New FRONTIER

JANUARY, 1937

Guilty! Mr. Croll

A Story of Hawkesbury

Barcelona

By SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER

A United Front in Canada?

By CHARLES HERBERT HUESTIS

Mr. Baldwin Fires A King

Vol. 1, No. 9.

15¢

CANADIAN LITERATURE & SOCIAL CRITICISM

Contents

New **FRONTIER**

EDITORS:

MARGARET GOULD WILLIAM LAWSON
DOROTHY LIVESAY J. F. WHITE
JOCELYN MOORE, *Business Manager*

ASSOCIATES:

Jean Burton, Margery Cleveland, W. E. Collin, Jack Conroy, Eric Duthie, S. I. Hayakawa, Isabel Jordan, Norman Lee, Harry Mayerovitch, Betty Ratz, Edwin Seaver, A. J. M. Smith, Alex Tooth, Felix Walter.

ADDRESS: 989 BAY ST., TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA.

Rates 15c a copy; eight months subscription $1.00. NEW FRONTIER welcomes the work of Canadian artists and writers. Manuscripts and drawings must be accompanied by return postage. As NEW FRONTIER is a co-operative venture, it does not pay for contributions.

Between Ourselves

WE REGRET TO ANNOUNCE that the decision of the judges of the contest for one act plays has not reached us at the time of going to press. Contest results will be announced in our next issue.

Manuel Altolaguirre was born in Malaga, has travelled all over Europe, and is at present in Madrid fighting in the side of the Government. He has published half a dozen books of poetry, some of which were printed on his own press, and in the anthology of contemporary Spanish poetry edited by Gerardo Diego his work occupies 14 pages, including 24 poems. His work in this issue dates from before 1934, and therefore cannot, except prophetically, be a reference to present actualities; and it is worthy of note that it's tone of lament and despair has been abandoned in the actual event for more militant behavior.

Austin Beer is the pseudonym of a Toronto newspaper worker.

C. A. Millspaugh has published poetry and prose in *The New Republic, Poetry, The Commonweal, Pagany* and other literary magazines. His first book, *In Sight of Mountains,* was published Nov. 20 by Doubleday, Doran.

Sylvia Townsend Warner, the British novelist and poet, has just returned from Barcelona, where she was working with the Red Cross. Her article in this issue first appeared in the English *Left Review.*

New FRONTIER

Revelation On Democracy

MR. BALDWIN'S prestige is very much in the balance as we write, but his statement in the House of Commons on November 13th deserves our attention, for he spoke there as a representative of a party and a class, and revealed there the workings of a system, which is still definitely with us. "I will put before the whole House my own views with an appalling frankness", said Mr. Baldwin, and the House found this no exaggeration. For the essence of his statement was that he and the Cabinet had decided on a policy of large-scale re-armament as early as 1933 and 1934, but that in view of the widespread feeling against re-armament (as shown by the Peace Ballot and the Fulham by-election) they had not made re-armament their platform in the 1935 general election, because, in Mr. Baldwin's words, "I cannot think of anything that would have made the loss of the election from my point of view more certain." That the Government did not make re-armament their platform is an understatement. Not only did they conceal their real intentions from the electorate but they categorically denied them, in a series of pledges that there would be "no great re-armament," that "There has not been, there is not, and there will not be any question of huge armaments or materially increased forces." Surely there has never been a clearer admission of the deliberate deception of the electorate by its supposedly responsible leaders.

But, Mr. Baldwin explained, he did this for the people's own good. He worked on the theory that "democracy is always two years behind the dictator" and that, in effect, the electorate has, therefore, to be managed, and if necessary deceived, by its leaders until new facts teach it the necessity of new policies. In the meantime, of course, the action of its leaders may have committed it to policies which it would never have desired to see initiated, but this, we are to infer, is a regrettable necessity in any democracy to-day. That there is some truth in this theory no student of government would deny, but if Mr. Baldwin's statement of it were the whole truth, we might as well discard the pretence of democracy altogether. Yet it is only the whole truth so long as we allow it to be.

The significance of Mr. Baldwin's theory is not limited to this particular question of re-armament, grave as that is. For the final argument by which he justified this one action can be used to justify any other undemocratic action; it is the argument of raison d'état. Any act of the rulers may be excused if it is done in the interests of the State, those interests to be determined by the rulers. "From the national point of view, *which is all that matters,* that (the Government's coming forward with an extensive re-armament program before the election) would have been disastrous to the very cause that *we* knew to be essential for the national safety." The words are Mr. Baldwin's; the emphasis is ours. If that is Mr. Baldwin's basic theory of democracy, its implications need all the emphasis a retentive mind can give them.

Duplessis Vs. Hamel

THE SILENCE of the press cannot conceal the fact that far-reaching developments are taking place in the province of Quebec. Outwardly all is serene, but a split which widens daily has assumed major proportions within the ranks of the Union Nationale Party of Maurice Duplessis; Dr. Phillipe Hamel, fiery right wing member of the Union Nationale, is leading an insurgent, fascist-inclined group against the Premier.

The Church, which at this moment views the possibility of an open split with alarm, has asked Hamel to tone down a trifle. The power interests, the Bank of Montreal, the Royal Bank, and the pulp and paper interests, all interconnected, are still solidly behind Duplessis, and take the same stand as the Church. These interests are ready to transfer their affection to a new "saviour" when the situation calls for it, but as yet they see no reason for a switch. But the stage is being set. The next session, slated to open in January, will be the first act in the fascist drama. A new hero may not be needed for the time being, but Hamel is being groomed for the part; studying diligently the anti-trust and anti-capitalist phraseology of his script.

Hamel's appeal is directed mainly towards the middle class. He is trying to cash in on the growing disillusionment with Duplessis' blood-hounding after corruption. The people of Quebec are getting tired of smelling the corrupt corpse of the late Liberal regime. They want something more tangible, and less miasmic. They want food, and jobs, and a better life. The government's red-baiting and the clergy's anti-communist campaign have alarmed people who see behind the smoke-screen of "law and order"

the first move in the violent suppression of democratic liberties.

Even the Liberal Party has begun to pick up hope. The Montreal civic election finds two members of the Union Nationale in the contest for the mayoralty, and at the time of writing ex-Mayor Houde seems to have a good chance of sliding in between them. A defeat for Duplessis' candidate J. A. Raynault would be the first major set-back for the Union Nationale. While the New Year may see the emergence of a more clearly defined fascist movement, it will by the same process of development witness the consolidation of the progressive movement. The honest elements within the Liberal and Union Nationale parties will swing to a progressive front if given determined leadership.

The clerical-fascists seem to have overplayed their hand; the next move must come from the progressives. "Preserve and extend democracy" must be the rallying cry of the people of Quebec on this New Year.

The Nobel Award

THE AWARD of the Nobel Peace Prize to Carl von Ossietski by the Norwegian Storting must be hailed as a courageous deed. This is the second time a small country has risked the Nazi fury on this matter; for two years ago the Swiss Parliament recommended Herr von Ossietski for the same distinction. A happy contrast to the cringing of the great democracies towards Fascist Germany and Italy.

A more deserving candidate could not have been found. For Ossietski has served the cause of peace since 1912. His experience in France during the War did not increase his love for generals and throughout the Republican regime he wrote brilliantly against militarism at home and abroad. In 1931 he was tried by a secret court for publishing a treasonable article in his journal *Die Weltbuhne*. The article, which had appeared two and a half years previously, had attacked the German Government's expenditures on aircraft. Both Ossietski and its author were sentenced to a year and a half each for betrayal of military secrets. The fact that the "traitors" were brought to trial so long after the deed, led to the suspicion that the Government had another questionable affair in preparation and wanted to intimidate criticism.

Under a general amnesty Ossietski was released in 1933 before completing his term, but rearrested and sent to a concentration camp by the Nazis. Repeated demands for his liberation were of no avail until quite recently. He is now in a hospital, presumably recovering from the experience of "protective custody".

The fury of the German Government at the news of the award has two causes. Thanks to the excellent work of Dr. Goebbels, the legend of Germany as the great bulwark against "Asiatic bolshevism" has washed away the ugly memory of the origin and nature of Nazism. It is a serious blow to Nazi prestige that this great distinction should be bestowed upon a recent inmate of a concentration camp. But what adds insult to injury is the fact that it was the most "nordic" of the "nordic" nations which singled out that "traitor" for the award. There remains one cause for regret: it is a pity that Herr von Ossietski is not a Jew!

Our Free Press

THIS MONTH'S BOUQUET of decrepit cabbage is grimly extended to the Montreal *Standard* for its general pro-fascist attitude, and specifically for its issue of November 21st, in which Rev. W. X. Bryan, S.J., was allotted endless columns for red herring waving, and "liberator" General Francisco Franco was described as a man of "vision and idealism" which has "inspired him to take supreme risks for the salvation of Spain". The reactionary instigator of the Moorish and Foreign Legion invasion of the Spanish people's liberties, is lyrically described as "a little, smiling man with a good-humoured mouth and a dreamer's eyes". To pile on the sport, the *Standard* correspondent hastens to advise the credulous that "with his aquiline nose, firm, full lips, and slight double chin, he bears a remarkable likeness to Napoleon." This tool of international Fascism who promised to "fusilate half the population" if necessary to restore Spain to its semi-feudal state, and return the land-starved Iberian peasants to the starvation and despair they enjoyed under the old regime, is lushly represented as one who stares "beyond the sky, to some secret vision". Anti-fascists, progressives and liberals have it well within their power to call the Montreal *Standard* to order by applying the effective tactic of boycott to this weekly paper as long as it continues its vicious misrepresentations.

The New Commonwealth and The Elections

THE RECENT Toronto municipal elections resulted in a large increase in the vote polled by labor and progressive candidates, and the election of twelve of their number in Toronto and the surrounding townships. It was a heartening victory for those who are striving for the unification of all progressive forces against the old-line politicians, and another vindication of the policy of the united front.

The one discouraging aspect of the election was the stagnation, and in some places the decline, of the C.C.F. vote. This in itself is sufficiently disturbing, but when it is followed by the sort of explanation which featured the next issue of the *New Commonwealth,* official organ of the Ontario C.C.F., then progressive-minded people must feel a very real alarm over the fate of the socialist movement in that province.

For the editors of the *New Commonwealth,* the lesson of the campaign which "must be drilled into the C.C.F. again and again" is that "nothing can be accomplished without organization". The C.C.F. campaign was a failure because it was "half-hearted, badly organized and ill-financed". And the remedy for this condition is — *organization!* Surely this superficial formulizing, this

substitution of a stale tautology for a political analysis of the election, is not the considered attitude of a supposedly responsible socialist paper. Obviously there are a number of important reasons for the weakness and disorganization of the Ontario C.C.F., and we take this opportunity to suggest a few of them to the disgruntled editors of the *New Commonwealth.*

The first and most important one is the confused policy of the Ontario C.C.F. leadership; their opposition to the united front; and their splitting tactics in the election campaign, which brought about the defeat of at least one labor candidate, and demoralized the C.C.F. membership. Another is the tendency among these same leaders to drift towards sectarianism, towards that inflexible policy of "pure" socialism which destroyed the British Independent Labor Party, and which is creeping like a dry-rot through the American Socialist Party. And a third and most salient reason is that petty spitefulness, that refusal to face the facts, which has made the *New Commonwealth* the instrument of a clique of right-wing leaders instead of the organ of a socialist movement.

A glaring example of this venality will be found in the same issue of the paper, in its criticism of the election campaign conducted by the Communist Party. It is not our intention to debate the ridiculous assertion that the Communist campaign had nothing to do with communism; for it indicates an elementary misconception of the very nature of the socialist and communist movements which the Communists themselves can best clear up. The more specific charge that the campaign "was carried out with no reference to the Communist Party or to communism" can be refuted by anyone who has read the election literature of the Communists, or listened to the speeches of their candidates. But the *New Commonwealth* does not stop at misrepresentation:

"The Communist Party, in fact, abandoned its principles entirely, and took up a policy indistinguishable from that which Mayor Robbins or any other Tory candidate could have endorsed. There was also such a neat trick, by no means worthy of emulation, but revealing the shrewdness and effectiveness of the Communist machine in sending out a letter *in the name of the Catholic election committee,* urging the Catholics to vote for Stewart Smith. *No doubt many Catholics were deceived by this trick."* (The italics are ours: the English the *New Commonwealth's.*)

On what do the editors of the *New Commonwealth* base their accusation that the Communists were guilty of forging a letter to deceive the Catholic voters? A group of Catholic workers in Toronto's Ward Five, supporters of the Communist candidate, formed a committee and themselves sent out a letter in its name which attempted to explain to the Catholic workers of the district why it was in their interest to vote for Smith in preference to the other candidates. The letter could not possibly be misconstrued as a "trick", and did not attempt to "deceive" anyone. The malicious insinuations of the *New Commonwealth* overstep the bounds of political polemic; we cannot see where they differ in any material respect from the slanderous red-baiting of the Toronto *Globe and Mail.* We hope that its editors will have the decency to apologize to their readers in the next issue. But an apology will not be enough. It is time that the membership of the Ontario C.C.F. took matters into their own hands, and put through some badly-needed reforms in the editorial policy of their newspaper.

This King Business

THE PALACE REVOLUTION is over and our newspapers will now presumably allow the Spanish Civil War and other minor events to start functioning again. It was a pretty wretched business from start to finish, though fortunately, the British people have a happy knack of persuading themselves that their actions have been noble, lofty and dignified, when in reality they have been anything but that. A sentimental crisis among Anglo-Saxons is painful enough, when it assumes mass proportions, but it is ten times worse if it can be built up into a "moral issue". Those who seem to have come out worst from the whole thing are, firstly, the British press whose ostrich-like "hush-hush" policy came home to roost with a vengeance, and who, led by the owl-like *Times,* have not only had the cheek to blame the American newspapers, but have outdone themselves in ungenerous criticism of the prince for whom no fulsome praise was too good a week earlier. There are, secondly, the clerics, professional moralists and retarded Victorians who helped to make the political conspiracy a success. Spinsters of both sexes who have never loved a human being in their lives prated about duty to all who cared to listen, but the record in priggishness is probably held by the Toronto parson who the Sunday following the abdication wrote and recited a special prayer for what he unctuously called "that poor, misguided woman". If there were painful elements in the royal tragi-comedy, there were also humourous ones: Messrs. King and Lapointe crawling all over themselves so as not to embarrass Baldwin; Winston Churchill trying to found a King's Party in the twentieth century; Oswald Mosley and his blackshirts naively backing the wrong horse. We may not learn the full details of the intrigue for years, but the fact that stands out clearly is that the British Tory machine rules the Empire. If we lived in a world of reality instead of in a world of make-believe our oaths of allegiance would pledge humble obedience to it and to nothing else. For the first time in fifty years a corner of the curtain was drawn back and people were given a glimpse of things as they are. The result is that for two or three days one heard sober citizens actually questioning the utility of the Crown as an institution. Simon, who is probably less of a humbug than Baldwin, pointed out to the House of Commons the fallacy of believing that the Crown is the only thing that holds the Empire together and in that same House five members were found to record their opposition to the whole regime. Those five may grow in numbers. For a flake of gilt has been knocked off the gingerbread.

Pan-America

WHILE ON THE SUBJECT of Imperial relations, there is another matter, recently in the public eye, which has received very inadequate comment in the press of this country. We mean the Pan-American Congress. For years now at every session there has been a vacant seat at the conference table for Canada, and for years our politicians, even the "autonomists", have refused to occupy that seat for fear of displeasing London. Yet, unless the maps lie, Canada is an American nation. Great Britain does not plead Imperial commitments and wash her hands of the continent of which she is a part, though Lord Beaverbrook might like her to do so. Actually there is a better case to be made out for Canada's adherence to the American family of nations than for membership in the League. The former, for one thing, is less likely to get into trouble than the latter. Its agenda touches our own problems more closely. And if we are too high and mighty for outright membership, there is nothing to prevent us from giving semi-official collaboration at first. Just as the United States, while declining to become a member of the League, keeps accredited observers at Geneva, furthers the work of many sub-committees of the League and has in the past on more than one occasion followed the line of the League with well-timed diplomatic pronouncements. Membership in both international bodies need not prove embarrassing; the Argentine Republic does not find it so. The only objection might come from liberal-minded Canadians who are alarmed at the spread of Fascism in Latin America. And it is true that with the notable exception of Mexico, the republics of South and Central America have been particularly infected by the virus. But the more non-Fascist nations represented the better. Our presence might actually have a prophylactic effect. In any case, Canada should be at the next Pan-American Congress.

Soviet Drama Comes to Toronto

FOR THE FIRST TIME Toronto audiences are to see a Soviet play, when the Theatre of Action produces Tretiakov's *Roar China!* in January. The Russian dramatist has painted an unforgettable picture of the great swirling cauldron that is modern China, a nation mortgaged to Imperialism. Both as an indictment of imperialist methods, and as a striking example of a new kind of drama, this courageous undertaking should be of tremendous interest to every theatre-goer.

Montreal is also to have an important new play. Word has just come that the New Theatre Group have completed arrangements to produce Sinclair Lewis' *It Can't Happen Here,* which will undoubtedly give a strong impetus to the struggle for civil liberties in Quebec. This will replace their former choice, *Peace on Earth.* The Winnipeg group is also negotiating for rights to this famous anti-fascist drama. Canadian theatre workers are active day and night to strengthen the cultural popular front.

Ottawa Notes

WITHIN A MONTH from now the clamor from Parliament Hill will indicate that the House is session. The main points of legislation to be dealt with are the new Defence Estimates, the Trans-Canada Airline, and a bit of patching of the Ottawa Trade Agreements. Undoubtedly the Canadian people will have to shoulder a much heavier load than heretofore in maintaining the Empire "defence" burden. The new $10,000,000 Trans-Canada airway will operate between Montreal and Vancouver with a sixteen hour daily flying service. All ground and radio facilities will be provided by the Government, but the airline will be operated by a private corporation. It is probable that the Government will be represented on the corporation's board, the company operated as a semi-public utility. This will be the Canadian section of the All-Red British air service which will encircle the globe. Linked with this will be a strengthening of our military aviation. For the two we shall spend something like $25,000,000.

It will be seen by all that social legislation of any kind is going by the board. The working people and unemployed of Canada are being forgotten in the mad scramble of our chief legislators to get over to London in time to get a reserved seat glimpse of the Coronation.

The National Employment Commission, which has so far only proved a smoke screen for the Government's inactivity in social legislation, reports that there was in October 1936 a reduction of six per cent in persons receiving direct relief in twenty-two cities throughout the Dominion as compared to the previous year. Thus while editorial room economists sing the praises of returning prosperity in terms of soaring profits and dividends. the unemployed are still left where they were this time last fall, hoping against hope for a warm winter.

The Dominion-Provincial Conference which opened December 9 is the first meeting of what has been christened the National Finance Committee. If any definite course of action for the future should be adopted by this august body, which has no immediate powers of its own, however, the small farmer and tradesman, the worker and unemployed man may expect little of it. Its aims are to do away with so-called duplication of taxation, eliminate competition in borrowing and thus reduce interest rates and other fixed charges burdening the taxpayer. Though education and social services languish for lack of funds, the big taxpayer whose stocks are booming nicely will be carefully pampered around the region of his pocket book.

There is another dangerous trend here; a trend towards the centralization of all taxing and financial authority in the hands of the provincial and ultimately Dominion governments, at the same time depriving the municipalities of any of these rights. Which is very convenient for the powers that be when the municipalities are showing a tendency to elect labor aldermen and councillors.

DILLON O'LEARY.

Guilty! Mr. Croll

A Story of Hawkesbury

TED ALLAN

"WHY AREN'T YOU in school?"

"Aw, I ain't got no shoes. That's why. Look can't yuh see?" His bare feet were black with dirt.

"And your sisters have no shoes either?" The seven sisters, aged two to fifteen, giggled and huddled in the far corner of the darkening room.

"Sure. They ain't got no shoes neither. Nobody of us got shoes." He smiled at me proudly, his nine-year-old shoulders swinging as he spoke. His shoulders were humped. The boy looked like a wizened old man.

There were three beds in that one room. And a kitchen stove. Rags and paper were stuffed into sewn pieces of cloth. Modern up-to-date mattresses. . . .

The room was cold. Outside snow covered the ground. Some of the children's lips were blue with the cold. Two year old Cecile began to whimper; there was no spirit in that cry. She was hungry and cold.

"Where's your mother?" I asked them.

The oldest girl came forward shyly. Her dress was four sizes too large for her. She looked like a Hollywood comedienne.

"Ma's gone for the relief check."

"And your father?"

"He was took," lisped four-year-old Antoinette. Her dirty golden curls kept falling over her eyes, and she made short, nervous attempts to get them out of the way. "He was took away," she finished.

The boy spoke. "He was one o' the thirty-five what they took to Kapus—Kapus—" he stuttered and couldn't pronounce the name. "Aw, I forget the place."

"Kapuskasing?" I suggested.

"Yeh! That's it. Kapus—Kapus—well, what you said," he ended lamely.

I smiled and the brood smiled back. All except Cecile who continued her monotonous whimper.

Pierre, the boy, approached again. "Are you a policeman?"

"God, no! I'm a reporter. I came to write about Hawkesbury."

"Oh." Silence.

"Are you going to write about us?" His old face looked up, wistfully, appealingly.

"Yes," I told them, "I'm going to write about you. I'm going to tell the people of Canada how some Canadian children live. How Honorable David Croll fulfills his job as Minister of Welfare."

The eldest girl lit the coal-oil lamp. Its flickering light reflected on the pale faces of the children. Croll was right—this was a "ghost town".

"Do you know who Croll is?" I asked. They shook their heads negatively.

"I know," shouted Pierre. "I know. Ma told me about him. He's the man what said we was getting too much relief. He's the man what made pa go to that place up north."

"That's right. That's the man," I answered.

"See?" The boy looked around triumphantly. "See? I know."

We shook hands and I bade them all goodbye.

Ninety children had not gone to school for the past three weeks in the town of Hawkesbury for lack of clothing. Three babies had died from undernourishment during the month of October. People were ill and were not receiving medical attention. Thirty-five men had been sent north, to Kapuskasing, 700 miles away. They came back telling stories of hardship, of the cold. Sleeping in canvas tents, breaking through the ice of their wash basins. . . .

There are some 8,000 people in the town of Hawkesbury, ninety percent of whom are French Canadian. Half of them are on relief. But Croll wanted to make doubly sure that his description, "ghost town", was correct, so he appointed his own relief supervisor for the town. He cut relief. He put a special tax levy on the town. And certain people in Hawkesbury were very happy with the way things were turning out.

The sulphite mill of the Canadian International Paper Company is situated in Hawkesbury. The mill employs 400 workers. It is the only thing moving in the town except the automobile traffic between Ottawa and Montreal. The Saguenay Power Corporation supplies electric power to the territory around Hawkesbury.

Things now begin to make sense. Hawkesbury is controlled by a town council and a mayor who in turn are controlled by the people of Hawkesbury, not the paper mill and not the power company. This is bad. The mill can't run things the way it wants to, the way other mills run the towns they happen to be situated in. And the power company can't run things the way it wants to. Therefore the respectable people of Hawkesbury hate Mayor Louis Auger who put up a fight on behalf of the unemployed.

Auger had to be discredited. Croll was doing nicely, as far as the mill and the respectable people of Hawkesbury were concerned. The civic elections were taking place in December. They would show Croll that they could elect their own council and their own mayor and run things the way they should be run. The shipment of the 35 unemployed to Kapuskasing was part of the plan

to get Auger voters out of Hawkesbury. But it didn't work. The unemployed of Hawkesbury are organized, and the men refuse to die like rats.

In Canada, babies would not die like rats either if they were organized, or if they came in fives. The Dionne quintuplets have rosy, healthy looking faces, the sort of faces all babies should have. But then the quintuplets have Hon. David Croll for their guardian.

The three babies who died from undernourishment in the town of Hawkesbury had no guardian. I saw the three death certificates. Here is how each read:

"Pauline Roulleau. Age five months eighteen days. Death from gastro-enteritis. Lack of vitality."

"Joseph Rene Bernique. Age two months fifteen days. Verdict of coroner's inquest: Death due to improper food and unhealthy surroundings." Joseph Bernique was found dead on the morning of October 1.

"I came to feed him," cried his mother, "and I picked up my dead baby."

I saw Mrs. Victor Paquette. She was in bed. Her baby had died after living one day. "Lack of vitality," said the doctor.

On the day I visited the homes of the three dead babies, Croll arrived in Hollywood by plane. I saw a picture of him in a newspaper smiling at a pretty movie actress. He was there to help put the finishing touches on the quintuplets' film. Croll loves babies, but they must come in fives.

If there was maladministration in Hawkesbury, as Croll charged, if people were getting relief who should not be getting relief, then they should be arrested. Consequently, three unemployed were arrested: Arthur Sauve, Wilfrid Tessier and Joseph H. Jellineau. They were charged with attempting to defraud the town of Hawkesbury, Sauve for the amount of $8.24, the other two for double that.

I said before that the unemployed of Hawkesbury are organized. They call their organization the Unemployed Federation of Prescott County; it is affiliated with the Ontario Federation on Unemployment. When the three men were arrested Harvey Murphy, president of the Federation, brought J. L. Cohen, defence attorney, to Hawkesbury. Cohen was hired by the unemployed. Their nickel dues came in very handy.

The Department of Welfare realized how important it was to get a conviction. A conviction would vindicate Croll's policy concerning all small municipalities. It would back up his charges that the people of Hawkesbury were getting too much relief. It would show that Croll was not acting out of malice and for his own department's interest but for the interests of the people of Ontario. It would put the Hawkesbury Board of Trade (read, Canadian International Paper Company) in a very good position when it appealed to the electorate. So the Department of Welfare sent its own solicitor, Clifford Adams, to act as Crown Prosecutor. A conviction was important.

The hearings took place at L'Orignal, seven miles from Hawkesbury. The courtroom was packed. Hawkesbury unemployed had trekked the seven miles in below zero weather to watch the proceedings. Magistrate Raoul Labrosse was on the bench.

First case. Arthur Sauve. Asks for preliminary inquiry. Pleads not guilty to charge of defrauding the town of Hawkesbury of the sum of $8.24.

Mr. Adams calls his witnesses, Lionel Lemoureux is the first witness for the Crown. Mr. Lemoureux has worked in Hawkesbury since 1932. He is now officer in charge of relief, having replaced Mr. Percy Lucas just last week. Prior to being officer in charge, Lemoureux had been investigator, and prior to that, bookkeeper. Lemoureux testifies that accused took check of $8.24 on October 19, without reporting earnings of $19.00 made two weeks previously.

Mr. Cohen then questions Lemoureux. Lemoureux admits that Mrs. Sauve, wife of accused, had told him her husband was working. He admits that he knew Sauve was working prior to issuance of the check. He admits that $8.24 represents a cut in comparison with checks previously given. Sauve used to receive $9.25. This for two weeks for a family of three.

Mr. Cohen asks for Mr. Lucas' whereabouts. Lemoureux doesn't know. Cohen looks around the courtroom and smiles. "Perhaps he's gone to Kapuskasing."

More crown witnesses. More questioning. Cohen gets tired of proceedings. "We admit the defendant received the money. But where is the fraud?"

Mr. Adams strokes his chin. What a case! The setup is so flimsy that he has to smile on more than one occasion. Cohen rocks the crowded court room with laughter as he makes the Crown witnesses sweat and squirm. Adams tries a new stratagem. He gets Mayor Auger to take the stand. If he cannot convict the men, then at least get some damaging statement from the lips of the mayor. But it doesn't work, because the mayor tells the truth. Adams wants Auger to say that he (Auger) is directly responsible for the administration of relief. Auger says simply, "I am not directly responsible. But I should be."

Magistrate Labrosse listens to the two lawyers summing up. Adams points out that accused took $8.24 and did not report earnings. Cohen makes a brilliant summary and brings out the hollowness of the charges. With sickening sarcasm, "an unemployed family defrauding the town for $8.24!"

The trial ends with Cohen acting as prosecutor and Adams defence counsel for the Department of Welfare. Magistrate Labrosse sums up summaries of two lawyers. He can't see how the defendant is guilty of fraud.

"The case is dismissed."

Adams then rises and tells court he wishes to withdraw charges on the two other cases. They are tried formally. Each plead "Not Guilty."

"Case dismissed."

The court room is bathed in smiles. The unemployed start to hum songs.

One lets out a loud guffaw. "Case dismissed, Mr. Croll. Found guilty! Mr. Croll."

Barcelona

SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER

WHEN THE SOLDIERS came marching from the barracks of Montjuich into the centre of Barcelona people supposed it was another parade. Parades had been frequent—sabre-rattling gestures supposed by the military authorities to have a sedative effect on the nerves of the populace.

It was not till they opened fire, not till the women out marketing, the breakfasters in the cafés, the street vendors showing their wares, the gardeners tranquilly planting the flower-beds of the Plaza de Catalonia with scarlet salvia, looked up and saw people falling dead around them, that the sedative effect of this military parade was realised.

It was morning. The workers were already in their factories, safely out of the way. A large body of troops occupied the Hotel Colon, a block-wide building overlooking the Plaza de Catalonia and raking the long, straight boulevard of the Ramblas. There they sent the guests to the ground floor, the servants to the top floor, and settled themselves and their machine-guns in the remainder of the building. Others continued down the Ramblas, small detachments entering the churches on their route.

What happened then is something which we in England must find almost unbelievable. The police ranged themselves with the people, fighting side by side with members of the middle class, with professors and journalists and intellectuals who left their coffee-cups and their newspapers to make history. The police carried arms already, the others ran to the gun-shops, taking what they could find, sporting guns and automatics, and hunting-knives when nothing better was left them.

Even stranger weapons were utilised. A tram, hastily blinded with some scraps of sheet-metal, was sent at full speed down the Ramblas, through a machine-gun barrage spraying from that heavy Baroque church which has subsequently become so famous and endeared as an exquisite work of art. Where the soldiers had gone in, the tram cargoes of men with shot-guns and pistols followed, though they did not find so easy an access. However, they took the kingdom of heaven by storm, and put the machine-guns out of action. In the sturdily tranquil Barcelona which I saw two months later that tram was running as usual, distinguished, though, from trams of no past by the great wreath of flowers, renewed every morning, which it carried on its bows.

Wearing its proud wreath, it rumbles past the bullet-scarred walls, the trophies of flowers propped here and there against them to mark the death-site of some fighter in the July days, the street-vendors' stalls which line the broad asphalt walk under the trees. Mixed with the old wares, the flowers, the shaving-brushes, the canaries and love-birds, the watermelons, are new wares: militia caps, pistols (toy-pistols, to our shame be it spoken), rings and badges and brooches carrying the initials of the anarchist F.A.I. and C.N.T., the Trotskyist P.O.U.M., the Communist P.S.U.C. and U.G.T., the inter-party clenched fist with its motto *No Pasaran* and the hammer and sickle. The bookstalls show new wares, too. Books on political theory, the classics of Marx and Bukharin, Proudhon and Ferrer, the novels of Zola and Rolland and Barbusse. Among them are many treatises—serious, not bawdy—on birth-control and sexual hygiene.

On such wares as these the empty sockets of the church windows stare down. They look very queer, these churches, Giant Popes abruptly changed to Giant Pagans: for with their gutted interiors, their unglazed windows, their broken, boarded-up doorways, they carry a sort of dissolute resemblance to Parthenon and Baalbec. Inside them accumulates that peculiar litter which arrives to every derelict building, however made derelict, whether by fire or flood or earthquake or war or the will of man: mortar and rubble, scraps of paper, scraps of clothing, pigeons' dung and pigeons' feathers.

The barrel-organs rattle out the 'Internationale,' at intervals the loudspeakers confirm it. Technically, the broadcasts are pretty bad, the loudspeakers blare and rattle; but the quality of the music broadcast, both classical and popular, is good. It was a shock, even remembering what the B.B.C. is like, to return to the 'popular' programmes of the B.B.C.

It was interesting, too, to compare the commercial art posters still remaining on the walls with the new official posters. These are admirable, with a certain stringent and ascetic quality which exactly echoes the *No Pasaran* of a people who, drilling with broomsticks and fighting against the weight of Europe, drill and fight on. Turning from their sober colouring and grim line to the fading Cadum babies, the public statuary, is as much of a shock as returning to the B.B.C.

But to realise fully what sort of taste the new alliance of worker and artist has driven out one has to visit the *torres*—the suburban villas where the upper classes enjoyed pure air and a view over Barcelona.

If one is English one can undoubtedly swallow a good deal in the way of architectural delirium, if only because we live in a climate which makes any light-coloured building with a great deal of balcony and verandah and top-hamper seem invigoratingly light-hearted. At heart, too, nests the hereditary feeling that people on the Continent dwell naturally in casinos. But swallowing the minarets and the crenelations, the large bastard-Corbusier bathing-huts and the Fitzjohn's Avenue gothic, the toughest stomach quails before the interior decorations of these villas. They can be perfectly studied by those who have a mind to it since their owners left in a hurry,

and the State, taking over, has preserved them intact. Or so I believed till at a local Comité I was shown sheet after sheet of typed lists of the valuables taken from these same dwellings: a dinner-service of 120 pieces, in gold; 10 embossed wine-coolers, in gold; a chalice in platinum; a washstand set in silver; two grotesque figures, in gold; a coffee service in silver, jewelled.

"Most of them have been melted down. They were of no artistic interest."

I could well believe it.

Out of the churches a great deal has been taken and placed in museums. Some of these preservations are interesting from other points of view than those of the artist and antiquarian. One church was being burned out when a connoisseur who was present recollected that a certain exceedingly venerable tapestry had been overlooked in the preliminary sifting. He ran forward and beat out the flames which had already begun to consume it. As he did so pieces of charred paper were seen fluttering down. Further inspection showed that the back of the tapestry was wadded with banknotes.

I heard other stories of non-sacred valuables stored in churches; and it seemed to me extraordinary that a cult sufficiently modern-minded to preserve machine-guns and ammunitions in its churches should not have a more accurate appreciation of the beauties of a bank-balance. I did not discredit the good faith of those who told me these stories, but I supposed that legend, always a quick breeder in a crisis, might have made fifty different versions of one incident.

When I had looked at the rich men's houses, when I had read the lists of the valuables taken therefrom, I revised my opinion. The Spanish aristocracy is in a primitive stage of capitalism, it preserves the medieval brag of possessions, it locks up its money in gold and jewels and keeps the gold and jewels for display.

An amazing example of this was the celebrated boarding-school for young ladies kept by the sisters of the Sacred Heart. No young lady was allowed to enter this establishment (officially sacred to the daughters of the nobility) without a trousseau in which every article of clothing was numbered by a dozen dozen. So valuable was the social prestige of this establishment that the unenobled rich, equipping their daughters with the requisite 144 nightgowns, bust-bodices, etc., strained every nerve and every persuasion to get their daughters received there. So powerful was the tradition of the social prestige that the un-enobled daughters, even when they had been admitted, were not allowed to mingle with the blue-blooded.

The modesty of our English aristocracy, hanging its womenkind with Ciro pearls and synthetic emeralds while the genuine articles repose in the bank, is unknown to them. So strong is this tradition in Spain that the magnates of Barcelona, to seem aristocrats, did the same. That the tradition has its advantages is proved by the number of empty jewel-cases, bare ruined choirs where late the sweet dollars chinked, which they left behind in the villas. If the laity is thus medieval, no wonder that the church is medieval too, only with Christian humility burying its gold beneath the flagstones, lining its tapestries with bank-notes.

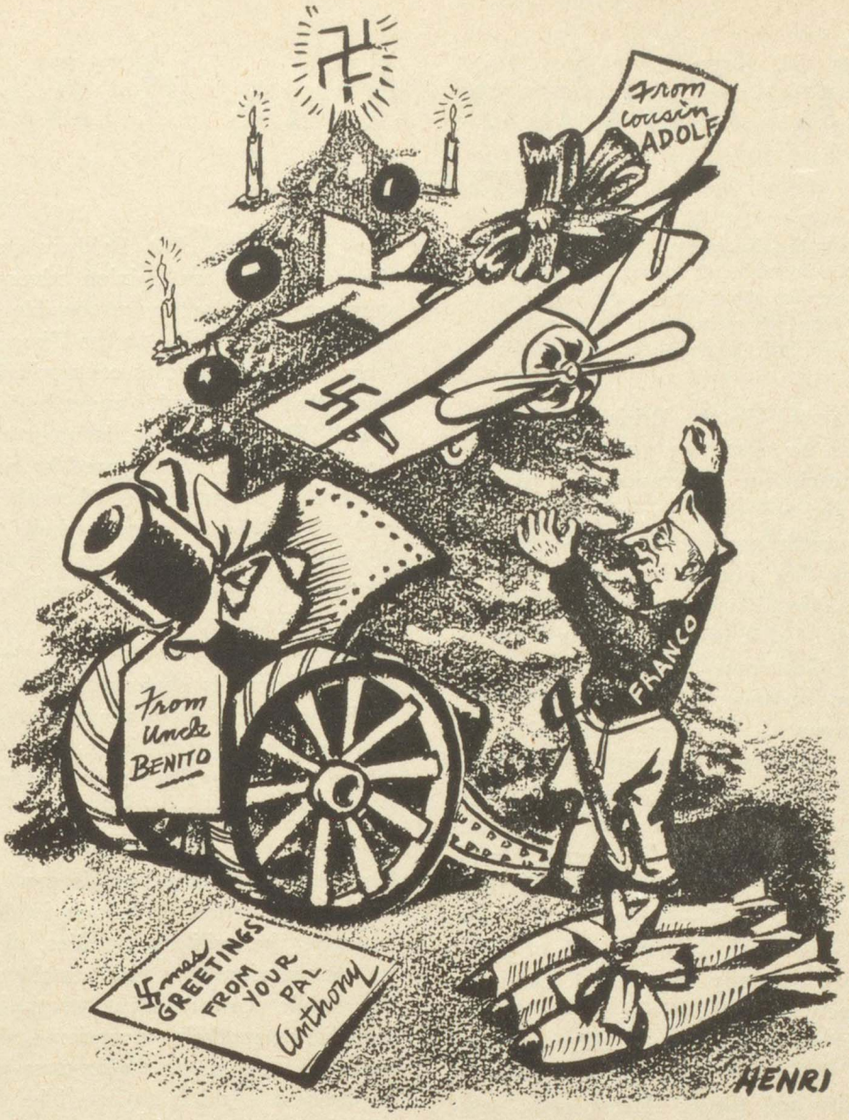
The works of ecclesiastical art are in the museums, the churches are bare and barred. Apologists in this country have tended to stress the first statement, but the second is the more significant. Those systematically gutted interiors are the more impressive when one contrasts them with the preservation of the villas. In the villas was as great, or greater, a demonstration of luxury, idleness, and superbity. In the villas were objects infinitely more desirable as loot than anything the churches could offer. Had the churches been sacked, as some say they were, by a greedy and envious mob, that mob would have sacked the villas with more greed and better satisfaction. But the villas are untouched, and the churches are gutted. They have been cleaned out exactly as sick-roms are cleaned out after a pestilence. Everything that could preserve the contagion has been destroyed.

It is idle, too, to suggest that this work was the result of a policy imposed on the people by a Marxist leadership. One might well wish that it had been. It would be a feather in the Marxist cap. But actually, Barcelona is an anarchist town, and anarchism does not impose policies. It was the people themselves who, deliberately and systematically, put the churches out of action. So extensive, so thorough a campaign, could not have been carried out unless it were by the will of the people. And it was more than the expression of resentment at finding the churches used as arms-dumps and machine-gun nests. Not every church was so used, but the blameless on this count have not fared any better than the others. It was a longer, a more universal resentment which stripped the walls and burned the pulpits and confessionals, and barred up the doors, a realisation that here, beyond the other strongholds of Fascism and capitalism, was the real stronghold of the oppressors.

I was lucky enough to see one belated example of this. It was reported that in the garden of a suburban villa a religious plaque which had escaped notice was being used as a private praying centre. The local Comité to whom this was reported sent two men with hammers. Seriously, without a vestige of either rage or contempt, they smashed it to bits. Their expressions were exactly those of two conscientious decontaminating officers dealing with a bag of infected linen which had been discovered in a house which was supposed to be free of infection.

A dozen people or so watched the ceremony, and when the plaque had been destroyed one of them drew the men's attention to a garden statue half concealed in bushes. The two men looked at it. "It's not a saint," they said, and went away.

Among these lookers-on was a servant girl who had been suspected of worshipping before the plaque. She had had a religious upbringing, she could neither read nor write. While the hammer-blows fell she watched with painful attention. Her face expressed profound animal fear. But it was not on the men that she fixed her terrified stare. It was the plaque itself which she watched with such bewildered and abject terror.



Ballad

(*After the Spanish of Manuel Altolaguirre*)

Dragging across the sand
Like the tail end of a funeral,
Prisoner to my shadow,
Sad and lonely I go
And come beside the streams,
Remembering, forgetting
The causes of my sorrow.
The city I loved the most
I have lost in a war!
I'll never see again
The twin towers of its church
Nor the unshadowy roads,
The rivers and the by-paths.
The city I loved the most
I have lost in a war!

ROLFE HUMPHRIES.

My Suffering

So tall and high my suffering rose
When from the house in tears I came
The lintel, after I went by,
Seemed not much higher than my feet.
How small they seemed, how tiny, those
Whom I encountered on the street!
I passed among them like a flame
Whose rage by cloth and hair is fed,
And from the bung-hole of my head,
As from some monstrous keg, there poured
A rain of bullets, a fighting horde,
Disorder and confusion hurled
To disembowel the passers-by.
My suffering rose so tall and high
That up above the evening sky
What I beheld was a new world.

MANUEL ALTOLAGUIRRE.

(*Translated into French by* Jean Prévost, *English version by* Rolfe Humphries.)

Mr. Baldwin Fires A King

DAVID GILLESPIE

> The King represents the decorative part of the Constitution. . . . As the fountain of honour his prestige is enormous. There accretes about all he says and does those habits of loyalty and deference into the causation of which reason can so little enter.—Professor Laski: *Democracy in Crisis.*

WHAT A SPECTACLE! So the British ruling-class failed to draw its refractory agent to heel. It has had to teach our generation that British kings can be scrapped and tossed into the discard. It has had to reveal that monarchs are useful to the country's owners only as long as they can be propped up as the symbol of unity—an emotional symbol of that "unity" of exploiter and exploited, of that national lie—which it is the care of Press and Government to foster. Let our respectful adulation be endangered, and Mr. Baldwin slips through the backdoor of the palace and shakes his pale affronted face at the King. Through its Cabinet, the ruling-class has had to take the initiative, rip to pieces the skillfully cultivated mythos of kingly untouchability, and tell the monarch where he dismounts. A nod from Downing Street and the vast rollers of the British Press—silent so long, now "free"—revolve with power and speed to present us, not with the usual dish of regal slop with which we are normally entertained and nurtured, but with brave new pabulum, advice if you please, advice to His Majesty from the hired scribes of the dominant class, advice that turns out to be a significant medley of cant, servility and threat. Hired pens, yes; but the words are the words of the big bourgeoisie, of British Imperialism itself.

What so alarmed the ruling-class? Was it the dismay of the vestigal aristocracy—the troop of dowagers and company directors offended less perhaps with the fact of the King's affections than with his wish to marry the lady, his plebeian morality? No, it was not the disappointed dowagers, but the Protestant Bishops, the Catholic Churchmen, the Scottish Presbyters whose sense of morality, they tell us, had been outraged.

On the Churchmen scarcely less than on the Pressmen, depends the maintenance of loyalty to the capitalist state; and this social function they normally fulfil by inspiring loyalty to the person of the temporal King. But such loyalty is theoretically transcended by their religious beliefs and subject to their moral concepts. Disregard of such concepts by the King, makes it hard for them to endeavour to maintain the usual allegiance by the usual means. Mr. Baldwin, perhaps, over-estimated the difficulties of the Church; but it seemed to him that to maintain the monarch in his errant course was to lower the moral repute of the Church, while to maintain the Church's morality against the Crown's was to end the function of the Church as an engineer of loyalty to King and State. Mr. Baldwin's class could not afford the prospect of an opinion adverse to the King in the very agents so largely responsible for manufacturing the loyal imperial spirit. As the *Times* declared, "Even more than in the seventeenth century" there exists to-day "the sense that the kingship must be kept above public criticism." This, of course, is no paradox, in an age when class divergence is measured by millions of dollars' difference in incomes and when the activities of governments have become almost wholly the defence of the indefensible—the preservation of capitalism in decay with all that this involves in preparation for the coming war. The value of the Crown to the ruling-class as an emotional opiate for the common people of England and of the Dominions is obviously greater than ever; especially is this so of the Dominions where the symbolism of the Throne has replaced the authority of the Cabinet, and where the old loyalty becomes ever harder to create with the weakening of economic ties.

In the past the Church has provided the King with his aura. The King for his part provides the past and present generation of cannon-fodder with the pomp and panoply, the military parades, the salutes to the unknown warriors, the visits to the navy, to the slums, to the derelict areas; with coronations, jubilees, and—when expedience mothers invention—with semi-jubilees. The bread is scarce; the ruling-class can afford no scarcity of circuses. And it works. The disinherited are taught affection. They have dared to touch his sleeve when he visited their slums—"I was in your Guard of Honour, sir, when you landed in France"—and got nothing worse than immediate arrest, a speedy search for arms, and the royal smile of understanding and sympathy from the monarch. In a capitalist crisis such feelings can be made to serve the political needs of the dominant class. In Mr. Baldwin's view such feelings are necessary.

Not only is the Crown the means by which this reservoir of emotionalism is created from which capitalism draws for its wars and wage-cuts, it is also, if exceptional need arises, a rallying-point for every reactionary force in the Empire, a rallying-point for the men who are everywhere ready to betray democracy the moment democracy puts the interests of the people before the interests of capitalism. The fight to save the forms of democracy (and with them the possibility of ending capitalism peacefully) may itself provide what the dominant class chooses to regard as the moment for laying bare its class power. "Extraordinary circumstances beget extraordinary actions," writes Professor Laski, "and the theory of a Patriot King is exactly suited to a crisis of this magnitude." Whatever may have been the capacity of the recent monarch for such a role, it is clear that

most of the ruling-class were convinced that the moment had not yet come. In their support for Edward, the British fascists have probably once more miscalculated. But it is a mistake to suppose that fools never learn: the General Boulanger of the 19th century matures in the Mussolini of the 20th; on modern soil, life is growing them bigger and better.

Most fascinating to the student is the reaction of the working- and middle-classes to the somewhat drastic activities of their rulers, their Church, and their Press.

The working-masses were clearly for the rebellious King. It was their healthy instinct to side with the man as against the graven image on the coin of the realm. In their own lives and jobs, they have bitter experience of the limitations of human rights imposed by capitalism. They are quick to sympathize with another, however remote from themselves, whose rights as a man are menaced by the restriction of the job. They were with the insulted and injured. Edward the national symbol might be used to speed them to war or to crush them with the counter-revolution, but Edward divested of kingly sanctity, Edward at odds with his masters, had become the momentary symbol of their own frustrations and for once a man like themselves. Clearly it was not a stable basis for the perpetuation of loyalty; but it was a feeling creditable in itself and a slap in the face to their preachers and rulers.

To the middle-class, the discarding of their King came with much less of a shock than they would have thought possible. Axiomatic as the King had been to them, his dismissal was an experience which many found exhiliarating and few overwhelming. Their world did not collapse. It did not even tremble. For some the show was *Grand Guignol,* for others *Opera Bouffe.* Few shed tears.

For responsible members of the British ruling-class, however, the thing was serious indeed. Shelving the monarch had become for them a necessity—the lesser evil; but with what enormous misgiving did they carry out the task. *Their* world was indeed quaked. At a stroke they have had to countermand so to speak half a century's publicity. No wonder the Rothermeres and Beaverbrooks shied at the prospect. Theirs is the job of starting it all over again. Prince Charming is dead, long live the King.

From a thousand gushers of printers' ink there begins to spout the new elaboration. Within six hours of the abdication, we learn that the new King has long been a Friend of the Working Class (very important, of course!) that he is a better golfer than his brother, that he is as good a rider to hounds as anyone, that he has done everything from driving locomotives—"one of his favourite hobbies"—to playing tennis in Wimbleton tournaments and that he was once mobbed and kissed in the east-end of London by a crowd of working lassies. The new kingly ethos is underway, the new tribal figurehead in process of construction. Solemnly resilient is the British ruling-class. Its agents, tongue in cheek, will spread the necessary slime year in and year out with painstaking thoroughness.

This is the degradation of man's mind, imagination and feelings. The natural loyalty of man to his friend, of workman to workman, comrade to comrade, is transformed by such means and attached to the latest capitalist convenience, the newest and best monarch; and to what revolting end?—the interests of the king-breakers, of the dominant class.

But Premier Baldwin has shown us what can be done. Let us hope that the British workers will learn to have as few inhibitions as their betters.

Poem

The dangers that these times must know
Stare from the unclean crannies of the heart.
There like owls in the shadows of a barn
Death's images are niched, their obscene stance
Copied from carrion, from the lewd stunts
Of the grave-worm.

Who learns from the bee
Direction, from the bird's body change, is free
As wave over sea-shard, morning over snow,
Soon must come on the piled shadow
Of the mind and rummage there
As one with a lamp in an attic,
Shake out the molding souvenirs,
Broken at the folds.

There must be a bounty on ancestral skulls.

Men must be taught to bring the skinless heads
Down to the sea for their reward.
And of them one midnight they can build a fire
To signal the other stars
That they are free.

C. A. MILLSPAUGH.

Trotsky and Terrorism

WILLIAM LAWSON

THE WIDE SPREAD INTEREST evoked by the Moscow trials of the Zinoviev terrorists has tended to centre around the equivocal figure of Leon Trotsky, in reality the chief defendant, although not present in the witness stand. A considerable body of liberal opinion has received with polite scepticism the evidence produced at the trials and the confessions of the accused; to many the accusation that Trotsky was implicated in the terrorist plots is sheer nonsense. How is it possible, they ask, that an old revolutionary like Trotsky, whose Marxism precludes the use of terrorism as a political weapon, should sink to the level of the wretched Zinoviev and his accomplices?

Obviously the answer to this question will not be found in wrangling about Trotsky's "Marxism". It is true that Trotsky was once a Communist leader; it is equally true that he is now allied with the Nazi secret police against the Soviet Union. Such political careers are not uncommon; we need only cite the classic example of Benito Mussolini, or the more recent instance of Jacques Doriot. But they cannot be explained simply in terms of the psychology of the individual in question. The problem of Trotsky's "sincerity" or "insincerity", a favourite debating point among the intellectuals, is not relevant to the objective historical problem of the role he plays in the class struggle. Anyone with sufficient interest in the subject could learn through a study of Trotsky's writings that he is a megalomaniac, but it would require the research of a trained psychologist to discover up to what point he is "sincere". Trotskyism, like Fabianism or the doctrine of exceptionalism, represents the intrusion of alien class elements into the political theory of the revolutionary working class. As a social phenomenon, it can be discussed profitably only against the background of the developing Communist movement.

As was the case with other revolutionary movements, the newly-formed Third (Communist) International attracted to its ranks, along with some of the best leaders of the working class, a swarm of revolutionary careerists. Just as the First International had its Duehrings and Bakhunins, and the Second International its Bernsteins and Kautskys, so the Communists found themselves temporarily allied with anarchists, confused left-wing socialists, crank theorists and middle class intellectuals who saw a chance to carve a career for themselves in the new revolutionary movement. A number of these people possessed brilliant qualities, and their personal ambitions landed many in leading positions in the various Communist parties. The end of the revolutionary post-war period, with the working class temporarily defeated, while international capitalism entered into a new period of relative economic and political stabilization, brought disillusionment to the romantic lovers of the revolution. With the prospect of immediate victories replaced by the certainty of a long and difficult period of reorganization and routine work, the careerists and the middle class radicals began to fall away from the Communist parties, or attempted to steer them into the channels of opportunism. In England the Murphys and Postgates, in America the Cannons and Lovestones, and in Canada the Spectors and MacDonalds were expelled from the Communist ranks.

The most famous of these renegades from Communism, one whose writings provided the ideological basis for much of the inner-party struggle, was Leon Trotsky. A brilliant but erratic figure in pre-revolutionary Russia, he joined the Bolshevik party four months before the October revolution. His talent as an orator and pamphleteer, his genius for dramatizing himself, and the publicity which he received in the world press, which invariably discussed the development of the Russian revolution in terms of personalities, made him a popular hero to thousands of radical workers and intellectuals. The legend widely propagated by Trotsky's partisans that he stood second only to Lenin in the Russian Communist Party has survived to this day. Trotsky's intellectual qualities, his vivid literary style, and his instinctively middle class outlook endeared him to the hearts of the emancipated intelligentsia. When we consider the ignorance of Communist theory prevalent among American and European intellectuals, it is not surprising that in Bloomsbury, Park Avenue and other hotbeds of revolutionary ferment it is the custom to refer to him as the "foremost disciple of Lenin".

What is the truth about Trotsky's relationship with Lenin, and what role did he play in the Communist movement? Contrary to the popular belief, Trotsky is not an "old Bolshevik". From the year 1903, which marked his first appearance in the political arena, until July 1917, he was an active opponent of the Bolshevik wing of the Russian labor movement, allied with the right-wing Mensheviks, and an outspoken critic of the policies of Lenin. At its second congress, held in London in 1903, the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party split into two groups, with the Bolshevik left wing under the guidance of Lenin winning the support of the majority of the delegates. Trotsky, who was present at the congress, aligned himself with the minority, and made a spirited onslaught on Lenin's conception of a disciplined party organization, which was the principal point of dispute between the Bolshevik and Menshevik factions. Later in the same year he participated in a special Menshevik congress convened in Geneva, and was responsible for the adoption of a secret resolution attacking the Bolshevik program.

The first decade of the twentieth century was one of

tremendous struggles, victories and defeats for the Russian labor movement. The revolution of 1905 was followed by a period of the most brutal reaction, and the Bolshevik leaders needed all their tenacity of purpose and their grasp of Marxist theory in order to keep the revolutionary party intact, so that they were able to take the offensive in the new wave of strikes and political demonstrations against Czarism which began in 1910. The war was only a temporary interruption in the march of the Russian working class towards the seizure of power—a victory made possible only by the unflagging work of the Bolshevik party during the pre-war period.

While the Bolsheviks were laying the foundations of the proletarian dictatorship, Trotsky was vacillating from one anti-Bolshevik grouping to another. During the 1905 revolution he distinguished himself by raising the suicidal slogan of "No More Czars, A Workers' Government", wishing with one ultra-revolutionary phrase to do away with the intervening stages of the bourgeois revolution, and negating the revolutionary role of the peasantry. A year later, disillusioned with the failure of the revolution, he reversed his position and supported electoral agreements with the Cadets, the party of the liberal manufacturers. Veering sharply to the right he next emerged as the champion of the liquidators, a group which wished to disband the revolutionary party and set up in its place a legal parliamentary party. Trotsky was the chief organizer of the August Bloc which met in Geneva in 1912 in a futile effort to unite all anti-Bolshevik groups behind the program of the liquidators.

During all this time he was carrying on a continuous polemic against Lenin, to whom he referred in his pamphlet *Our Political Tasks* as the "leader of the most reactionary wing of our party". The following excerpt from his letter to the Menshevik leader Chkeidze in April 1913 contains a summary of his views at that time: "What a senseless incitement seems the rotten discord which is systematically exploited by the specialist in such work, Lenin, that professional exploiter of everything backward in the Russian labor movement. . . . Lenin has made *Pravda* the implement of sectarian intrigue and unprincipled corruption. . . . Lenin has to play systematically at hide and seek with his readers, talking of unity from below and making a split above, presenting conceptions of the class struggle in terms of disruption and faction. In short the whole structure of Leninism is built up on lies and distortions, and contains the poisonous seed of its own decay." Trotsky declares his purpose to be "the destruction of the very foundations of Leninism, which is not compatible with the organization of the workers into a political party, but flourishes magnificently in the dung of factional differences". (Quoted in *The Truth About Trotsky,* by R. F. Andrews.) It must be admitted that he has clung tenaciously, if unsuccessfully, to his self-appointed task.

Even during the years of the war Trotsky continued to fight against the Bolsheviks, ridiculing their slogan "Turn the Imperialist War Into Civil War". It was not until July 1917, three months after the first revolution, that he made a formal recantation of his past errors and joined the Bolshevik party.

If in the writings of Trotsky and his admirers the first stage of his career is either ignored or dismissed with a few generalizations, their version of his activities inside the Communist movement is so distorted by misstatements and irrelevancies that his early years seem in comparison to be bathed in crystal light. In the first place it is necessary to clear up any misconceptions about the part played by Trotsky in the revolution. In his *History of the Russian Revolution* and other writings Trotsky has with characteristic modesty striven to give the impression that he stood second only to Lenin in the work of organizing and carrying out the insurrection. It does not require any profound knowledge of Communist political philosophy to realize that this newcomer into the Bolshevik ranks, one whom the party had every reason to distrust, and who held views diametrically opposed to the Bolshevik conception of the revolution, could not be trusted in any such important position. Even a superficial reading of the authentic histories and of contemporary newspapers and party documents shows that Trotsky's part in the insurrection was almost exclusively that of a revolutionary agitator. The actual work of organizing the insurrection was carried out by a special committee of five, including Lenin, Sverdlov and Stalin, of which Trotsky was not a member. Similarly scant credence should be given to the carefully fabricated myth that Trotsky was the guiding spirit of the Red Army during the intervention. With little knowledge of military tactics and dependent for advice upon generals from the former Czarist army, Trotsky in his position as a member of the Military Revolutionary Committee made so many errors and displayed such bureaucratic tendencies that it was necessary to appoint a special committee headed by Stalin to supervise his work, and to countermand any of his orders which were fraught with serious consequences. The history of the war of intervention shows that Stalin and Voroshilov were the best strategists and the most important leaders of the Red Army.

But Trotsky's egotism and his love of the limelight were personal faults. His political differences with Bolshevism became apparent in 1918 at Brest-Litovsk. Trotsky had been appointed head of a committee sent to Brest to negotiate a peace with Germany. At the conference with the German militarists his vigorous denunciation of the war gained wide publicity for the Bolshevik cause and played a considerable part in strengthening anti-war sentiment throughout the world. But over the protests of Lenin and Stalin, Trotsky refused to sign a peace at terms which were extremely disadvantageous to the Bolsheviks. This irresponsible attitude followed logically from his theory of permanent revolution—the impossibility of building socialism in one country, with its corollary that only a German revolution could save the Soviets. It resulted in further victories for the German army, the success of the counter-revolution in Finland and other countries, and, when the peace was finally signed on Lenin's threat of resignation from the Central

Committee if Trotsky's "policy of revolutionary phrases" continued, in the loss of great territories to Germany.

Trotsky's next open clash with the Communists came in 1920, over the question of the proposed militarization of the trade unions. Speaking of Trotsky's factional activities at that time Lenin said:

> Even if the new tasks and methods had been pointed out by Trotsky just as highly correctly as in reality they have been pointed out incorrectly throughout . . . by such an approach alone Trotsky would have caused injury both to himself, to the Party, to the union movement, to the education of millions of members of the labor unions and to the Republic. (*Collected Works, Vol. XXVI, Page* 116.)

But in spite of numerous declarations of loyalty to the Party, Trotsky had no intention of dropping his factionalism. Continuing to develop his theory of permanent revolution, he fought bitterly against the introduction of the New Economic Policy. He made unprincipled alliances with anti-Communist groups abroad, while in the Soviet Union his faction varied their intensely personal criticism of the Party leadership with hysterical attacks on the Party policy. In 1926 Trotsky joined with Zinoviev and Kamenev in the formation of an underground opposition organization within the Communist Party, which held clandestine meetings and carried on systematic lobbying and disruption. After the Opposition leaders had set up a secret printing plant to issue anti-Soviet literature and attempted to organize anti-Soviet demonstrations in the streets of Moscow, they were expelled from the Communist Party, and Trotsky was later exiled from the Soviet Union.

It should be emphasized that Trotsky was not expelled from the Communist ranks for his ideas, but for his anti-Soviet activity and refusal to submit to Party discipline. The Opposition leaders were given every opportunity to bring their platform and political theories before the Party membership and the Russian working class. Their speeches were printed by the Party press in hundreds of thousands of copies, and their books were widely circulated. But when after a discussion which lasted for four years the overwhelming majority of the Party members rejected the Opposition platform (less than one half of one per cent supporting the united opposition groups) it was Trotsky's duty to submit to the majority decision. This he recognized in words, but his egotism and his thirst for power would not allow him to admit defeat.

The stream of books and pamphlets which Trotsky has published since his expulsion from the Communist ranks provide the best possible index to his steady intellectual and moral degeneration. The wounded vanity which prevents him from admitting his own past errors and present political bankruptcy has a perverse logic of its own. The Communists have rejected Trotsky's theories—therefore the Communist International is dead. According to the Trotskyite analysis, the Chinese revolution was defeated—therefore the victorious Chinese Soviets are "bandits". Because he defended himself so heroically at the Reichstag trial, Dimitroff is a "parade revolutionist". The French Communist Party, which organized the first movement capable of checking the advance of fascism, has "betrayed the working class". At times his bias leads him into the realm of pure fantasy, as in the pamphlet *Soviet Economy in Danger,* published in 1933, with its gloomy predictions of the "imminent collapse" of Soviet economy, or *The Kirov Assassination,* which combines an elaborate rationalization of the use of force against Communist leaders with all the brighter features of an Oppenheim thriller.

But the best known and the most important of Trotsky's writings is his *History of the Russian Revolution.* Undeniably this is a brilliant and powerful work; but it can be accepted as a Marxist interpretation of history only by the uninformed. Reading it you get a curious sense of unreality; Trotsky seems to feel that the Bolshevik party as an organized group played no role whatever in the victory of the Russian working class. Everything is conceived in terms of personalities. You encounter only *individuals,* sometimes united in small cliques, but always for personal ends, in whose hands the revolutionary Party is a mere plaything. Needless to say this viewpoint is the very antithesis of Marxism. And Trotsky's *History* suffers from graver defects. In his efforts to justify his own position and to discredit the Communist leaders, he has not hesitated to conceal vital facts, to exaggerate the weaknesses of his enemies and to magnify his own virtues. To be explicit, in this and in other writings Trotsky has shown himself to be an unscrupulous and not altogether convincing liar.

To give but one example: in his *History* Trotsky cites a number of quotations from the writings of Lenin which appear to prove that he shared the theory of the "impossibility" of building socialism in one country. But each one of these quotations, *if taken in its proper context,* only repeats one of the axioms of Communist theory, that it is impossible for a socialist state to exist side by side with capitalist states without the danger of armed intervention, and that consequently the only final guarantee of the victory of socialism is the world revolution. Before his death Lenin defined Trotsky's abilities as an historian:

> Trotsky distorts Bolshevism, for Trotsky has never been able to get any definite views on the role of the proletariat in the Russian bourgeois revolution. Much worse however, is his distortion of the history of that revolution. (*Collected Works, Vol. XV, Page* 15).

Now that history has written the final refutation of Trotsky's political theories, there is a tendency among many Communists and socialists to underestimate their importance, and to minimize the danger which the Trotskyites represent to the working class movement. The revelations of the Zinoviev trials and the subsequent mobilization of anti-Soviet forces in defence of the terrorists should do much to dispell this apathy. The Trotsky who denounces Communism in the columns of *Liberty* can be dismissed as a harmless egomaniac indulging in wishful thinking, but the man who organized the Moscow terrorist centre is a cunning and dangerous agent of reaction.

(*This is the first of two articles on Trotsky. The second will appear in our next issue.*)

LOVERS SHELTERING FROM A STORM *Laurence Hyde.*

They Did Not Pass!

JEFF LLOYD

"EAST END WORKERS! Rally against Fascism!"
"Onto the streets, Sunday, Oct. 4th, 2 p.m."

The streets of Mile End, Whitechapel and Shoreditch were white in the autumn sunshine, with the slogans scrawled by East London's active anti-fascists.

For months past, Mosley's black groups had terrorized the inhabitants of Shoreditch, Stepney and Bethnal Green; smashing shop-windows, setting upon young Jewish couples after dark, and generally striking terror into the hearts of ordinary lawabiding citizens. In Bethnal Green, scarcely a Jew dared venture from his door after dark, and the Mayoress of Stepney had repeatedly informed the press of the intolerable state of affairs in the East End. The Jewish People's Council had continually demanded some sort of protection from the hooligan gangs. Labor M.P.s and councillors had repeatedly urged the Home Secretary, Sir John Simon, to take action.

All to no purpose. The matter was deferred, whilst Simon haggled and a half-hearted committee of enquiry was set up. Yet still the raids went on; young Jewish workers were still beaten up at night; and still, the terrorism grew.

And now, to cap it all, Mosley was going to march through the heart of East London, to impress the unfortunate victims of his hooliganism with the private army that he leads. Mosley was to march from Royal Mint to Victoria Park Square!

By 1.30 on Sunday, the crowd in Whitechapel High Street was already huge. People were lining the sidewalks and thronging the streets, pushing their way slowly up and down. The police were there in hundreds, and there was an air of expectancy everywhere. You could feel, somehow, that your neighbour was just as excited as yourself.

Being a Jewish quarter, the shops were mostly open, although it was Sunday. Many of the smaller ones had taken the precaution of chalking or posting up slogans:

"Mind the worker's shops." "This is a worker's shop. Be careful!" Everywhere you went, there were whitewashed slogans: "Against Mosley, rally 2 p.m. Sunday." Every street-corner, every tram or bus stop; outside the metro stations, and on all the hoardings.

By 2 o'clock, the atmosphere was pretty tense. Every one knew that, not half a mile away to the South within a stone's throw of the Tower, three thousand Blackshirts were assembling in Royal Mint to start their East-End "operations". People who had rushed their midday meal, were hurrying out onto the streets. All along Commercial Road, Whitechapel High Sreet and Leman Street, workers from the East End and from all over London, were massing in their thousands. The first news of Mosley's intended march had been published two days ago in the *Daily Worker*. Two days only, yet here were hundreds of thousands of people massing on the streets in opposition to such provocation. Liberals, Socialists and Communists; Jews and Gentiles; shopkeepers, factory workers, and dockers; people of no political creed, yet all imbued with the one hatred and that one desire:

"Fascism shall not pass!"

By 2 p.m. the crowd around Gardner's Corner and Aldgate East metro station was so dense, that the police had already begun clearing it. The traffic was not heavy, yet we could see long lines of trams and buses held up in Commercial Road and Whitechapel Road. Every minute or two, however, a busload of police would slowly push its way through the roaring crowd. like some great ice-breaker, and each time the crowd would surge forward to fill up the space left in its wake.

At Gardner's Corner and in Leman Street, the crowd was at its densest, and from 2 p.m. till 4, the police were constantly making charge after charge. "Don't mind them flat-feet. The cossacks is the real buggers," a man shouted close to me, as he threw a bunch of Chinese crackers under their horses. He turned round and grinned: "Too much crowd to spread the marbles."

Across the square, someone had scaled a tall lamppost, from which now fluttered fully 30 feet from the ground a strip of scarlet cloth. The crowd cheered, and someone burst into the *International*. But everyone was too busy with the cops to take it up. There were plenty of provocateurs amongst us, but on the whole they weren't very successful, though the temper of the crowd was ugly at times.

I glanced down Leman Street. There was a commotion, and I saw a Union Jack moving through the dense crowd. It was the one-armed leader of the ex-servicemen's anti-fascist movement leading his veterans down the street. And then, before anyone knew what was happening, there was a police charge and the Union Jack was wrenched away and snapped in two by one of the cops. This was the first time, I think, that I had ever seen the national flag treated like that by the police. The crowd was furious, of course, but the mounties turned and scattered them. There were so many of them you might have fancied it was the Charge of the Heavy Brigade.

I slipped down a side-street into Leman Street. There, the first arrests were being frog-marched along under heavy escort, to the accompaniment of boos and

cheers from the crowd. Clenched fists shot up, as each victim shouted encouragement or urged his comrades to rescue him. Several attempts at rescue were made, but the mounties were hitting out and none was daring enough to rush them.

I glanced at my watch. 3 o'clock, yet still no sign of my friend Brownie and the others. What could have happened to them? Had they been run in, or knocked out? In my anxiety, I forgot that it is the easiest thing in the world to lose a single person in a crowd a quarter of a million strong. The police were charging again, so I dived down another alleyway and found myself back in Commercial Road again. Suddenly I felt a heavy hand on my shoulder, and the thought flashed through me that I had been pinched. I twisted round and it was Brownie.

"Well, where the hell have you been?" I asked with a sigh of relief. I saw that he was excited.

"We've been down in Cable Street. They built a barricade . . . kept the cops back . . . and the Blackshirts. Boy, you should have been there!"

"When we lost you," said Brownie, "the boys and I made for the Royal Mint. Or the Minories. It didn't matter which, if only we could get a glimpse of the Blackshirts. Well, we couldn't make it. Police cordons all round. Every street guarded, it seemed. After a time, though, we manged to slip through into Cable Street by that bridge at the other end of Leman Street.

"The police were making continuous charges, as usual. But they weren't getting it all their own way, down there. You ought to have seen those dockers, and the tough boys from Ireland. They were fighting back, flinging cabbages and stones, any old thing they could lay their hands on. Everyone's blood was up. They weren't going to let the lousy Blackshirts through Cable Street, if they could help it. Still, gradually they were driven back. It was only the flat-feet—the cossacks couldn't get there, too much broken glass on the street. But even so, the boys were being pushed back, slowly but surely. The batons were too much for 'em.

"Then someone had a brain-wave. Everybody began building up a barricade. Planks, dustbins, bits of old furniture, any old thing they could scrounge. The boys went in and out of the neighbouring yards and alleys, and picked up everything they could find. Paving stones were pulled up and laid across. And finally they got hold of an old lorry, and turned it up on its side. God, that was some barricade when they'd finished."

The police had been pushing us back yard by yard, as he was speaking. On my right, a young kid was holding his neck and sobbing: "They got me on the neck. One of them cops. I wasn't doin' nothing."

"Cheer up, youngun," I said. "There's been plenty of that today. It'll wear off." Job's comfort, but I wanted to hear the rest of the story. I gave the youngster a pat, and turned back to Brownie, who had been talking all the while:

". . . and they're still holding 'em, on that barricade. God, you ought to have seen the cops, hiding in the doorways from the showers of stones and rotten cabbages that are pelted at them. In front of the barricade, the boys have chalked—'The Fascists shall not pass'; and they've tied a bit of red to a stick. The Blackshirts haven't passed yet, either. Nor had the police when I left. O boy, you should have been there. It was great!"

It was a quarter to four.

"Let's go and have a look and see whether they're still there," I said. I was pretty excited myself, by now. We got into Leman Street, but the police had strengthened the cordon, and you couldn't get through. However, there were a lot of people hanging around there still, so I went up to one of them, a sturdy looking docker, and asked him what had happened.

"Well," he said, "I was on the barricade. After an hour's fighting, the police took us in the rear, and we had to fall back. The Blackshirts didn't get through, though," he added. "Mosley didn't pass."

I felt as if I had been a bit out of it. Yet the same feeling of pride was in me too, as we pushed our way back to Gardner's Corner. The rest of the boys were all there. Most of them had been there all the afternoon, so Brownie began repeating his whole story. But he was cut short by a man distributing leaflets:

"Victoria Park Square," he shouted at us, and disappeared in the crowd. The leaflet announced an anti-fascist meeting there at 4.30, to be followed by a march through Bethnal Green to the Shoreditch Town Hall. This was carrying the fight into the enemy's own camp, with a vengeance!

The crowds were already moving up towards Mile End, as we turned into Whitechapel Road, and we soon found ourselves part of a column swinging along towards the Victoria Park Square. Someone was singing:

"We peasants, artisans and others
Enrolled among the sons of toil,
Let's claim the earth henceforth for brothers
Drive the indolent from the soil . . ."

We took it up, singing lustily to the crowds clustered on the pavements:

"Then comrades, come rally
And the last fight let us face,
The Internationale
Unites the human race."

All along Whitechapel Road and Cambridge Road, we were greeted with clenched fists. The Fascists had lost this round. Like the famous Duke, who marched his men up the hill and then marched them down again, Mosley had brought his black army to Tower Hill, and then had to march them back westward along the Embankment. "Venit, vidit, legged it" as someone remarked near me. From the front of the column, growing ever stronger as we swept along where Mosley could not march, came the ringing slogan:

"They *did* not pass, they *shall* not pass,
They shall *never* pass!"

A United Front in Canada?

CHARLES HERBERT HUESTIS

THERE IS A CELEBRATED CHAPTER in a mythical history of Ireland on "Snakes" which contains just six words: "There are no snakes in Ireland." The subject at the head of this article admits of similar brief treatment. Not only is there no united front in Canada but if the C.C.F. has its way there never shall be,—and that makes the story longer. It has been said that the worst quarrels are family quarrels and it is a curious fact of political history that men quarrel most with those whose ideas coincide with their own. This truth finds illustration in the abhorrence of any association with the Communist party which characterizes the C.C.F. That body, like Caesar's wife, must be above suspicion of any connection with the evil deeds of Communism. Its members may not even walk with communists and some who did so this year on May Day were promptly expelled from the party. Its leaders even endeavoured, happily without success, to persuade George Lansbury not to address a peace meeting in Toronto last summer because some communists—or near communists—were the promoters. Mr. Lansbury was prevented from attending and wrote a letter regretting the same.

Mr. J. S. Woodsworth in *The New Commonwealth* last spring set forth the official attitude to a united front in three and one-half columns and in doing so delivered himself in the very capable hands of Mr. Tim Buck, who, in *The Worker* for March 28th, left him hardly a rag to cover his nakedness. Mr. Woodsworth criticized the forthright methods of the C.P. in comparison with the more leisurely and peaceful conduct of the C.C.F. and even went so far as to take a text for his discourse from Karl Marx. Mr. Buck pointed out that Mr. Woodsworth was guilty of quoting only part of what Marx said. To Mr. Woodsworth's claim of Marx' authority for the policy of attaining Socialism by peaceful means, Mr. Buck replied that the gist of Marx' contention was that "some day the workers must conquer political supremacy." He was also unkind enough to remind Mr. Woodsworth that he himself "was catapulted into national prominence and a parliamentary career mainly as a result of his participation in the greatest and most striking manifestation of open and, in a sense, revolutionary, class struggle activity in the history of the working-class movement in Canada."

Now, lest I be misunderstood, I hasten to state that in writing this article any idea of the possibility or advisability of political unity between the C.P. and the C.C.F. is far from my mind—at least at present. With the present attitude of the right wing which controls the latter body such a proposal would be futile in the extreme. I am also reminded of the Levitical injunction, Thou shalt not plough with an ox and an ass together. Nevertheless in the scheme of the farmer both these animals have their place and I see no reason why the C.P. and the C.C.F. and all other anti-capitalist bodies, which polled more than a million votes at the last general election, should not form a united, non-political movement to undermine the foundations of the present order by propaganda, if not a Front Populaire at least a *union sacree*. The Front Populaire in France, according to Thorez, the communist leader, in a recent interview, "was never a political organization. It included many units—not only of voters, but also of women and youth." Its esprit de corps was the fear of Fascism. Even in Spain where the left organizations and parties were divided as nowhere else, they have united against a common enemy.

And this reminds me that the nearest approach to a united front in Canada is the League Against War and Fascism. It is said that the motive power of that organization is provided by communists, but I find on its directorate some men of local and national eminence who have in public protested their hatred of Communism. The chief weakness of this organizaion is expressed by the adverb of its title. I have never believed that good can be accomplished simply by fighting against evil. In hammering out gold plates sometimes a bulge appears on the surface. It has been found that it is no good to hammer the bulge because if you do so it will appear on another part of the plate. So the workers hammer the plate around the bulge coming nearer and nearer until at last it disappears. There you have the technique for Canadian socialism to-day. The cause of the bulge is not in itself but in the molecules which compose the plate. War and Fascism are the products of the present world order. Their evil is not in themselves alone but in the order which produces them. Hence the need of the unity of all agencies which would change that order. Mr. Graham Spry in his report at the last C.C.F. convention in Toronto, spoke in favour of "the unity of all progressive anti-capitalist forces as essential at the present time", and offered the C.C.F. as the basis of such unity. In an article in *The New Commonwealth* he stated that the C.P. "was more of an organization and less of a movement, and the C.C.F. more of a movement and less of an organization." He might have added, the C.P. knows where it is at and whither it is going and the C.C.F. seems to know neither one nor the other.

I have been repelled by the revolutionary policy of Communism now happily undergoing a meliorating process and I could see not a whit to choose between the pogroms of Hitler and the purges of Stalin; but I could wish that the C.C.F. had one-half of the passion and clear-headedness of the communists, or for that matter

of the fine youth movement which has been to the front this year. What redness the C.C.F. used to have is now hardly a decent pink. It will soon be difficult to distinguish it from the other parties. The fault I impute to this political organization is "the unlit lamp and the ungirt loin." It has succumbed to the same pernicious anaemia which afflicts the Labor Party overseas which makes it the unresisting victim of the Tory National Government. The Regina manifesto had great promise but the labor of parturition in bringing forth that infant seems to have been so exhausting as to have made further creative effort impossible. The C.C.F. deprecates the rude manners of the communists and seems to think that political power will drop like a tropical fruit into its lap if only it waits long enough. I greatly fear that what does drop may be a Fascist cocoanut whose fall will be destructive not only to the C.C.F. but to all democracy.

The Kailyard Comes To Life—Lewis Grassic Gibbon

MARION NELSON

IT CANNOT be claimed that Scotland is remarkable for literary productivity. Apart from a handful of great names in the past, the literature of that country has been largely marked by an ingrown parochialism from which, very occasionally, emerged a single minor work—such as *The House with the Green Shutters*—whose isolation, its author appearing to have been exhausted by the one effort, gave it regrettably some of the cachet of a freak.

In contemporary writing too no one would deny that Scotland is but meagrely represented. And this aridity, this absence of a distinguished literature going beyond national bounds in outlook and meaning, is to be wondered at in the country of the ballads which, though narrowed to a particular geopraphical setting, do nevertheless flow into the main stream of English literature. Essentially of Scottish life, part of the moorland and the windy cliff, part of that native independence which is really a simple fact and no mere tag become a cliché, the ballads have a more than national significance which the great part of Scottish writing has not. And although their substance is preponderantly heroic and romantic, they are undeniably of the people in that they were accepted by the people as their property. The earl, the laird, the captain, the rich merchant figure most conspicuously in the ballads, it is true. But there too are signs of the peasant close to the land. And the peasant and the land have the same language all the world over. Who better than the Scottish crofter, for example, would understand *Fontamara?*

Of all Scottish writers save Burns, whom in some respects he resembles, Lewis Grassic Gibbon has drawn closest to the folk "universality" of the ballads. That is, he reflects not the Scottish "Kailyard" but the problems of the common people to-day in Scottish life and terms.

. . . . .

Lewis Grassic Gibbon was the pen name of James Leslie Mitchell, novelist, archaeologist and journalist, who died within a week of his thirty-fourth birthday, in February, 1935.

Gibbon was a very prolific writer. Besides a number of non-fiction books, he produced in about five years five novels, three of which are without doubt important. His first two novels, though much less balanced than his later work, are interesting for the evidences of development they show and for their reflection of the early doubts and hesitations in the philosophical progress of the writer. *The Thirteenth Disciple,* his second novel, gives an unforgettable picture of a sensitive country boy plunging into city journalism, into socialism, into war — the experiences of Gibbon's own life.

The trilogy, *A Scots Quair,* however, is by far Gibbon's most valuable work. All three of the novels forming it are set in that region south of the Dee and east of the Grampians known as the Mearns Country. The author's choice of this old Pictish land was not deliberate but inevitable. It was his own birthplace and he knew it inside out. There is nothing Celtic, nothing Highland about the Mearns Country. Its people are plain, sceptical, matter-of-fact. As regards both subject-matter and background, therefore, Gibbon differs fundamentally from his compeer, Mr. Neil M. Gunn, the only other Scottish writer to have produced, to be producing, contemporary Scottish fiction that has serious claims to distinction.

Gibbon and Gunn are in fact the antithesis of each other. Gunn is imbued with the old Gaelic "soul" and it is his endeavour to reproduce, to interpret a spirit that we have heard of as traditional, that modern capitalism has done its best to kill and that, anyway, has small likelihood of a future. His philosophy is idealist and his political inclination, logically enough, towards the Scottish Nationalists.

Gibbon's outlook, on the other hand, is international; his philosophy in the main materialist. In *The Observer,* at the time of Gibbon's death, Mr. Ivor Brown wrote: "In the novels there continually wells up one of the governing ideas of his mind, the belief in a better past, a world of simple, uncorrupted men, true primitives." This is a wrong emphasis and, in face of Gibbon's complete work, a remark singularly ill-founded. It is Mr. James Barke, writing in *The Left Review,* who gives the real key to Gibbon's attitude: "He looks forward, he is consumed with the vision of Cosmopolis."

. . . . .

The task that Gibbon set himself in his trilogy was a major one: to depict and interpret a section of Scottish life in a more fundamental and far-reaching fashion than it had ever been dealt with before; to do for Scotland, let us say, what Gorky was doing for Russia in *Klim Samghin,* what both Josephine Herbst and Fielding Burke are doing now, though less vividly, for the United States of America.

In *Sunset Song,* the first part, we are taken to Kinraddie, a small-farming district in the Mearns, and shown with keen insight the effect of the Great War on rural life. *Cloud Howe,* the second part, deals with the small, semi-industrialized town of Segget in the first shock of the post-war depression. The last part, *Grey Granite,* describes Duncairn, a city such as Aberdeen or Dundee, in the grip of the general economic crisis.

At this point a little should be said about Gibbon's style in the trilogy, which is original to a degree and at first even startling. It has been called many names from god-awful to anapaestic but that it is effective there can be no question, particularly in conjunction with the consistent realism of his character treatment. Rhythmical, cadenced, it is nevertheless far from precious; for always we have the feeling that it is this character or that who is telling the story, in his own words, in his dialect distilled as Synge distilled the speech of his Irish folk, and it comes to us as natural that the language of the country people should be slow-moving and melodious.

The principle character of *Sunset Song* is Chris Guthrie, the daughter of a crofter. Indeed, in one sense, the entire trilogy is her saga, she moves through it strong, sensible, realistic, but swayed now in this direction now in that by a division of character not new in life or fiction but seldom if ever before analyzed with such masterly understanding. Hers is a dichotomy deeply feminine, essentially the result of woman's dependent position in the capitalist world.

"So that was Chris and her reading and schooling, two Chrisses there were that fought for her heart and tormented her. You hated the land, the coarse speech of the folk and learning was brave and fine one day; and the next you'd waken with the peewits crying across the hills, deep and deep. Crying in the heart of you and the smell of the earth in your face, almost you'd cry for that, the beauty of it and the sweetness of the Scottish land and skies."

Against a background of frugal living, drudgery, peasant coarseness and religious prejudice, which is drawn with the wide sweep and the minute perfection of one who not only knew it intimately but both hated and loved it, Chris grows to womanhood. Defeated by nature (and environment) in her desire for learning, she marries the young foreman, Ewan Tavendale, and with him and their son, but for the war, would have settled down to the typical life of the small farmer.

With Tavendale Chris experiences at first a happiness that is exquisite. Yet there is a mental gulf between them of which she slowly becomes aware. Once, when at Edzell Castle, Ewan has in answer to a remark of hers shown a lack of understanding that appals her, she "laughed and looked at him, queer and sorry, and glimpsed the remoteness that her books had made." And again "but once she'd thought there wouldn't be a thing they wouldn't understand together. . . ."

The war comes, brutalizes Tavendale and kills him. It kills too the life of the Mearns crofter, and it is this latter destruction that is the main purpose of *Sunset Song.*

It is no exaggeration to say that a more significant picture of Scottish life has never been made. Against the inevitable trend of capitalism, the selling up of the land, the displacement of the tenant farmer, the robustness, independence and industry of the country folk are of no avail. The simplicity of the old life goes, sophistication creeps in, the crofter of the Mearns passes from history . . . but the farm servants begin to be organized.

. . . . .

In *Sunset Song,* with a gusto at times ribald, Gibbon has shown the clergy ranged on the side of the landlords and warmakers, bigoted and hypocritical. In *Cloud Howe* he outlines the beginnings of a change on the part of the church, the growing awareness of the younger generation of ministers that "God's in his Heaven, all's right with the world" has ceased to be a perfect sequitur.

This aspect of modern times is very carefully and realistically built up. Robert Colquhoun, the young minister whom the widowed Chris marries, is an honest and a sincere man, a devout believer with a marked touch of the fanatic, which has been emphasized by his war experiences. Secure in his God, Robert does not bother overmuch that Chris is a pagan at heart . . . a fact which she, woman-like, refrains from stressing. His first efforts to heal the world by means of religion widen, as his knowledge and experience increase, into a desire to ally himself with the working class. This he does in the General Strike of 1926. The collapse of the Strike and the betrayal of the masses by the labor leaders affect him acutely. He has a transitory reaction, a sudden swing towards mysticism and, groping for comfort, he hysterically accepts a "vision" which to the practical Chris seems a foul hallucination. Distress and ill-health, from lungs gassed in the war, work havoc with Robert. He dies in the pulpit, calling for "a stark, sure creed that will cut like a knife, a surgeon's knife, through the doubt and disease."

Cloud Howe is neither so complete nor so balanced a picture as *Sunset Song.* Here Gibbon has been content to view his subject as from the Manse window, the result being that we see the spinners of Segget only from a distance. They erupt upon the small and smug community with their red flag and their labor songs like so many visitors from another planet. They are presented only as in relation to the middle class.

But this apart, the novel is an impressive summary. It is the Scottish small town to the life. All its meanness, all its gossip, all its hidden and overt bawdiness are there; all its aspirations to gentility, all its plain common sense. And these are worked in in relevant anecdote after anecdote, rich and lusty in their reality. The contradiction between Scottish downrightness and the urge to be genteel is again and again hit off with almost painful exactitude. There is the lady who compromises with her Scots to the extent of saying "Such fine!"; there is the provost's wife, impatient with her son's newly acquired niceness, who burst from good manners in reply to his demand for a slop-basin with "Slop it in your guts!" But incidentals like these these cannot be fully appreciated except in their context, and readers must turn to the

trilogy itself for acquaintance with a gallery of men and women who owe something to Rabelais, something to Burns, but most of all to Gibbon's own remarkable perception of character.

. . . . . .

In *Grey Granite* Gibbon was faced with a great opportunity and with an undertaking that might well have intimidated any writer not thoroughly conversant with industrialism and industrial workers. *Grey Granite* was to be the fitting, the unavoidable conclusion of everything that he had been developing in the first two novels. It was now his specific aim to show that all half-measure panaceas for the reform of the capitalist world are impractical and useless, that social democracy with its inherent tendency to class-collaboration must fail, and that the emancipation of the working class is to be achieved only through the revolutionary organization and leadership of the Communist Party.

Partly he succeeded in establishing this thesis, and partly he failed.

Let us take his failure first. In the town of Duncairn where Chris, now widowed for the second time, is engaged in running a boarding house, her son Ewan has become an apprentice-engineer. At first Ewan is unpopular with his fellow-workers; the reactionary elements in his own background cause him to despise the ignorance and vulgarity of the "keelies". But gradually, chiefly through the influence of a young teacher, Ellen, with whom he falls in love, Ewan becomes interested in the labor movement. When the labor leaders weaken in a crisis, as they did for his stepfather in 1926, Ewan with a characteristic resoluteness is done with them. He inaugurates a fancy socialist league of his own. Further close experience of the struggle, in which he suffers imprisonment and bodily injury, brings him to the Communist Party itself. The novel ends with Ewan preparing to lead a Hunger March on London, where he is to become an organizer at the party headquarters.

Such is the brief outline of Ewan's progress, which certainly is not untrue to life. Unfortunately, however, Gibbon lacked familiar knowledge of the class-conscious workers whom he set out to portray. His heart, as it were, was with them, but he had never plumbed their minds as he did the minds of his petty-bourgeois and peasants. This fault, which would undoubtedly have been corrected had he lived, led him to a romantic view of the communist's rôle; a view which is still widespread among intellectuals who are sympathetic to Marxism but have few contacts with worker Marxists.

Gibbon saw that for the active revolutionary, personal feelings must be secondary to the work to be done and with a rashness which is the result of superficial knowledge and a romantic desire for "perfection", he discounts human feeling entirely so that his revolutionaries emerge not only robot-like but almost perverted. In this way, for example, and with the most sympathetic intention, he describes the communist, Trease, and his wife:

"And Ewan sat and looked on and spoke now and then, and liked them well enough, knowing that if it suited the party purpose Trease would betray him to the police tomorrow, use anything and everything that might happen to him as propaganda and publicity, without caring a fig for liking or aught else. So he'd deal with Mrs. Trease, if it came to that . . . and Ewan nodded to that, to Trease, to himself, commonsense, or other way to hack out the road ahead. Neither friends nor scruples, not honour or hope for the folk who took the workers' road; just *life* that sent tiredness leaping from the brain; that sent death and wealth and ease and comfort shivering away with a dirty smell, a residuum of slag that time scraped out through the bars of the whooming furnace of History . . ."

Such a passage with its "betray him to the police tomorrow", its "neither friends nor scruples, not honour or hope" is the romantic concept of a writer who has discovered in the communist what is obvious and admirable —a hard core of purpose—but who does not yet realize that the hardness and purpose are based on the more-than-friendship of the working class, on the scrupulousness of one to whom his fellows' welfare means more than his own, on the honour of all who despise the hypocrisy and money-nexus of the capitalist social order, and on the hope which, being selfless, endures till neck meets axe.

So in the treatment of Ewan does Gibbon overstep the mark. Ewan is the grey granite of the title, "the cool boy with the haughty soul . . . self-reliant." Perhaps the final stages of his character's metamorphosis were beyond Gibbon's power as he wrote this novel; obviously, at least, he fell back too trustingly on his imagination—an inherited tendency in novel-craft when dealing with the radical thinker, and one which the developing Marxist writer has to discipline out of himself. At all events, Ewan, the communist, is something less than human. A bit of a prig, self-righteous, romantic too—seeing himself so readily in the great march of History. Ewan's rejection of Ellen, his social democrat sweetheart, who could not at once accept her lover's conversion to communism is unreal in the extreme. The average communist would have been more likely to win over Ellen than to abandon her with such unnecessary brutality.

But these criticisms, which are necessary, do not affect the real intention of the writer. In the political alignment of young Ewan he presents us with the synthesis that Chris had once longed for—a way of life that would unites the best that Tavendale, the unawakened worker, had stood for with the idealistic aspirations of Robert, the Hunter of Clouds. Shortly before his death, stating that all art is, in one sense or another propaganda, Gibbon declared that his work was a continuous criticism of capitalism. "I am a revolutionary writer," he wrote. "All my books are explicit or implicit propaganda."

This is unquestionably true. The fact that his treatment of decaying capitalism is more accurate than his picture of its gravediggers does not weaken the claim. The loss is ours, and that of English literature, that Gibbon did not live to erect from the partial failure of *Grey Granite* another novel, other novels, marked and enriched by his own deepening understanding of the class struggle.

As it is, we should be blind not to recognize in his trilogy a pioneer achievement of much more than passing importance.

Liaison On Melinda Street

AUSTIN BEER

THE ALARMING GROWTH of centralization in newspaper ownership in Canada with its attendant dictatorship of public opinion is graphically — almost picturesquely—illustrated in the union of Toronto's two morning papers, making the new *Globe and Mail* the second largest newspaper in Canada — circulation nearly 200,000.

Patrons of the newcomer are not confined to readers of the Liberal *Globe* and the Conservative *Mail and Empire*. Many an evening reader turns eagerly to the *Globe and Mail* each morning. He does not seek news, for the new paper is almost unanimously deplored as an even poorer news sheet than the scarcely lamented *Globe*. No, he's afraid he may miss the latest tid bit in the noisest squabble between politicians and capitalists that the Holy City has enjoyed in some time. Next to a Major Bowes hour dedicated to his very own city, your Torontonian loves nothing better than the sort of public name-calling that was precipitated when George McCullagh startled his fellow burghers by buying two newspapers in little more than a month.

The story is all the more relished because it is a mystery yarn to most observers—a mystery with few clues to its secret and the end not yet. Even bourgeois eyebrows went up when McCullagh announced the backing of mining tycoon W. H. Wright in his purchase of the *Globe*. What was up?

Plenty of answers have been tried but none of them fit any better than Mr. McCullagh's. A successful newspaperman who had entered the brokerage business and made good,—at 31 he is the youngest member of the Board of Governors of the University of Toronto — he spoke modestly of his ambition to make it a great newspaper worthy of the traditions of its founder, Hon. George Brown.

Many a citizen hinted darkly—in fact, vaguely—that Wright was going to use the sheet to promote mining interests. Saltiest of these ruminations was the editorial comment of *The Daily Clarion*: "The *Globe,* losing money at the rate of $1,000 a week, has for years, through its editorial and news policy, been offering itself on the street. It was obvious that the Lady was over ninety; equally obvious that she had lost her innocence at least half a century ago. There was difficulty about the deal. Now a purchaser has been found in the person of William H. Wright. As the head of two gold mines which have averaged over three million dollars annually for 18 years, Mr. Wright has the latitude allowed to the rich in affairs of this kind. The *Globe,* now that the period of solicitation has been brought to successful fruition, may resume the old air of respectability. The point to remember is that more than ever it is a kept paper."

But Toronto millionaire owned papers were already selling generous portions of their souls to the mining interests and the half million or more that Wright and McCullagh are reputed to have paid for her seemed an exorbitant tariff for the nonagenarian Lady of Melinda Street.

Suspicious individuals of a certain turn of mind warned that the paper would be used to promote reactionary principles. A few days after the purchase, these people pointed to a two-column story in the *Globe* reporting that "Reds" had been refused permission to use a school building for a peace meeting. The facts in the matter were that the committee sponsoring the meeting included names like that of Denton Massey, famed for his monster Bible Classes and a fairly prominent old-line Conservative politician. Worst of all, in the eyes of the alarmists, permission had not been refused. It had been granted willingly. The *Globe* corrected the story next day without too much grovelling. It looked bad to the alarmists, but anyone who worked on the *Globe* knew that the cub who made the boners and the editor who let them by got a serious over-coals hauling.

Meanwhile, joy reigned in the hearts of newspapermen. McCullagh began pumping money into the paper with such apparent abandon that even the starvelings on the old *Globe* began to hope there might be a raise. Several scriveners moved over from the *Mail and Empire* at higher pay. The *Mail* hired several men to strengthen their staff against the rejuvenated opposition.

Then the thunder on the right rumbled again—this time with a more practical threat. The Tory *Evening Telegram* was left stuttering with rage when McCullagh announced that he had bought the *Mail*—"body and soul" as the *Clarion* shrieked. The "Tely" hid its grief at being relegated to third and last position in circulation among the capitalist dailies of Toronto. But it burst into garrulous indignation at the "disappearance of the chief Conservative organ" in Ontario. It warned the public against an "organization that pretends to be politically independent while shouting for Hepburn and Separate schools."

McCullagh had announced that the paper's politics would be independent. He added that, generally speaking, it would give support to existing Governments. In private he admitted that to him, at the moment, Premier Mitch Hepburn's Liberal government looked better than Earl Rowe's Conservative opposition. Orangeman Tely muttered that the merger pie had been baked to win the East Hastings by-election and that Senator Frank O'Connor, rich and potent Roman Catholic, had a finger in it. A formal statement from McCullagh flatly denied any such setup.

"As far as is humanly possible in the light of good business judgment," said McCullagh's official statement when he bought the *Mail,* "we will take care of as many of the staffs of both papers as we can." It was obvious that heads would roll. In the end several hundred from all departments—mostly in the *Mail*—were given notice. They were "taken care of" by being given four weeks pay—a generous procedure when it is considered that an employer is only expected by law to pay one week's salary. Incidentally, it is estimated that this gesture added $40,000 to the $2,500,000 McCullagh and associates are reputed to have paid broker I. W. Killam of Montreal for the major interest in the *Mail.*

Two discomforting facts are illustrated by the effects of the merger and neither casts any demonstrable slur on the apparently childlike innocence of Georgie McCullagh. Both are the result of what those nasty "reds" call the "system under which we live." The first is that when one capitalist buys up another, the worker gets short shrift. Not even the long overdue unionization of editorial workers would have helped reporters and editors on the *Mail.* The printers' union had no means of preventing wholesale dismissals.

The other fact is that the reader has no say in the public opinion that the newspaper make such a fuss about reflecting. In effect, the newspaper dictates so-called public opinion merely by asserting that it is such and such. If you doubt this, watch how quickly newspapers come out with editorial comment purporting to quote public opinion on a new issue like the King and Mrs. Simpson before the editorial writer can have had time even to call up a couple of friends and ask what they think about it.

Meanwhile, as we hinted higher up, it's lots of fun reading Toronto newspapers, which is something new. J. V. "Pinko" McAree tells his readers in the Fourth Column that "Mr. McCullagh says we can give him hell in his own paper if we want to. Our scope is precisely the same as it has been in recent years." Judith Robinson's column, honored with front page position, fulminates against Fascists. On the second front, one A. Lorne McIntyre writes daily "news" stories about the horrid Communists who are meeting in those rough Ukrainian halls somewhere near Bathurst and College streets and teaching "un-Canadian" ideas like "violence" to the city's babies in arms. Shades of 1914!

And to meet the *Telegram's* complaint that it is bad for a city not to have organs for both old line political parties, we hear as we go to press that a Conservative morning sheet may appear on the street "any morning now"—perhaps backed by Tely money. Some day soon the *Globe and Mail* may start losing Wright's money—but not while the suspense remains so keen.

French Novelists of Today

IV. ANDRE MALRAUX

DABIT, THE SUBJECT of the last article in this series, arrived at the political attitude implicit in his later novels almost insensibly and through the heart rather than the head. "His Communism," wrote Paul Morand in an obituary article, "was gentle, subdued in tone and quite uncomplicated. He reached it by following his natural bent and without having to perform any heroic acrobatics. He was obliged neither to do himself violence nor to divest himself of anything, for he knew poverty and regarded it with the affection one might feel for a close relation."

For Malraux, Dabit's exact contemporary (both were born in 1898), the road to a revolutionary political position started at another pole and followed an utterly different course. The two things Malraux has always sought have been a tightly-knit and comprehensive philosophy and a way of heroism. The way of heroism comes first. Struggle and action, the "gratuitous act" of Gide and before Gide of Nietzsche have beckoned Malraux since early manhood and are at once the goal and the compelling force of the heroes of all his novels. Such a Communist could be at first more than half an anarchist, much like Garine in *Les Conquerants* (*The Conquerors*). A character in that novel had this to say of the political position of Borodin's aide: "Understand, my friend. If by Bolshevik you mean revolutionary then, of course, Garine is a Bolshevik, but if you mean a special kind of Marxist revolutionary, then, in my opinion, he isn't a Bolshevik at all." It would not be unfair to apply this description to Malraux himself. An extraordinary distaste for sectarianism has always been a part of his attitude and has frequently made narrowly orthodox left-wing critics look askance at his work. "They call me a Trotskyite," he said to me last year with a wry smile as we paced the terrace outside his room in the offices of the *Nouvelle Revue Francaise.* "They call me a Trotskyite, because I admired Trotsky in the past and refuse now to deny his intelligence or his personal charm. Why must they confuse persons and politics?" Then the talk turned to ideas and in dense, packed, pregnant sentences, the difficult unyielding prose of his novels, he told me of his attempts to synthesize Nietzsche and Marx and of the philosophic work he plans to write.

Malraux started life in post-war Paris as a young man of moderate means. Natural aesthetic and political affiliations led him to the groups of young experimental writers who stood at that time chronologically halfway between Dada and Surrealism. In 1920 he began his first work, *Royaume-Farfelu,* an exotic piece of persiflage full of hippocamps, Moguls great and little, with plenty of scorpions. The novel, if one can call it that, is now almost extinct, but one copy slumbers in the *Bibliotheque Nationale* and there one day I copied down the following as a representative passage: "The Czar looked at me

with a fish-tail in his fist. He had the fish's head (its eyes wide open) between his teeth; one tiny fish had got stuck in his beard." There is a good deal more in that strain and little that points forward to the later Malraux except for the almost religious absorption in torture as the supreme test of manhood and his constant reiteration of his horror for the slavery which ordinary membership in the human race imposes—a first statement of his theory of the *condition humaine.*

Malraux did not spend all his time with Artaud, Breton and the young revolutionary stylists. He had already felt the tug of the Orient and prepared himself for his future travels in Africa and Asia by going through the mill at the School of Oriental Languages. (Malraux is a brilliant linguist and can pick up a new idiom without seeming effort in about three months.) Soon Malraux was in Indo-China on what seems to have been an idol stealing expedition. At least that is what the French authorities took it to be, for Malraux spent several uncomfortable months in a tropical jail. Many of the incidents of that period and, in particular, the author's marked distaste for colonial officialdom were to find their way later into *La Voie Royale* (*The Royal Road*) which appeared in 1930.

La Voie Royale might be described to anyone who has not read it as a hard-boiled adventure story set in the Siamese jungle. The two protagonists, Claude Vannec and Perken, are both men who have renounced the unbearableness of a tame existence with an almost nauseated aversion. There are chapters of extraordinary vividness; notably the description of the attempt to strip a jungle temple of its friezes by flash-light in a nightmare world of crawling, scurrying and flying insects, and another in which the two men and a third European they are trying to rescue are surrounded in a straw hut at night by the savage Moi. But the novel for all its impressiveness lacks direction. The reader senses a general revolt against occidental self-satisfaction, but on such broad terms that what might be a sharp-edged weapon is blunted. Malraux intented this book to be the first of a series called *Puissances du Desert,* but so far no other volumes have appeared.

La Voie Royale is an end rather than a beginning. It closes the period opened in 1926 by *Tentation de l'Occident,* a philosophical work in which the East was weighed against the West with the scales sharply tilted in favour of the former.

And now the scene shifts to China, the China of 1927, the bloody, heroic year, the year of Chiang-Kai-Chek's betrayal. The place and the time have been brilliantly if briefly described by Vincent Sheean in his *Personal History.* Canton. Shanghai. Malraux gives each its novel in *Les Conquerants* (1928) and *La Condition Humaine* (*Man's Fate*) which appeared five years later. As far as the subject-matter is concerned the two can be considered as one, though *La Condition Humaine* is by far the more significant and striking. Its central problem is the search for a way of endowing human life with dignity. Kyo Gisors, half French, half Japanese, has found an answer as far as he himself is concerned in Communism and he adds meaning to this personal sense of worth by communicating his philosophy to others. There is no cocksureness about his position and he puts it with diffidence to König, the German prefect of police. "I think Communism will make dignity possible for those on whose side I am fighting. Its opposite, at any event, forces them to go without a vestige of human worth, unless they are lucky enough to possess a wisdom which is as rare on their side of the barrier as it is on yours." Against the awful background of the collapse of a revolution, Malraux, in *La Condition Humaine,* paints a whole gallery of men caught in a moral and intellectual crisis. There is not only Gisors but Tchen the terrorist, the Belgian Hemmelrich whose sick wife and child are pledges to fortune which keep him from action almost to the end. And there is Katov, the seasoned agitator, who meets the author's supreme test at the end when he gives away his cyanide of potassium to the other prisoners knowing he will be thrown alive by Chang-Kai-Chek's executioners into the furnace of a locomotive.

After his experiences in China,—for Malraux was on the spot and his two novels are sublimated records, not echoes of events,—he continued his wanderings. Friends who dined with him in Paris would read a week later that he had just flown over the site of the long-lost capital of the Queen of Sheba. His gaunt face and striking figure were seen more and more often at political meetings. He worked for the *Front Populaire* in its earliest stages, for the refugees from Nazi Germany, and it is from these, as he acknowledged in a preface, that he got the material for the latest and starkest of his novels, *Le Temps du Mepris,* (*Days of Contempt*) which was published in 1935.

Here in less than two hundred pages is a Malraux novel in its most definite form. Half as long as usual and with characters stripped to a minimum, the latest anguish which stamps all his work is here more impressive than ever. For nine days Kassner, a militant in the post-Hitler illegal K.P.D. lies in a German concentration camp while the Gestapo try to hammer his identity out of him. As he swims back to consciousness between beatings his mind casts back over his past in the Russia of the Civil War and the years in Weimarian Germany. At the end of nine days an unknown comrade gives himself up in Kassner's name and the leader leaves to join his wife in Prague. It is a hallucinatory work and tragic in the antique sense; "Man, the crowd, the elements, woman, destiny. Two characters; the hero and his way of life." In a brilliant preface Malraux makes his plea for "passionate" literature, for the tradition of Corneille, Dostoievsky and Wagner as opposed to the impersonalism of Flaubert and the novel of the last half-century, and denounces at the same time the crudities of the mere propaganda novel: "It is not passion which destroys a work of art but the desire to prove something."

Rumour says that Malraux is now flying a pursuit plane in Spain. No action could be more characteristic nor any death finer than the one which probably awaits him and which he has so ardently longed for all his life.

FELIX WALTER.

Books

Footnote To History

TRANSPLANTED FROM a village in the Ukraine to an American tenement at the age of seven, Joe Freeman* by 1913 was listening to the clatter of dishes in the kitchen and writing in his notebook his visions of love:

"Let me muse upon the mountain
Pipe my songs to my beloved
By the aromatic fountain."

It was a lie, he tells us, a dream, a fantasy. For he had no beloved; the aroma he smelt was the aroma of garbage.

His inclinations were intellectual and studious but the circumstances of his life made him aware of the class struggle. The grocer's boys were socialists; his friend Louis Smith was an agitator; the old *Masses* brought him exciting reports from the industrial battle-fields. And even at Columbia—"whatever we might hear during the day about Donne and Catullus, we were sure to hear at night from parents, friends, street-corner orators about the fight for bread, the struggle for existence."

His formal education emphasized the dualism; it distinguished between Eternity and Time, pure reason and practical reason. Back to the campus from a workers' meeting on American imperialism or the Russian revolution, he would talk till dawn with some professor about Catholic theology or Julian the Apostate. He could recite strophes from Swinburne but could not enumerate the provisions of the Treaty of Versailles. In his thinking, the quest for the Absolute was at odds with his sense of the actual.

The war brought its own shocks; fostered in him an emotional nihilism, a sense of chaos; till ex post facto came enlightenment—journalistic exposés—"now it can be told"—and the publication by revolutionary governments of the secret robber agreements.

It was the business of schools and college to transform this immigrant boy with the working-class background into a middle-class intellectual, but the counter-influences prevented their making a complete success of the job. Indeed, his story pictures the reverse process: his very gradual transition from the position of the middle-class to that of the revolutionary workers—a social phenomenon which for thousands of readers will be a corroboration and extension of their own experience. Parallel with this and part of the same process, you have the transformation of a Greenwich Village poet—

I have lost the key
To good and evil:
God and the devil
Are one to me.

I move apart
From the coils of duty;
Only beauty
Can stir my heart.

—into a poet and critic whose work more and more reflects the values and spiritual needs of the class that can change society. So the history of the *Masses,* the *Liberator* and the *New Masses* and the personalities and ideas of dozens of writers whose work fertilised the revolutionary literature of America became part of the pattern of his life.

Long and arduous is the individual writer's path. You are in the No Man's Land between two worlds, a ghost between two fires. Your proletarian head is at war with your bourgeois heart. No longer can you create poems and stories "out of emotion, out of unquestioned pre-supposition . . . you must analyse, weigh, compare, question, test, hypothesize. The quest of the intellect transforms the assumptions of the emotions . . . 'Until you bridge that gap,' said Scott Nearing, 'you had better stick to prose, preferably news despatches!'" A sound remark, for it is news of the real world—of the social relations of men hidden behind the material facade of things, that each must seek, if his feelings are to be adequate feelings and not relative sentimentalism.

There are interesting passages on the social meaning of bohemianism, on psycho-analysis, on the changing outlook of his father risen to wealth with the boom, on his own perceptions as a newspaperman, as a worker for the Civil Liberties Union; there is much about the women who held him; there are thoughts about justice, about religion, about poetry; sketches of many communist workers and leaders in America and Russia; discussions with Mayakovsky and Eisenstein; details of work for the Comintern; impressions of Trotsky and of the crisis in the Russian Party.

His Soviet experiences are a book in themselves; no mirror-image but a reflection which *interprets* the revolution in its complexity of good and evil: here are horror tales that would delight a Hearst correspondent, but they are part of a context profoundly depressing for Mr. Hearst and his class. Is not that world-view most necessary, most right, which can account for the greatest number of seeming contradictions; exhibit them freely, and yet leave one more than ever sure of the direction of life's drive? At a hundred points we are made to feel the confusion, face it and proceed with clearer mind. We hear a good deal of Greta, for instance, a communist nymphomaniac with whom he is for a time infatuated. Greta's squibs have the effect of bombshells: "She suddenly cried out: 'Oh, take me out of this damned place! Take me back to New York.'"

**An American Testament.* By Joseph Freeman. Farrar and Rinehart. $3.00.

"You see," remarks another woman twenty pages on, "While we are thinking whether socialism can be built in one country, *he* is thinking whether Greta is typical among us or exceptional. Oh, and he even writes poems about us, very deep ones."

No one can say that Mr. Freeman does less than justice to his mole-hills; some of which swell to mountains and even when deflated remain quite considerable hillocks.

And, of course, he was having trouble with his poems. When he modestly declined to allow his poem on Djerdjinsky to appear on a soviet workers' bulletin-board, the request is turned into a "party order" in these terms: "Oh, don't be a prima donna. . . . Listen, he wants to be begged like a girl, so you beg him . . ." So, too, as an artist in uniform, Mr. Freeman's own ultimate appeal is to common sense.

A transition from class to class is not a sudden conversion. Back in Berlin after Moscow, he marches with his problems in his knapsack and his eyes and ears open for what life has to tell him. He does, however, permit us the luxury of a climax—a particular experience which confirmed the direction of his march and helped to integrate heart and head. The communists were demonstrating in Berlin against the shooting of some workers by a trainload of Nazis. Freeman was marching with his friend Hedda in the ranks behind Thaelmann. Provocateurs failed to break the procession. The police commenced to fire. "Keep together, comrades, march on." They wheeled into the Kantstrasse, the wounded still in the ranks. Shaken, Freeman looked down and saw the workers' blood in the Kantstrasse, blood on the street of pure reason. "Perhaps I just needed that kind of detonation, that shooting on the street of pure reason which the worker finds so commonplace."

"Wonderful, wonderful," said Hedda later, "you've found out at last that grass is green and skies are blue!"

Instead of merely *thinking* in terms of the working-class outlook he had begun to feel as they felt. He was knit to Thaelmann who had been there to shout *Weiter, weiter!*; to his comrade Hedda who had pushed him out of the line of fire; and to the multitude of workers who together had given him the strength and courage to march on. "Individual rebellion had somehow passed out of me. . . ." This is the nearest Mr. Freeman comes to a Pauline conversion. It will not, I think, much worry the agnostic. Even so the incident was not itself the producer of the state or grace; it was merely the last of many pushes that life had given him. And next morning he got another push when he opened a volume of Freud and read: *"the highest spiritual achievement of which man is capable . . . the subordination of one's own passions in the interests of a goal which one has chosen."*

In a sense we are all impressionists. It is Mr. Freeman's power to retain many associations: to recount them in their sequence and multiplicity and contradictoriness, and to estimate their value and proportion. The process of judging is the process of groping towards the interpretation of this society. The self-revelation becomes a social revelation, which is at the same time the portrait of the artist—the social individual. Other writers have written more movingly of the moments of experience, have printed their winsomeness on the page with more grace or humour, have delved more deeply into their own well of loneliness. But are not all such portraits by their very aim less than the truth? If progress implies a deepening of consciousness, this book touches a new level in autobiography: mere consciousness of self has become *consciousness of the self as a part of society and of social experience as a part of the self.* Turn for comparison to *The Education of Henry Adams;* one is mainly struck by how little Adams learned. In autobiography at Freeman's level of consciousness, we are never in doubt as to *why* the author thinks what he thinks and does what he does. The business of living becomes increasingly the modification of action in the light of fresh knowledge. The business of autobiography becomes at every point the *why* of the knowledge and the *wherefore* of the act. Re-reading Mr. Well's *Experiment in Autobiography* after Mr. Freeman's is to echo the famous exclamation "What a Philistine!" Indeed, for me it was to understand the remark; for never before did I realise the entire unawareness in Wells of the why and wherefore of his own thoughts, an unawareness that gives his dicta an air of almost barbarous naiveté, of haphazard whipper-snapperdom, enhanced of course by the fact that he is so consciously "a social thinker". Mr. Wells speaking boldly for mankind reveals himself obliquely as an unconscious ideologist of the English lower-middle class. Mr. Freeman in speaking from his acquired standpoint of his own development impresses himself on us as a part of humanity becoming conscious of the nature of our time's necessity.

All of which perhaps is simply to say that Freeman *as a writer* was fortunate in achieving marxism before he set about his autobiography. If so—agreed.

ERIC DUTHIE.

A World He Never Made

A World I Never Made. By James T. Farrell. Vanguard. $2.50.

IN HIS NEW NOVEL, Farrell returns once again to the lives of his Catholic characters whom he has so ably depicted in *Studs Lonigan.* With a slight shift of neighborhood we are immediately brought into contact with the problems and life routine of a Catholic family in its inner relationships and its relationship to the world. Jim, the hard-working, little-earning proletarian; Lizz, his sloppy, child-bearing wife, belittling religion to a series of superstitions; Al, a shoe-salesman, the petty-bourgeois, over-sentimental and too, too idealistic brother of Lizz; Mrs. O'Flaherty, the pipe-smoking, beer-guzzling mother; Peg, her conflict-torn daughter, whoring on the side with the minor "big shots"; Danny, son of Jim and Lizz, wondering at the mystery of the world, and other members of the O'Flaherty-O'Neill family fill the 508 pages of the book with their talk and thoughts, revealing their lives in an endless procession of conversations and encounters. Effacing himself, Farrell depicts his characters through their own self-expression without commenting on their attitudes or individualities from the outside. Farrell's primary ability to catch the actual living speech of the American street, the homely talk of plain folks, has ample scope to reveal itself. Yet despite the adapability of the form to

Farrell's ability, *A World I Never Made* falls short of Farrell's last novel *Judgement Day*. The rich content underlying Studs' struggle with the world outside him and his attempt to comprehend the irrational sequence of events and forces about him that made up his objective world are lacking in the present novel. The recurring touches of specific local color that enriched *Judgement Day*: as for example the malted milks, the I.C. trains, the loop, the movies, etc., are also lacking in the present novel. We have none of the identifying marks to which Farrell was so sensitive previously, and in the trips of the travelling salesman we are never aware of the differences between the various cities Al travels through. Throughout the novel there is a surface expansion, bringing us added conversations and experiences, yet there is no deepening in conception or portrayal.

The fact that Farrell reveals a regression in his present work leads us to question his technique and method. The objective writing that he strives for so patiently leads him usually to a naturalistic reproduction of the scene he depicts. This reproductive ability together with his ear for speech enable him to portray a character in his everyday reality. But Farrell brings little critical judgement to his writing: at no time does he transcend his characters, and when he loses himself in their small talk their conversation never takes on more significance than mere small talk. The accumulation of mere incidents, real as they may be, can never portray the depths of man's life. There must be consciousness of what unites these incidents and to what these incidents are related. With his lack of imaginative ability, Farrell never leads us into the irreducibly human elements of his characters, and his photographic presentation of living men and women often leaves us with the unpleasant feeling of encountering only the obvious with the really vital remaining unknown. The deeper revelations of man somehow evade the picture.

Farrell does succeed in giving us an exact picture of the members of an Irish-American Catholic family, with their queer tribalism and their inner antagonisms, their daily life and their aspirations for the future, their frustrations and moments of joy, but *A World I Never Made* is far from being the great contemporary American novel that many hoped it would be.

DAVID MARTIN.

The Devil's Dialectic

Left Wings Over Europe, or How to Make a War about Nothing. By Wyndham Lewis. Jonathan Cape. $2.50.

THIS EXERCISE in a pseudo-intellectual's approach to the class struggle and European current events could very well carry another sub-title, "The Devil's Dialectic, or how to state bald lies as established facts." Lest this appear to savour of the polemical, I quote from page 103, whereon is expressed the author's detestation of a kept press, whether Communist or Government:

"Now, it is significant that the refreshing exceptions to the rule depend ultimately upon two individuals—namely Lords Rothermere and Beaverbrook, who occupy much the same position in England as Mr. Hearst in the United States. And of course everyone knows that is to Mr. Hearst that you must go if you want any intelligent inside information about what is going forward in America—information that has not been doctored by one or other of the big Power-Trusts."

This sounds like laborious sarcasm, but, incredibly enough until you have read more of Mr. Lewis' book, he is quite in earnest. At least, he wants you to believe he is sincere, although he is perhaps not so great an idiot as he sounds. Here is some more of it, in reference to dictators: "Stalin, being an ex-bank robber is, perhaps not unnaturally, the roughest of these despots," and again, perhaps more of an example of wishful thinking than an expression of conviction, "Pitiless state-coercion must have bred far too much hatred of the present regime in Russia, hatred with no outlet beneath a Terror. . . ."

Mr. Lewis states in his foreword that he would like reviewers of his book to report that it is from cover to cover, "one long plea against the centralization of power." This reviewer, suffering from an ingrained prejudice which forces him to consider the intellectually dishonest about three degrees lower than the pimp, is compelled to state that Mr. Lewis has written an incredibly poor defence of Hitler and Mussolini, in an endeavour to project Soviet Russia into the place of British Public Enemy Number One.

I could amuse myself with further quotations were the book worth it. But it is not, and is, as well, quite unreadable, perhaps because of the obvious and laboured attempts to be clever. But remember, if you wish to absorb its essentials in a form involving less mental contortion, the columns of the Hearst, Beaverbrook and Rothermere press are always open to you.

B. A. WARD.

A Marxist Quarterly

Science and Society: A Marxian Quarterly. Published at 310 E. 75th St., New York City. 35c. $1.25 a year.

THE APPEARANCE of the first number of *Science and Society* is a sign that an increasing number of students and scholars are realizing the necessity of combining with their attitude towards their own work a conscious attitude towards what are commonly known as the social sciences. The philosophy of Marxism is cutting its way through the tangle of misconception and falsification which reaction has so eagerly fed and watered. More and more scientists, especially, are reaching the conclusion of J. B. S. Haldane, who has said that Marxists have a philosophy which seems more compatible than any other with the progress and full utilization of science.

The first number of this quarterly has 126 pages, a pleasing shape, and an agreeable slate-grey cover. Professor Margaret Schlauch, in her article on The Social Basis of Linguistics, shows how strongly the philosophies of linguists have been reflected in their work. An example is found in the policy of Anthropos, with its close adherence to the anti-evolutionist standpoint of its founder, Father Schmidt. Miss Schlauch discusses the efficacy of the union of the materialistic attitude with the method of the Hegelian dialectic. Further discussions of the subject, dealing mainly with contemporary Soviet linguists, are to follow.

V. G. McGill contributes a penetrating evaluation of Logical Positivism, giving credit to the members and disciples of the Vienna Circle for their knowledge of science, and for the strictly empirical nature of their criteria; but pointing out how they fall short when they describe idealism and irrationalism as "nonsense". These kinds of nonsense, inasmuch as they are apologetics for outgrown economic forms, have meaning—and are dangerous.

D. J. Struik's illuminating account of the nature of mathematics needs to be read by those who in their ignorance dismiss Marxian interpretations of the sciences as being crude and oversimplified. He traces the history of mathematics up to this present period of capitalistic decline, when the utility of the exact sciences is being denied in high places. And he emphasizes that "all theories have to go back finally to the origin of abstract images in small real bodies."

There is an article on American Education and the Social Struggle from a pragmatic view-point by Theodore B. Brameld; and a miscellany of Communications from distinguished authors on Jaensch, Comte, William James, The Southern Agrarians, and French Intellectuals and the People's Front.

Over 8,000 copies of the first issue have already been sold. The editors promise that the second will be a big improvement upon the first. That is a large order, but with so many good American names on the editorial board, and a list of foreign editors which includes the names of J. D. Bernal, Paul Langevin, H. Levy, and H. J. Muller, there may be a chance of its fulfilment.

H. WALPOLE.

Life Resumes At 11.10

Tonight at 8.30. By Noel Coward. Doubleday Doran Co. $3.00.

IN A SINGULARLY smug preface, Mr. Coward deplores the state of the one act play on the professional stage today, and suggests that with the appearance of this volume a new lease of life will be given to this neglected dramatic form. Despite the success of these plays on Broadway, I am afraid that if the re-birth of the one-acter depended on Mr. Coward we should despair of its life.

For the plays in *Tonight at 8.30* present no departure from those one finds in the publishers' catalogues together with the number of male and female parts, the nature of the interior or outdoor settings, and a resume of the plot. Mr. Coward's plays have the conventional number of scenes and characters; admittedly he can construct a neat plot, and write excellent dialogue. Otherwise he could never get away with it, even with the help of the Lunts.

In these three sets of three plays each Mr. Coward has worked out a useful formula for an evening's entertainment. For the first ingredient, take a triangle, spice with Freud, or drug-addiction, and you have something which will arouse the adolescent in any audience, and leave it in a state of teary satisfaction. Next, exhibit that strange creature the colonial Englishman, or the despised little suburbanite cowering beneath his aspidistra, or the Victorian family in deadly fear of the parent, and you have the subject for a satire guaranteed to induce a condition of happy pharasaism. Lastly, just let your audience in on some of the bohemian whimsies of the emancipated upper classes, and the combination is perfect. A cross-section of Mr. Coward's world lies before us.

Unfortunately Mr. Coward's world is cramping in its confines, and before long one wishes for a nice clean wind to blow away these little people with their little problems. Some future historian may find these plays valuable as an indication of the decline of the bourgeois theatre in the first half of the twentieth century. But an intelligent contemporary audience will forget them as soon as they leave the theatre, for the author has nothing new or important to say.

W. JAMES.

How To Produce Shakespeare

Principles of Shakespearian Production. By G. Wilson Knight. The Ryerson Press. $3.75.

PROFESSOR KNIGHT has produced eight Shakespearian plays in Toronto and one in London. His theories on production, therefore, are the fruit of experience. Added to this is the insight from years of close critical study which has found expression in several books of Shakespearian criticism. Mr. Knight's major point is that any production of a Shakespearian play must spring from a clear, intuitive perception of the play as a whole. His conception of the plays as poetic expressions of life and death forces, resolving into immortality visions in the final plays, is sensitive and profound. He is well aware that his conception is difficult of acceptance, and his capacity for self-criticism and tolerance of opposing views, makes it possible for a critic, who does not accept his conception with all it implies, to judge his book from a different view-point without losing sight of its unquestionable merit.

At the present moment Mr. Knight's discussion of Shakespeare's treatment of kingship as the symbol of spiritual sublimity is worth careful reading. The events of the last few weeks might lead us to conclude that kings as a symbol as no longer trustworthy. While it is true that Mr. Knight's analysis is intensely valuable for an understanding of Shakespeare, Henry the Fifth, as Shakespeare created him, and even Henry the Eighth, being symbols of all that was greatest in Elizabethan Britain, when the process is reversed and the values of these Shakespearian kings are applied to life, (and Mr. Knight insists that all Shakespearian values must be applied to modern life), we are faced with a choice between Shakespeare and history. And although we agree that Shakespeare was the profoundest individual artist England has produced, history demands that we reject his conception of kingship.

In the same way, Mr. Knight's reading of Shakespeare as expressive of the values of Christianity, his conviction that the values of the New Testament and of Shakespeare are valid because the deepest intuitions of religion and of art in the past have been identical cannot be accepted today without question. The fact which cannot be ignored is that religious values do not contain the all that is of most significance in human life, perhaps for the very reason that they are so high, that they project themselves into another world for realization.

Apart from this, the modern critic, while refusing to accept Mr. Knight's view of Shakespeare and Christianity as applied to life, is ready to grant the willing suspension of disbelief that he demands in an audience witnessing a Shakespearian play. But Professor Knight is more than a producer, he is a critic. And his book, although primarily concerned with production, like all his previous writing, even his recently published novel, is concerned with Shakespeare in relation to life. There is one sentence in this book which we should like to see expanded into another book or essay. "Shakespeare's choice of aristocratic persons is closely related to his sense of poetic sublimity: which raises questions which I must put aside for the present." These are precisely the questions which bear most directly on the whole problem of Shakespeare in relation to modern life. There is no one more sincerely conscious of them than Professor Knight, and serious consideration of just this point might lead to an alteration in his position if he followed through all its implications in the light of historical development.

S. M. GORDON.

The Soviets And Peace

The Soviet Union and the Cause of Peace. By Lenin, Stalin, Litvinov and others. Francis White Publishers. 30 cents.

THIS IS A COLLECTION in handy form of key statements and speeches by Soviet leaders on the foreign policy of the U.S.S.R., beginning with Lenin's Decree on Peace of Nov. 1917 and ending with Litvinov's speech to the League of Nations Council, on Germany's re-occupation of the Rhineland, in March 1936. With its appendix of documents, including the text of the Soviet-French Treaty of Mutual Assistance and the 1933 Soviet Convention for the Definition of Aggression, the collection serves as a useful footnote to a study of the role of the U.S.S.R. in post-war international politics.

More than this it does not set out to be, and it is unfortunate that an opportunity has been lost of making a collection more valuable for Canadian readers. For most of the speeches are statements of good intentions, such as are made, we know, by Hitler and Eden on the same pattern. The prevailing tone is the politician's; what is wanted for Canadian readers is the analyst's. We need it made clearer why the good intentions of the U.S.S.R. in the matter of peace are, and must be, more real than are the others' today. There is little here to tell us. Litvinov's speeches at the League are the most satisfactory in this respect, having been given to foreign audiences where explanation was at a premium and enthusiasm at a discount. More of this type would have made a more valuable book.

C.B.M.

Darklinger And Darklinger

Darkling Plain. By Sara Bard Field. Macmillan Co. of Canada. $2.00.

IN THE "Note to Fellow Marxists" which prefaces her latest volume of poetry, Sara Bard Field gives expression to a conception of the nature of poetry and of the relation of the artist to his environment which a left-wing writer of her integrity should have outgrown long ago. Her own experience, she tells us, has confirmed a theory first suggested to her by John Cowper Powys, that: "knowledge of unnecessary human suffering produced by stupidly inimical institutions, and longing for the Revolutionary Angel to trouble the dark waters" are part of an "inmost involvement which throbs and cries but cannot sing." And so the would-be revolutionary poet turns to subjects "implicit in race-consciousness", love, nature and death; subjects which are universal, and which "combine the familiar life with eternal mysteries".

This is indeed a naive statement of the poet's failure to master the social problems of her time. The high-flown language in which Miss Field confesses this dichotomy will in itself provide a clue to her inability to make poetry out of her own experience. It is hardly necessary to point out that the revolutionary movement is not an angel sent from the unknown to set everything in apple-pie order; rather it is the collective movement of tens of thousands of workers, farmers, and intellectuals like Miss Field, wresting from the routine of day to day existence weapons for the struggle against capitalist reaction.

Miss Field tries to rationalize her involuntary escapism with the sophism that all true poetry is a challenge to a sick society. This reviewer had a hard time of it finding any very pointed challenge in her latest poems. Technically they rank among the best contemporary verse. If you number among your friends any who enjoy sufficient income to lead sheltered lives and meditate upon life, death and other eternal mysteries, *Darkling Plain* will make them an excellent Christmas present. Such people will enjoy the exquisitely written poems which fit inevitably into such headings as "Purple Darkness" and "Between Darkness and Light". And the book is beautifully designed and printed by the renowned Grabhorn Press of San Francisco.

It is unfortunate that Miss Field should conclude her preface with a tribute to Miguel Unamuno, the influence of whose writings is evident in the first part of the book, the section dealing with death. If she had delayed publication a few weeks, the poet would have been able to add another poem to this section, about the spiritual death of the liberal philosopher who is now whooping it up for Franco and Mola as the "saviours of Spain".

LAWRENCE SHEA.

Brief Review

Who is Prosperous in Palestine? By British Resident. Labor Monthly pamphlets. 25c.

WAS THE RECENT six months' Arab strike purely a movement against the Jewish population, or was it the result of very real grievances amongst large sections of the Arab population, arising out of the development of the Jewish National Home in Palestine under the British Mandate? This pamphlet, written by a Englishman who has lived for many years in Palestine, gives a number of facts in answer to this question. It deals in turn with each section of the Arab population,—the landlords, tenants and smallholders,—graphically describing their situation framed in a background of the story of how the Mandate over Palestine was granted to Britain, the details of which are little known. The pamphlet is extremely opportune at the present moment, as it gives the facts on the existing deadlock between Jew and Arab, as well as critically discussing the proposals current for its solution.

The Jaundiced Eye

British People Undaunted

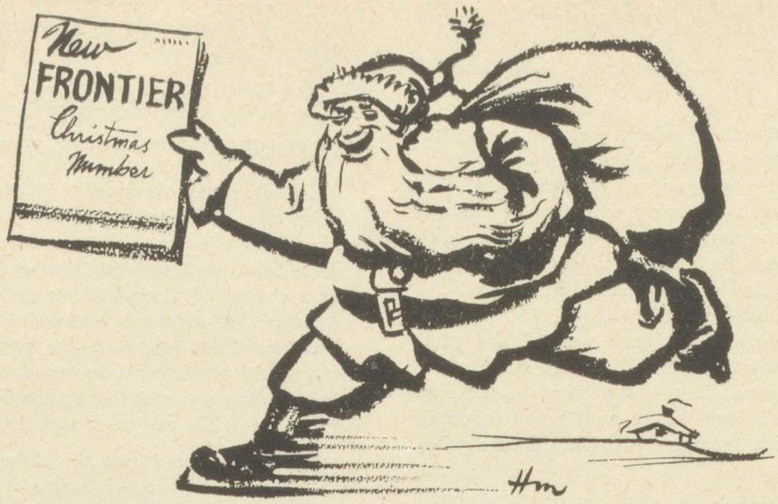
(Editorial in the Toronto *Globe and Mail,* Friday, Dec. 11.)

The characteristic manner in which the British peoples came through the test of the past few weeks might well provide an example for other nations to ponder. Less than the abdication of a King has caused serious disturbances elsewhere. In some countries a change of the monarchy could not have taken place without a political upheaval or revolution. Throughout the Empire events have been followed with great anxiety but it is doubtful that anywhere this was due to fear of a major disaster. The sturdy philosophy that begets confidence founded on long experience of trials and successes, has served Britons well again.

Nations scattered over the globe may marvel at a race which learns that its monarch is struggling with himself, and gathers in groups to sing "God Save the King"; which bears the struggle has ended in tragedy and with the ascension of a new King and sings again "God Save the King." The British race is hard to define, its characteristics may be hard to explain, but there can be no question about its unanimity and earnestness when occasion arises to sing the national anthem.

This is not lip service to an ideal. British institutions have endured and triumphed whenever challenged, and British loyalty to them is deep-rooted. So Parliaments may change, a King may come and go without causing more than a ripple in the spirit of devotion which makes Britain sound.

The people who constitute the British Empire have had an experience without precedent. There is nothing to tell them what to do except their innate common sense, and this they are following. So the Empire marches on stronger than ever.



Timely Tip for Santa Clauses

If you are hag-ridden by a Christmas gift list, dear Santas . . . gnawing the thumbnail of irresolution over how to fix up Aunt Tabitha, come back hard on Cousin Jerome for last year's bilious tie, and generally square things with the family who've behaved nicely the last few weeks . . . if all this is getting you down, we say, amiably—shoot the works—give NEW FRONTIER subscriptions to all and sundry this Christmas.

The benefits are cumulative. They consist of eight lively, pertinent monthly numbers of Canada's forward-looking journal, packed to the brim with articles, drawings, fiction, verse and book talk by capable progressives . . . men and women politically aware and socially alert . . . who are thoroughly conversant with the Canadian scene and fearless to probe its social sores.

The cost to you is modest. One dollar (of the realm) is all you have to send us to ensure the pleasure and enlightenment of each family, relative or friend for eight months.

The festive season accounts for this jollity of tone—but the issues facing Canadians are grave ones, to be studied with care and acted upon. NEW FRONTIER endeavours to serve the interests of progressive democracy by exposing reaction, fighting the fascist threat, defending at all times the civil liberties which are our living heritage. By denouncing Canadian finance capital's lip service to democratic practice, by taking the only position on Spain which is possible to honest, freedom-loving people, and by standing squarely against war, NEW FRONTIER **points the course to action** which the Canadian middle and working classes must take, if peace and warmth are to brood on our hearths, and life be continuous and more joyous.

NEW FRONTIER

989 BAY STREET, TORONTO, CANADA

Please enter my subscription for NEW FRONTIER beginning with the.....issue.

Enclosed you will find the sum of.....

Name .....

Address .....

RATES—Eight months' subscription, $1.00.