maurice Zolotow, Arthur W. Baum, Elsie McCormick, Martin Sommers, and others.

In the introduction, besides setting forth the purpose of the book, Mr. Ratcliff has included a lengthy discussion of the new and multiple uses of natural gas since this topic was not covered elsewhere.

This is truly an enlightening volume, especially if you cannot keep up with all the scientific journals.

JESSIE SWANSON

### Objective Study

*A SHORT HISTORY OF GERMANY.* By S. H. Steinberg. The Macmillan Co., New York. 303 pages. Indexed. \$3.00.

THIS book, published by the Cambridge University Press in England and by the Macmillan Company in America, is an excellent history of Germany for the present day reader. It is in no sense propaganda, but a careful, objective study. The book starts with the year 911, after an introductory chapter on centralism and federalism in German history, when the attempt of Charlemagne to unite the Teutonic and Romanic nations of Western Europe in one body politic had finally broken down and the three main parts of the empire began to shape themselves into what were later to be known as France, Italy, and Germany. The author indicates clearly the structure of the Holy Roman Empire and presents a vivid picture of the leading emperors, Otto the Great, Barbarossa, Frederick II, and Charles V. His brief discussion of the Reformation is adequate

and he states that the chief effect of that great movement upon the political and constitutional development of the Empire was the further consolidation of the power of the princes. The later decline of the Empire is followed by a discussion of the German Confederation, the Empire of Bismarck and that of Wilhelm II, the Weimar Republic, and the rise of Naziism. Dr. Steinberg contends that "the outstanding fact in the history of Germany is the non-existence, up to 1871, of any political unit called Germany. The history of the Germanies is the history of the unending struggle of the continental Teutons for a working compromise between uniformity and disruption."

### A Book to Argue About

*SO WELL REMEMBERED.* By James Hilton. An Atlantic Monthly Press Book, published by Little, Brown & Co., Boston. 1945. 309 pages. \$2.50.

WHY this story was not serialized in a magazine prior to book publication is a puzzle to me. Although part four is half the book, the major sections readily subdivide into instalment-length units which are tantalizing because they urge on your desire to find out ever more and more about the characters. Suspense without violence keeps you reading beyond bedtime. Yet when you have finished, the tame ending is a jolt to your expectations!

The first pages introduce George Boswell officially meeting Lord Winslow for a civic celebration; on the last pages he voluntarily meets the

same lord's grandson—George's ex-wife's son by second marriage—who is on his honeymoon. Between these two events we glimpse headliner details of the twenties, thirties, and forties in recent world history as the European and Asiatic problems affect George, Livia, and their acquaintances.

Hilton's fame as a novelist rests mostly upon his skill in characterization. The prize character in *So Well Remembered* is Olivia Channing, who holds sinister influence over three men: her first husband, public-minded Councillor (later Mayor) Boswell; her second spouse, Jeffrey Winslow, unsuccessful in carving a career in the British diplomatic corps; and her son, Charles Winslow, RAF hero recuperating from a plane crash. Readers will differ in their opinion of her deeds and desires, but will be compelled to admire Hilton's technique in poisoning her so antithetically to the only other character to dominate the entire story, the homespun hero of the book, George Boswell. "She was too utterly fearless to be reasonable, while he was too reasonable to be utterly fearless."

Memorable supporting characters are old John Channing, Livia's jailbird father; old Richard Felsby, eccentric Victorian manufacturer; Father Wendover, progressive Catholic priest; and Henry Millbay, ex-novelist master-mind who is a convenient *raisonneur* to George in filling in the twenty year gap of Livia's goings-on as Mrs. Winslow. Special mention should be made of the spirit dominant in such inanimate influences as the native village of Browdley (pos-

sibly reminiscent of the author's youth), the *Browdley Guardian*, which George edits, and the mysterious, ancient house at Stoneclough where Livia had been born.

That day so well remembered was September 1, 1921, the day after the officially declared end of the first World War. It started as a harbinger of good things to come, as George presided over the cornerstone-laying for the new housing project that would replace Browdley's slums. In the light of what was revealed to him that day about Livia, however, September 1, 1921 was also the turning point in George's private life.

In sheer drama Hilton again surpasses such previous achievements of his as *Lost Horizon*, *Good-Bye Mr. Chips*, *We Are Not Alone*, *Random Harvest*, and *The Story of Dr. Wasell*. One does not forget Livia's haunted smile nor George's everlasting books, interminable speeches, and rhetorical editorials. Nor will anyone dislike the individual stories behind the celebrated Channing case, or Uncle Joe's first meeting with little George Boswell after eternal moments of tortured doubt in the lad's mind, or the ironic death of infant Martin Boswell, or George's unexpected last dinner with his wife, or the Kemalpan Sultanate affair, or the coincidental revelation scene in the Mulcaster hospital, or Livia's theatrical return to George's home for only a few hours and because of an utterly selfish reason.

*So Well Remembered* is an exciting tale for readers who can forget to count pages. The author's skillful phrasings and pointed dialogue seem

at times more showy than necessary, but the total effect, enriched with genuine humor, is harmonious. May the motion picture version do justice to this latest of Hilton creations, which will survive on its literary merits.

HERBERT H. UMBACH.

## Great Oratory

### *THE DAWN OF LIBERATION.*

By the Right Hon. Winston S. Churchill. Little, Brown and Company, Boston. 1945. 417 pages. \$3.50.

**T**HE DAWN OF LIBERATION is another collection of the former Prime Minister's speeches, messages, and broadcasts during the fifth year of the war. Previously other collections of his speeches were published under the titles: *Unrelenting Struggle*, *The End of the Beginning*, and *Onwards to Victory*.

Your reviewer is not concerned with Mr. Churchill's obvious imperialism, his distinct Tory leanings. Only an evaluation of his oratory is our concern here. His exquisite choice of words, the rhythmic cadence of his sentence structure, his apt use of the transition, his remarkable clarity, and his illustrative figures of speech coupled with his arresting delivery mark Mr. Churchill as one of the greatest public speakers of our era.

Displaying the ex-Prime Minister's versatility, *The Dawn of Liberation* contains speeches and remarks on a variety of subjects: Basic English, War Decorations, Women and the Victoria Cross, Miners in the Army, Disorders in Greece, Death of Colonel Knox, the Flying Bomb, the

Quebec Conference, Palestine Terrorism, the Boys at Harrow, the Future of Poland, Lend-Lease Payments, and a host of other topics.

Students of the current scene as well as orators will derive pleasure and profit from a reading of this book.

## A Dash of Philosophy

*THE FACTS OF LIFE.* By Paul Goodman. The Vanguard Press, New York. 1945. 261 pages. \$2.50.

**T**HIS is a collection of cerebral short stories and a play. Goodman, a critic and writer now in his early thirties, seems, like Huxley and various European novelists, at least as much interested in carrying on a discussion with his readers as in presenting a facsimile of life. In some of the stories, "Iddings Clark," for example, the incidents are narrated in the traditional way, leaving the reader to draw his own inferences. But in such a piece as "A Goat for Azazel," the long passages glossing the philosophical problem dwarf the human situation from which the problem arises. The reader is reminded of Shaw's prefaces; here are short stories with familiar but learned essays attached or interspersed; "A Goat for Azazel," in fact, even includes a Noh play.

Goodman's familiar essays, both those in stories and those that are independent, suffer from a certain self-consciousness typical of graduate-school leisure-time discussions—discussions which are carried on largely for the fun of intellectual agility. In similar passages in the writings of



James Joyce this flaw is seldom observable; apparently Goodman as yet does not have a sufficiently full view of life. Yet a number of his writings indicate that he is a sincere writer, and many passages show that he has already considerable insight. His book of Noh-plays, *Stop Light*, was promising, and in the present volume there is distinguished thought and writing in "A Cross-Country Runner at Sixty-five," "Iddings Clark," "A Goat for Azazel," and the play "Jonah"; the other pieces also contain much interesting speculation.

"A Cross-Country Runner" is concerned with the problem of whether it matters what activity one spends one's life on as long as one is sufficiently devoted. "The Facts of Life," which demonstrates Goodman's ability to give a realistic portrayal of children, is a study of a little Jewish girl's confusion in the face of sex mysteries and race prejudice. In "The University in Exile," a group of refugees at a dinner party reveal their fears and snobberies. "The Canoeist" involves a subtle analysis of a snob who is filled with envy for the man whom, by ostracizing, he is setting free. "A Goat for Azazel" is a psychological study of the Scapegoat.

In the play "Jonah," Goodman makes use of the medieval custom of playing Bible incidents in modern dress and giving them whatever complement of comic they could bear. He attempts to fill out the Biblical account, reconciling Jonah's apparent devotion to God and worthiness of being a prophet with his dereliction of duty and his disgust over the sparing of Nineveh. The resulting char-

acter is a realistic elderly and somewhat woebegone Jewish man who honors God but longs to be released from His difficult service.

### Taxpayer's Burden

*THE PUBLIC DEBT.* By William Withers. The John Day Company, New York, N. Y. 1945. 110 pages. \$1.75.

THE author of this book is Associate Professor of Economics of Queens College who has several previous books on national debts, social problems, and economics security to his credit.

In this volume he discusses our national debt of nearly 300 billion dollars. Will our debt be a blessing or a disaster? To this question he gives answers which demonstrate that we can use the debt wisely if we will. As our public debt is central to every businessman's planning, to every worker's and consumer's hopes, we shall give the reader Mr. Withers' conclusions. If the reader is sufficiently interested in the processes of thought by which these conclusions were reached he will buy the book himself. Here are the conclusions:

- (1) A postwar public debt of \$300,000,000,000 or more will not prove burdensome to the people of this country.
- (2) Additions to this large public debt will not be injurious if proper measures are taken to insure the investment of the funds in productive public enterprise, and provided further, that adequate controls are established to prevent inflation and the unequal distribution of wealth.
- (3) We are entering a mixed economy in which the public debt must be regarded as a productive force which assists in the

employment of capital and labor left idle by private business. (4) Public debt incurred for productive enterprise will not cause great harm but will add to the economic welfare of the nation. (5) We must broaden our concept of public enterprise to include useful services, efficiency-creating expenditures, and income-creating expenditures. (6) The continuing effects of the public debt may prove inflationary unless care is taken to use the tax system and price controls to prevent inflation. Taxes should reduce saving during periods of low employment and production, and assist the control of prices during inflationary periods. Taxes should not unduly restrict business and major reliance should be placed upon income and other personal taxes.

(7) It is not always necessary to retire a large proportion of the public debt. If retirement of a part of the debt becomes necessary, it should occur during periods of economic prosperity so as not to restrict business by causing deflationary tendencies. (8) A widespread investigation of the effects of public investments should be undertaken and only those investments allowed which cause an increase of real incomes reasonably proportionate to the original investments. (9) Government-owned war plants and lend-lease materials and equipment should be used to serve as a means of public investment and as assets behind the public debt after the war.

### Ceterum Censeo

*BONES OF CONTENTION.* By the Rt. Hon. Lord Vansittart, P.C., G.C.M.G., D.Litt., LL.D. Alfred A. Knopf, New York. 1945. 158 pages. \$2.75.

**L**ORD VANSITTART reminds us of old Cato the Censor, who ended every public address with the ringing

and vindictive cry, "Furthermore, I believe that Carthage must be destroyed." His latest book, *Bones of Contention*, contains speeches and essays which Lord Vansittart delivered and wrote during the years of World War II. Whether he was speaking in the upper chamber of Parliament, whether he was addressing the members of The Trade Union Club, whether he was edifying the membership of the Society of Inter-Allied Friendship, or whether he was inspiring a rally for the rebuilding of blitzed churches, the refrain of England's famous peer was constant: "Germany must be destroyed!"

The author's thesis is simple. Only a hard peace, a long occupation, and Draconian justice will make it impossible for Germany to embark upon her periodic conquests of western Europe.

Vansittart's fundamental thesis, we believe, is tenable; but in the elaboration of that thesis his indulgence in so many sins of commission and omission causes the reader to doubt his intellectual honesty. For instance, to deny the existence of a post-war blockade in 1919—a blockade which resulted in the malnutrition and death of thousands of innocent German women and children—is to fly in the face of facts. To assert that the great democracies did not hasten the collapse of the Weimar Republic is simply not true. To cast reflections on the motives of Friedrich Ebert and Gustav Stresemann is more than uncharitable. To state that Luther advocated worship of the state, that there were in the Great Reformer

"strong strains of treachery, violence, and destruction" is calumny.

Read the book. Vansittart is no pamphleteer; he is an essayist with a mission. Whether he presents fact or fiction, indisputable fact or arrant opinion, he writes extremely well. His use of wit, epigram, and malediction mark him as a great essayist. Yes, read Vansittart, hoping that his book is an overstatement and praying that there is yet a remnant in Germany which has not bowed its knee to the Baal of Naziism.

### The Climbers

*THE WHITE TOWER.* By James Ramsey Ullman. J. B. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia. 1945. 479 pages. \$3.00.

LISTEN for a moment to the talk of six mountain climbers resting in the evening afterglow high up in their toiling ascent toward one of the most unattainable Alpine peaks. In preparation for their struggle they have left behind, as good mountain climbers must, all but the essentials of existence. Material essentials they have—their guide has seen to that. But something is missing. They all feel the lack, and in their conversation search for it.

"Aren't we, too, each in his own way struggling for escape from reality?" asks one.

"You're quite sure then, old boy," counters another, "of what comprises reality?"

"If you are speaking of ultimates, Monsieur," he replies, "no, I am not. If you are speaking of the world in which we are unfortunate enough to live, I am afraid I am."

Silence.

"That of course, is the bitterest thing of all," a quiet voice puts in. "The more we accomplish the less we have; the more we know, the less we understand."

And later . . .

"We must rediscover a purpose, a direction, in our living. . . . To know a little less and to understand a little more; that, it seems to me, is our greatest need. It may be faith that I'm talking about. I'm not quite sure."

They are floundering. On the mountain side, over glaciers and up perpendicular rocks, they can make progress, for they have all the material essentials. But to these other questions, which, strangely enough, become more and more important as the air grows thinner and the ascent more hazardous, they can find no satisfying answer.

Once you set out on the climb, you cannot help but follow it, every step of the way. And Mr. Ullman has the gift of acquainting you intimately with the individuality of each of his characters. The book moves slowly because you have to talk with each one of them, and you have to admire the scenery, and you have to feel your way over slippery rocks and against blinding gales to the top. But, once started, you can't give up.

The Weissturn had loomed above the other Alpine peaks and it had held a peculiar fascination for the international assortment of characters who find themselves in the quiet Swiss valley hidden away from the chaos of World War II. More than anything else each wants to climb it: the elderly English geologist because he had once attempted Mt. Everest

and had failed; the vacationing Nazi officer for the glory of his country and as a test of his will; the French writer to seek the stimulus which would at last release the flood of literary creation he feels within him; the old Alpine guide because it is the climax of his life's work; and the young Austrian woman out of love for one of the climbers.

But it is the American pilot, parachuting out of the night sky from his doomed bomber, who brings them together to make the assault on the remote White Tower.

And now, as they struggle higher and higher, Mr. Ullman has a chance to strip men's lives clean of all save two fundamental human drives—love and the struggle against the elements. How the ideals of each survive or meet their end is told in a series of penetrating characterizations—the American, for instance, bringing into play a certain element of democratic thinking, and the Swiss guide a strain of religion.

Why do they—and why do we all—accept the challenge of a Herculean task? For many reasons, says Mr. Ullman, but mostly because *it is there*.

Not too satisfying, is it? But perhaps you have an answer. You should!

## Alger Redivivus

**STRUGGLING UPWARD** and other works. By Horatio Alger Jr., with an introduction by Russel Crouse. Crown Publishers, New York, N. Y. 1945. 570 pages. \$3.00.

IT was a happy thought on the part of the publishers to issue this volume of selected stories of the famous

Horatio Alger Jr.-stories which delighted the hearts of a generation of American boys now rapidly passing from the scene. The Alger stories are a part of the American tradition and the present generation should know something about the literature that for millions of American boys took the place of the present day movies and comics. The Alger books, of which close to 200,000,000 copies have been sold, gave the American boy his inspiration to strive for success, fired his ambition, and gave him the impetus to stand up for right against wrong.

It was a simple story plot that the author followed consistently in his objective of trying to improve the lives of underprivileged youngsters. The titles of his stories repeat the ever-recurring refrain: "Paul, the Peddler," "Jed, the Poorhouse Boy," "Julius, the Street Boy," "Tom, the Bootblack," "Joe, the Hotel Boy," "Jerry, the Luggage Boy," "Fame and Fortune," "Slow and Sure," etc.

Horatio Alger Jr.'s ideal was success and that is about the sociological significance his stories had, with the possible exception of one, namely "Phil, the Fiddler." Its purpose was to expose the practice of unscrupulous Italian padrones who brought Italian boys to New York, having purchased them from their parents, and kept them in virtual slavery, forcing them to roam the streets of New York as itinerant musicians and taking their earnings away from them. Alger, in his "Phil, the Fiddler," gave some help to the social workers who were doing their utmost to destroy the system.

The following stories are included in this volume: "Struggling Upward," "Ragged Dick," "Phil, the Fiddler," and "Jed, the Poorhouse Boy."

Those readers who read the Alger stories in their youth will find a nostalgic enjoyment in the reading of this volume. The younger generation who know not Alger, have an opportunity to taste a bit of the literature their fathers and grandfathers once read avidly and often surreptitiously because of their parental prohibitions.

### War President

*WOODROW WILSON AND THE PEOPLE.* By H. C. F. Bell. Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc., Garden City, New York. 1945. 392 pages. \$3.00.

WORLD WAR II has come to an end, but World War I and the leading figures in it are still being studied by historians and biographers. Recently Woodrow Wilson has come in for diagnosis in a number of well-written books by men competent for the task they have set for themselves. Several of these have been mentioned in previous issues of this magazine.

Mr. H. C. F. Bell, the author of the volume under brief review here, says that he has tried to write the sort of book about Wilson that Wilson would have wanted to have written about himself, a book that would help the people to understand him, and so within the range of the average man's appreciation, and a book that would emphasize Wilson's relations with his fellow countrymen.

After reading the book with much interest we believe that Mr. Bell accomplished what he set out to do. He presents a pen portrait of Wilson that does full justice to Wilson's supreme desire to be the people's servant and their interpreter. The many little sidelights on his career as professor, husband, father, governor, and friend only add lustre to the picture of a man who was most cordially hated by some of our leading politicians and statesmen of his day; who was misunderstood and maligned by others as pro-British, as a mere pawn of the British Empire; who wrecked his health and lost his power and seemingly died a failure. The events of the past year, the San Francisco Conference, the longing for an enduring peace that goes up today out of millions of hearts only show that Woodrow Wilson was not a failure and that our country and the world at large today are endeavoring to build on the foundations Woodrow Wilson laid.

The particular value of this book lies in its documentation. Mr. Bell quotes profusely from the record. He shows, for example, how strenuous Wilson's efforts were to keep our country out of the war, and that the slogan, "He kept us out of war," in his campaign for re-election was based on facts and was not a purely political catch-phrase. He takes us behind the scenes at the peace conference and gives us an idea of the tremendous odds against the man whose "Fourteen Points" were an idealistic objective devoutly to be sought after for possible achievement.



## A SURVEY OF BOOKS

### FRANKLIN, THE LIFE OF AN OPTIMIST

By Andre Maurois. Illustrated by Howard Simon Didier, Publishers, New York. 1945. 79 pages. \$2.50.

ANDRE MAUROIS' biographical sketch of Benjamin Franklin is a welcome addition to the juvenile bookshelf. His story of this great American, who dominated so much of our early history—literary, scientific, civic, and political—is easy and interesting reading. The language is simple, yet carefully chosen. Franklin's life is given sympathetic treatment at the hands of this biographer. His faults are not disregarded. His virtues are not over-emphasized. He is made a thoroughly human hero whose contributions to our American history deserve remembrance and emulation. The author does not attempt an exhaustive biography; yet the incidents chosen for inclusion in this little book adequately cover Franklin's busy career. Maurois' book represents a highly commendable type of biographical writing for children. We need more of it. The profuse il-

lustrations are a most welcome addition to the book, which in itself is an attractive example of artistic printing.

### PER ARDUA

*The Rise of British Air Power 1911-1939.* By Hilary St. George Saunders. Oxford University Press, New York. 1945. 356 pages. \$3.75.

HILARY ST. GEORGE SAUNDERS, author of *Combined Operations* and many other books on the various branches of service in the British Government, has written *Per Ardua* as a history of the air arm of the British forces. Beginning with the attachment of a balloon unit to the Royal Engineers in 1884, he traces the history of English air power down to the mobilization of the Royal and Dominion Air Forces on the third of September, 1939.

*Per Ardua* is scientifically written; Saunders is a historian, not a propagandist. The book has a bibliography, a good index, and some of the finest plates we have ever seen. Nevertheless, the book is extremely dry

reading. As a source or reference work the book is worthy of private library accession, but as a book for pleasure reading—perish the thought!

### GREAT RELIGIOUS STORIES

Edited by S. E. Frost, Jr. Garden City Publishing Co., Inc., Garden City, N. Y. 1945. 277 pages. \$1.98.

**T**HIS book is another proof of the deathless qualities of Holy Writ. We believe it will be popular. Written in a reverent manner and faithful to the text of the Scriptures the author tells the stories of the Bible and of great characters in church history. Nearly all the Bible stories contain direct quotations from the sacred text. The stories include all the important ones of the Old and New Testaments, with a selection of biographies of great Christian men and women from the first to the nineteenth centuries.

### SO FAR, SO GOOD

By Charles Hanson Towne. Julian Messner, Inc., New York. 1945. 245 pages. \$3.00.

**C**HARLES HANSON TOWNE brings together in these pages the reminiscences of many busy and interesting years. He devotes the early chapters to a nostalgic account of New York in his boyhood, painted with all the mellow hues of memory. Then follows the account of his rise in the publishing world, a busy, fascinating career that brought him into contact with most of the literary lights of the past forty years. A lively interest in the theatre added to his wide ac-

quaintanceship in the enchantingly mysterious realm of the stage. Of all this he writes most entertainingly. His viewpoint, as we might expect of anyone whose best years lie behind him, lingers in the past. "Those were the good old days."

Printers' ink and grease paint—these pages are pungent with them. These are the things and the people whom Towne found good, the names and places and times so fondly remembered. No doubt these are the things any autobiography is made of. But if so, we missed any mention of religious experience, which to us would seem to belong in any memoir. Perhaps in this case there weren't any. That thought alone to us marred the felicitous choice of the title.

### SHELLS BY A STREAM

By Edmund Blunden. Macmillan and Co., Ltd., London. 1945. 60 pages. \$1.75.

**T**HIS new collection of poems by Edmund Blunden includes several delicately charming pieces and one or two forceful ones; but as a whole the book fails of impact. The imagery is not memorable, and the myth-making is somewhat futile. The reader feels that he is listening to a pleasant and capable person who is just now thinking in a manner somewhat too relaxed.

There are occasional rewards for persisting, one of which deals with two lovers in a rose garden:

I wondered much at the great grace  
which fashioned your clear rosy face,  
After the myriads gone before, a beauty  
new and now supreme.

Another speculates on how some day a new ship may bear the then forgotten name of one that has recently met disaster:

And under her gray name a proud new ship

May yet advance,

Through with young faces brilliant for the trip:

God guard the dance!

### MY BROTHER AMERICANS

By Carlos P. Romulo. Doubleday, Doran and Co., Garden City, N. Y. 1945. 212 pages. \$2.50.

GENERAL ROMULO, author of *I Saw the Fall of the Philippines* and *Mother America*, here tells us of his experiences traveling to and fro across our land lecturing to our people. He covered 89,000 miles, visited 466 cities, and met thousands of our people. His heart-warming reception everywhere convinced him that the Americans were truly his brothers. His anecdotes and personal views that run through the volume also show him to be an

intelligent, understanding, patriotic American himself.

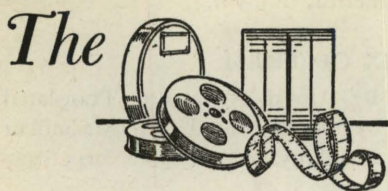
### SIX OF THEM

By Alfred Neumann. Translated by Anatol Murad. The Macmillan Company, New York. 1945. 327 pages. \$2.75.

ALFRED NEUMANN, the distinguished German novelist who has been living in California for a number of years, has written an absorbing account of a revolt against Nazism and of the methods which the Nazis pursued in their determined but ineffective effort to eliminate all thought of rebellion. A professor at the University of Munich, his wife, and four students are arrested, questioned, tried before the People's Court, convicted, and sentenced to death for disloyalty to the Third Reich and for attempting to persuade others to refuse to bend the knee to Hitlerism. The story is filled with suspense, power, and gripping intensity.







## The Motion Picture

THE CRESSET *evaluates one of the world's most powerful forces*

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"MOTHER SCIENCE gave it a premature birth, and Father Opportunism sent it out to work before it could walk." In these words, spoken on the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of the motion-picture industries, Marc Connolly put his finger squarely on the basic weakness of the motion picture as an art form. Technically the silver screen has progressed with giant strides; artistically it still halts and stutters. The principal causes of this uneven development are discussed by John Gassner and Dudley Nichols in a foreword to their valuable new book, *Best Film Plays of 1943-1944* (Crown Publishers, New York, 1945. 694 pages. \$3.00).

Two years ago Messrs. Gassner and Nichols edited an oversized volume containing twenty noteworthy screen plays of the past. The immediate success of *Twenty Best Film Plays* prompted the authors to undertake an annual publication devoted to outstanding

motion-picture scenarios. The first of the series contains the complete texts of the final shooting scripts for *Wilson* (20th Century-Fox), *The Purple Heart* (20th Century-Fox), *Going My Way* (Paramount), *Watch on the Rhine* (Warner Bros.), *Dragon Seed* (M-G-M), *The Miracle of Morgan's Creek* (Paramount), *The More the Merrier* (Columbia), *The Ox-bow Incident* (20th Century-Fox), *Hail the Conquering Hero* (Paramount), and *Casablanca* (Warner Bros.). Mr. Gassner declares that he and his co-worker have no desire to set themselves up as arbiters of the motion-picture world, and he emphasizes the fact that not all the better films could be included in one volume. In compiling their list the authors

made use of the simplest possible principle—that of presenting ten available screenplays which impressed us as being well above average, and as possessing qualities of interest in one or more respects.

The fine war documentaries and factual films were bypassed intentionally.

Mr. Gassner might well have had in mind *A Bell for Adano* (20th Century-Fox) when he wrote:

What, with notable exceptions, is omitted by the [screen] author or studio often comprises the most solid substance of plot and meaning. The logic of the resolution of a screenplay seems too often meager or hurried. The upshot of too many films is disproportionately small by comparison with the labor of preparation or the expository matter. The tendency is to follow the line of least resistance, or the line of least difficulty in comprehension, character analysis, and social import. Too much gets irretrievably lost in film making.

This is exactly what happened to John Hersey's distinguished novel. Into the Hollywood hopper went one of the most significant books of World War II. Out of the hopper came a cheap, stylized comedy portrayed by characters who might conceivably feel at home in light opera but who most assuredly were not written into Mr. Hersey's gripping tale of the village of Adano. The widely traveled war correspondent's plea for tolerance, understanding, and friendly co-operation among nations has been *spurlös versenkt*. John Hodiak is completely inadequate in the difficult role of

Major Victor Joppolo. The part of the girl Tina has been blown up to justify the appearance of screen star Gene Tierney—a complete waste of time, effort, and money. If the screen is to be an effective medium to promote international good will, it must do better than this.

On the other hand, it would be gratifying to know that *The Southerner* (United Artists, Jean Renoir) is to be shown to the people of many other lands. *The Southerner*, adapted from George Sessions Perry's novel *Hold Autumn in Your Hand*, is the simple, homely, and honest account of one bitter year in the life of a Texas sharecropper. It is a record of privation and misery, of hard work, high hopes, and heart-breaking disappointments. All the ugliness and anguish of poverty are here; but here, too, we see beauty, hope, and dauntless courage. This is a picture which the poor and the oppressed of other nations can understand. Thousands of Americans struggle against odds no less overwhelming than those portrayed in *The Southerner*. Why should we send to foreign markets only the gaudy, glittering films which depict the United States as a carefree nation in which life moves to the rhythm of a jazz band? There are minor flaws in *The Southerner*. Never-

theless, Director Jean Renoir and the cast merit commendation.

*Incendiary Blonde* (Paramount, George Marshall) presents a glorified technicolor biography of Texas Guinan, one of the most colorful characters of the era of the blind pig and the speakeasy. Those who knew the late Miss Guinan bluntly assert that this is merely a large serving of highly spiced hokum. The real life story of the lady of "Hello Sucker!" fame had little of the glamor and the romance lavishly bestowed on her screen image. In any event, the period re-created in *Incendiary Blonde* is not one of which we are proud. This is a picture you can skip without regret.

You can skip *Christmas in Connecticut* (Warner Bros., Peter Godfrey) too. This ridiculous concoction is evidently designed to see just how far one set of phonies will go in an attempt to outsmart another set of phonies. Has Hollywood revised downward its estimate of the average mental age of motion-picture audiences?

Freshly "blondined" Deanna Durbin romps through *Lady on a Train* (Universal, Charles David) with the grace and the subtlety of a circus calliope going at full blast. Was this trip really necessary, Deanna? The only mystery about the picture is why it was labeled a mystery.

*Uncle Henry* (Universal, Robert Siodmak), a well-made and well-acted psychological study, builds to a spine-tingling climax and then, like a pricked balloon, collapses, because of a weak ending. (A great secret, this ending! As though you haven't guessed it!) Surely, though, the public is becoming surfeited with penny-dreadfuls.

It isn't easy to bring the story of a living person to the screen. It becomes doubly hard when that person has a record like that of Al Schmid, the heroic young Marine who, singlehanded, killed two hundred Japanese on Guadalcanal. *Pride of the Marines* (Warner Bros., Delmar Daves) is a tactful and dignified picture; it is relatively free from maudlin sentimentality. John Garfield, Eleanor Parker, and a good supporting cast make the action credible and, very often, deeply moving. The subject of the war veterans' disability is a delicate one. It is my fervent hope that adult movie-goers will make unprofitable any attempt to exploit the heroism and the sacrifices of service men and service women.

*Junior Miss* (20th Century-Fox, George Seaton) is full of laughs and chuckles. The antics of Judy Graves, Sally Benson's enchanting adolescent characterization, are just as amusing on the screen as they were in Mrs. Benson's *New*

*Yorker* short stories and in the stage version prepared by Jerome Chodorov and Joseph Fields.

You will get full value for your money in *Anchors Aweigh* (M-G-M, Joe Pasternak). This gay and tuneful musical film parades the talents of Frank Sinatra, Gene Kelly, Kathryn Grayson, José Iturbi, and a large and competent supporting cast. Top honors go to Gene Kelly for his fine acting and superb dancing. No one would be rash enough to say that The Voice is a good actor; but, since he has the good sense not to *try* to act, his performance, by and large is a creditable one. Mr. Iturbi indulges in a bit of entertaining boogie-woogie.

There can be only one verdict concerning *Guest Wife* (United Artists, Sam Wood) and *Don Juan Quilligan* (20th Century-Fox). That verdict is "Thumbs down!"

Both films are dull. In addition, they convey a reprehensible moral slant.

A great deal better, but falling far short of being a notable cinema offering, is Producer Bing Crosby's initial effort, *The Great John L* (United Artists, Frank Tuttle). The story of the poor immigrant boy who smashed his way to the top in the fight game is one of courage and determination—and of pitiful weakness and blustering bombast. The Boston Strong Boy made and dissipated a fortune. A champion in the ring, he lost his private battle with Demon Rum. Burnt out and relegated to the status of a has-been, the great John L. spent his declining years as a temperance lecturer. The boxing scenes are excellent, the acting is fair, and the period has been re-created with careful attention to detail.



# Verse

## Dust-Bound Dreams

Falling leaves and shattering petals tell  
Of transiency brief living forms endure—  
Lace shadows dim the spot where splendor fell . . .  
Where restless life, at length shall be secure  
In death whose mold and clay perennially  
Absorb all beauty into dull decay!  
Time's wearing waves grind everlastingly  
Until our dust-bound dreams are powder-gray  
And only dreams we dare to live eventually  
Survive in forms that cannot fade away!

—GEORGE ROSSMAN

## Volumes Without Words

Pictures are a pin-point of the past,  
Solemn scenes in little silver frames;  
Frozen film or arid paints are glassed,  
Priceless volumes without words or names.

—LAWRENCE J. SMITH

## And No Word Enough

I walk the flowering pathways  
Of my eager mind,  
Where a laughing sunlight plays.  
Of all the loveliness I find  
I would bring you both hands heaping,  
Of petals showering on the stone,  
Purple violets, and the willows weeping,  
Or the scarlet roses blown.  
What is there of it you may understand  
From the faded petals in my opened hand?

—HELEN MYRTIS LANGE

### A Father's Prayer

Let not the shadow of a cloud  
Descend on him to darken his young face  
As I have witnessed it enshroud  
So many. Let no future war replace  
The peace we write in blood for him today;  
The peace that comes from knowing how to pray.

—S/SGT. V. N. WHITE

### Pilgrimage

A beggar walked along the road  
traversed by many men.  
He bent with pain  
and bowed with age  
and plodded on again.

A man who could have helped walked by,  
and he was young and fair.  
He swaggered on  
and looked away  
and left the pilgrim there.

The road then forked to left and right.  
The beggar's toil was done.  
His soul took flight  
and joined its Lord  
and left a man alone.

—JANICE PRIES

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# LETTERS to the EDITOR

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## A Chaplain on Communism

Sir:

Chalk up one vote against your article, "British Bulwark Against Communism," in the September CRESSET. The Nazi claim at virtue was centered partly around this same theme; in fact that very notion became their swan song. Are the British now stealing the march on the Nazis?

Second, is communism bad for Europe? For that matter, is communism bad—period! As for Europe, it may be the only way to crack the abject serfdom in which the people live. Neither the Roman Church nor democratic ideals nor British maneuver has ever lifted the people beyond brotherhood with the ox. Perhaps our own American ideals for Europe can best be served through the Soviets. I do not know. But two and one-half years association in the Mediterranean world cause one to become cagey toward the "simple and honorable purposes" of the royalists in Britain, Italy, and Greece.

CHAPLAIN VICTOR C. FRANK  
Las Vegas, Nevada

## A Challenge

Sir:

I see that in THE CRESSET for September you endorse the position of the atheist who wishes to have religious education classes discontinued because her son was embarrassed, being the only student not attending the classes.

Would you care to elucidate a little more fully on your position in some further editorial? It seems to me that the position is rather extreme, and has no basis either in separation of church and state, or certainly in fairness. Should one pupil's embarrassment cancel the privileges of all the other pupils in the school? So long as it is on a voluntary basis, I think the atheist has no feet to stand on at all.

A Texas court has rendered the following decision:

"It does not follow that one or more individuals have the right to have the courts deny the people the privilege of having their children instructed in the moral truths of the Bible because such objectors do not desire that their own children shall be participants therein. This would be to starve the moral and spiritual natures of the many out of deference to the few." P. H. Gwynn, *The Implications for Public and Religious Education of the Principle of Religious Freedom*, Page 269.

Jefferson's and Madison's positions I am certain were entirely different.

MARTIN P. SIMON

Eugene, Oregon

Ed. Note: *Since the ruling of a Texas court is cited by Pastor Simon, we have asked Prof. Beto, member of*

our editorial staff and professor at Concordia College in Austin, Texas, to delve more fully into the issue raised by our correspondent. Prof. Beto's reply follows:

## A Reply

Sir:

Mrs. McCollum's atheism is not the basic issue in this matter. A principle is involved. In a public school nothing should be officially done or taught which is offensive to the religious sensibilities of anyone, even though the offense be so insignificant that it involves the embarrassment of an atheist. If one pupil's embarrassment (because of a religious principle) occurs in a school located in a state where the state constitution or state statute carries a provision similar to that found in the first amendment to the Federal Constitution, then the privileges—and they are privileges, not rights—of the other pupils must be cancelled.

The Texas court ruling has no validity outside of Texas. Moreover, the writer personally knows of minority groups in Texas which have by their protests denied the people the privilege of having their children instructed in a public school in the moral truths of the Bible because such objectors did not desire that their own children participate therein.

We believe that the objections of the Illinois Council of the Friends of the Public School are relevant:

"1. The teaching of religion on school time for credit would introduce sectarianism in the schools and result in friction and intolerance.

"2. The cost, at present, would be borne by the various churches but how long would it be before certain groups would begin to bring political pressure to have the board of education make regular appropriations in their budget for this training?

"3. In giving credit for religious education you are making it a part of the curriculum, thereby establishing a coalition between church and state.

"4. The time of the regularly certificated teacher would have to be used in keeping records for work done outside of the public school.

"5. Teachers, uncertificated and outside the public school system, would be grading children and giving credits, which might mean their passing or not passing in their promotion from one grade to another."

I do not believe that the position of Jefferson and Madison was *entirely* different from ours. In his School Bill Jefferson wrote:

"But no religious reading, instruction or exercise, shall be prescribed or practiced, inconsistent with the tenets of any religious sect or denomination."

Madison wrote:

"You may scoff at such 'narrowness,' but as a true American you are bound to reverence and uphold the principles that every man shall enjoy the freedom of loyally adhering to his religious convictions, and that no barrier shall be raised against the participation of any man in any civic and patriotic activity by introducing into, or combining with, such activity a feature entirely foreign to its specific character and purpose. Adhere to right principles, true American prin-



ciples, and you will do injustice to no American citizen, nor deprive the state and community of the services of these who, whatever you may judge of their peculiar religious views, will yet, as you must concede, because of their loyalty to their convictions, render genuine and very often the best service to their country and their fellowmen."

GEORGE J. BETO

Austin, Texas

## A Good Position

Sir:

In reading the September issue of CRESSET I was surprised to note that on page 8 under the heading of "Organized Labor" the editors of CRESSET state that they have been forced to agree with William Rose Benet when he quotes in the article mentioned:

"Always and everywhere the salvation of the working class has been collective action, etc."

This article would read O.K. in a labor magazine, but nevertheless it would, in my opinion, be a weak defense for organized labor. I personally have always believed that an unbiased analysis of the factors which brought about the present high standard of living and income of the working class would show quite clearly that this progress is due primarily to the efforts of the honest and conscientious employers rather than the collective activity of the employes.

Unquestionably, there have been, and still remain, dishonest and unscrupulous employers, but by far the majority of employers are honest and conscientious, and realize that sound

progress depends upon fair dealing with labor, capital, and the consumer. It is not necessary to call attention to the fact that labor has been exploited by dishonest and unscrupulous labor leaders. On the other hand, collective efforts on the part of labor under honest direction and leadership is a help and blessing to management, and should be encouraged in every way possible, but the methods used by some labor leaders are a hindrance and definitely harmful to progress.

The use of strikes has in some instances helped labor, but I question whether the overall effect has been to labor's best interest.

If there has ever been a time when encouragement should be given to honest employers, it is now, when labor will be soon looking for employment. The tendency, however, has been just the opposite, and consequently very few of our people want to be employers, but prefer to be politicians, labor leaders, or reformers.

Rather than support and encourage the labor leaders to use strikes to get their rights through collective action, why not encourage collective action on the part of labor unions to pool their financial resources of millions and millions of dollars they collect from the pay checks of labor, and use these funds to purchase some of the war plants which can now be secured at a bargain, and enter into business as employers? The unions collectively have sufficient cash now to dominate any major industry, such as the automobile or steel industry.

Judging from the reports the labor leaders are sending to Washington,

they also have at their command sufficient statistics and information to prove that the steel and automobile industries can increase wages 30 per cent without increasing the price of steel or automobiles to the consumer. With this information and supply of capital, together with the labor leaders' knowledge of how labor should be treated to get the best results, it would seem to me they could demonstrate to all of us what real management can do for labor. By such a demonstration, strikes would probably not be necessary in the future. Competition would bring about the desired results.

Further, the crying need right now is jobs for the unemployed. It takes capital and management to make jobs—not strikes.

The statements quoted in this article, made by General Marshall and the Department of Labor, are misleading and, in my opinion, are only half-truths.

Surely you cannot gauge the loss and harm caused by strikes by counting the hours lost by the men on strike. The big loss is the loss caused to other workers and to industry as a whole by the strikers in key positions, and their ability to prevent

other willing workers from taking their place.

Assume, for instance, if the few thousand men who are now striking in the gas industry are successful in continuing this strike and preventing others from taking their place until every automobile and truck is laid up for lack of gas. It surely would not be fair to figure the loss to our economy by counting the hours lost by the strikers, or by the statements made in the article, that the loss could be made up by all labor volunteering to work on one or two holidays, such as Thanksgiving or Christmas. Surely such line of reasoning is not sound.

It just occurred to me that perhaps the editors of CRESSET "were forced to agree" in the same manner that many an honest employer has been forced to agree with unscrupulous labor leaders. If that is the case, the editors have my sympathy, but I still don't think they should admit their helplessness to the readers of CRESSET.

I like to read articles in CRESSET that deal with questions of a controversial nature treated purely from a Christian viewpoint.

A REGULAR READER

Chicago, Ill.



WITH this issue THE CRESSET launches out into its ninth year of publication. The steady progress which has marked the brief history of our magazine affords real cause for gratitude, particularly to those countless friends who have given their unfailing support, who have shown such warm sympathy for THE CRESSET's objectives, and who have done so much to enlarge this journal's circle of readers—and, correspondingly, its sphere of influence both at home and abroad. If the eight-year history of THE CRESSET

proves anything, it proves that the intellectual and the spiritual can be successfully fused, and that there is a place in the contemporary scene for a journal of mature Christian thought.



Our major article this month affords a new and intriguing approach to an always fascinating subject. Dr. Umbach, our phil-

telic philosopher, is professor of English at Valparaiso University.

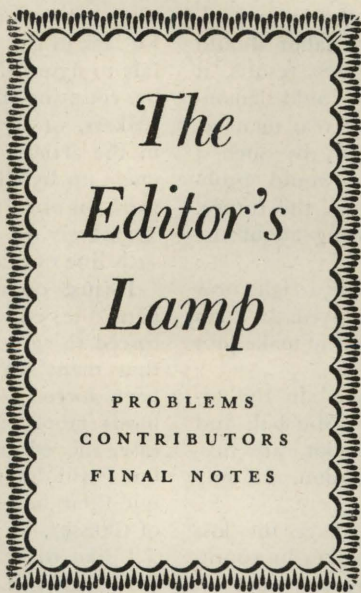


We have of late noticed a distinct crescendo in the click-click of typewriters, addressographs, and adding machines in our business office. That of course would be a harbinger of the impending Christmas season. All of which is supposed to be a subtle reminder that a gift subscription to THE CRESSET is an ideal Christmas gift for someone whom you especially want to please (we got that one from our

circulation manager). It's true, though—and it does make the Christmas shopping problem a lot easier.

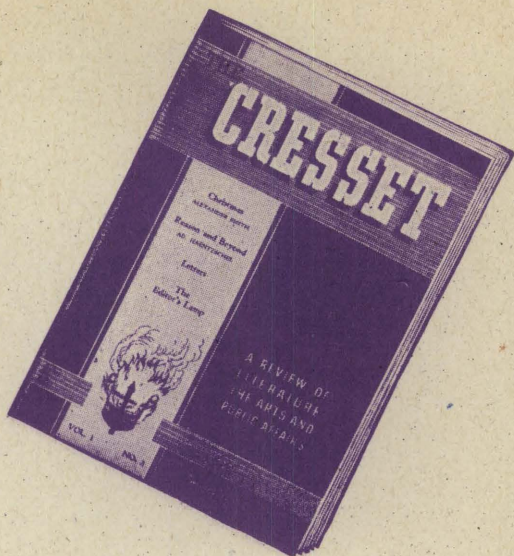


Guest reviewers in this issue include H. F. Wind of Buffalo, N. Y. (*The Best Is Yet*), Jessie Swanson (*Science Year Book of 1945*), and H. H. Umbach (*So Well Remembered*), both of the Valparaiso University faculty.





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