New FRONTIER

TORONTO
JUNE, 1937

- Spain is Different - - *Jean Watts*
- The Drama Festival - *David Pressman*
- New Horizons in Canadian Art *G. Campbell McInnis*
- Those Poor Russians - *Margaret Gould*
- Czechoslovakia--Another Spain? - *Editorial*
- The Truth About Tear Gas - *Jack Parr*
- Poems *by Charles Bruce, Leo Kennedy, Dorothy Livesay Gordon Leclaire, Norman Macleod*

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CANADIAN LITERATURE & SOCIAL CRITICISM

Contents

New FRONTIER

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Between Ourselves

NEW FRONTIER CLUBS continue to flourish in the larger Canadian cities. In Vancouver the Club's most successful meeting to date was a panel discussion "A basis for an aesthetic". Those taking part included A. M. Stephen, Vernon Van Sickle, K. M. Portsmouth, and the internationally known photographer Vanderpant. Dr. A. F. B. Clark was in the chair. There was a large turnout and considerable debate from the floor.

The article in this issue by Margaret Gould is an excerpt from her forthcoming book, *I Visit the Soviets,* which will be issued this month by Francis White Publishers.

Jean Watts is a graduate of the University of Toronto, former director of the Theatre of Action, who is at present serving in Madrid as correspondent for the Toronto *Daily Clarion.*

Charles Bruce, Leo Kennedy, Dorothy Livesay and Gordon Leclaire are Canadian poets whose work appears regularly in the literary magazines.

David Pressman, a graduate of the Neighbourhood Playhouse in New York, has for the past year been director of the Toronto Theatre of Action.

The offices of *New Frontier* have been moved to the Peace Centre, 929 Bay St., Toronto. For our Toronto readers, our new telephone number is Randolph 2156.

New FRONTIER

Labor's Opportunity

THE HONOURABLE MR. EARL ROWE, leader of the Conservative Party of Ontario, has swung well to the left of Liberal Premier Hepburn by endorsing the right of workers to choose their own agencies for collective bargaining in labor disputes. His announcement to this effect, which has caused considerable dismay in patriotic circles, was undoubtedly influenced by the growing strength of the C.I.O. unions in eastern Canada. When the mining magnates' scheme for a Liberal-Tory coalition government fell through, presumably because of the opposition of Federal leaders of the Conservative Party, Mr. Rowe accepted the only alternative open to him, to emerge as a 'champion of labor'. His maneuvre showed more astuteness than we have learned to associate with Tory politics, but it was of doubtful ultimate value. The Conservative Party has a record of anti-labor activity which cannot be washed away by a few campaign speeches, and the probabilities are that it will not receive any appreciable increase in working-class support in the next election.

It is even less likely that any worker in his right mind will support the Liberal Party. Premier Hepburn has gone too far to retract any of his wild statements on the C.I.O. The only course open to him is to proceed full steam ahead, and with the support of the admiring *Globe and Mail* to surpass all previous performances of the Tories in an effort to capture the reactionary vote. The Ontario government apparatus, hastily cleansed of all subversive elements, has intervened in the three strikes in progress at the time of writing, and is denying the strikers the right to bargain through their unions. After undergoing a minor purge, Hepburn's private army of strike-breakers is drilling against the day when it will be called in to shoot down striking miners. Political Liberalism is a corpse, but genuine liberalism, suddenly freed from the chains of party allegiance, is reviving.

In the face of the imminent split in both major parties, the labor movement in the province faces the greatest opportunity in its history to develop the unity of all progressive forces. The C.C.F. has taken the initiative by calling in the columns of the *New Commonwealth* for a conference to establish a "People's movement . . . to unite farmers, trade unionists, co-operators, retail merchants, small business men in defence of democratic freedom and in opposition to the big-business mining coalition that Mr. Hepburn has formed". This is the kind of language we like to hear, and coming from a paper which has formerly stoutly opposed the idea of unity, it is a heartening portent. More and more the need for a united front of all progressive forces is making itself felt in both provincial and national politics. Only when this unity has been achieved will the Hepburns and Rowes be forced out of political life into the obscurity they deserve.

For a Boycott of German Goods

THE EFFICACY of the boycott as a method of struggle against Nazism has often been questioned, but it cannot be denied that since Hitler seized power Germany's position in world trade has dropped considerably. In 1932 Germany transacted 10.2% of the world's commerce, in 1935 only 9.4%. German exports to such countries as France, Russia, Great Britain and the United States have decreased to a marked degree. The present financial crisis in the Third Reich can be partly explained by this catastrophic decline in foreign trade. It cannot be said that Canada has played a prominent role in this economic battle against the Nazi threat to civilization. Canada's imports from Germany are not much less than in the pre-Hitler era, while our exports have dropped to about one half of their value. Roughly we now import from Germany goods valued at about ten million dollars yearly, and export four and a half millions. Reasons for this situation include our marking regulations; the desperate attempts of the German government to obtain foreign trade by subsidizing exports, which have made it extremely profitable for importers to buy in Germany; and insufficient consumer resistance to German merchandise.

At present there are a number of organizations throughout Canada which are carrying out a boycott of German goods. The Toronto Trade Union Section of the Canadian League against War and Fascism is planning a boycott campaign in eastern Ontario, and hopes eventually to co-ordinate all boycott efforts on a national scale. This is a type of work which all anti-fascists can support. A determined campaign on the part of the consumer not to buy German goods and to persuade merchants not to handle this merchandise, will strike effectively at the Nazi terror at home and abroad.

Quebec's Crisis

THE POLITICAL CRISIS which led to the passage of the Duplessis padlock law, and the concerted aggression against trade unionism and working class organizations in Quebec can be understood fully only against the background of social and economic conditions in the French-Canadian province. Extreme poverty and the concentration of wealth at opposite ends of the social scale is the most obvious contradiction of our existing economic system. In Quebec this contradiction looms larger today than at any period in Canadian history. Quebec is a large and potentially a wealthy province. In an area larger than France, Spain and Germany combined are concentrated enormous forest reserves, mineral resources and potential water power. It is a highly industrialized province, producing 70% of Canada's textiles, 58% of boots and shoes, 40% of rolling stock, and containing other important industries. One reason for the concentration of industry is the abundant supply of cheap, docile labor, a social advantage widely advertised by the Provincial Chamber of Commerce. For of Quebec's three million inhabitants, some 2,300,000 are French-Canadians; and for reasons which will occur to the reader, only the most desultory attempts have been made to break down the racial and language barriers which separate them from the Anglo-Canadians. Primarily through a restricted, mediaeval education system, controlled by an ultra-reactionary Catholic Church, large sections of these French-speaking workers and farmers have been held in a state of backwardness and obscurity which can only be vizualized by those who have studied the plight of the share-croppers in the southern United States.

The report of the recent Federal investigation of the Canadian textile industry, in which the majority of the workers are French-Canadians, revealed lower wage standards than those in the southern cotton mills. One plant was found to be paying less than four dollars a week to its *adult* employees; in another the average wage was 10c an hour. The Associated Textiles, one of the wealthiest concerns, paid an average wage for a 55-hour week of $6.70 to men and $4.55 to women employees. Similar wage scales coupled with inhuman working conditions prevail throughout the entire province, except in the few industries which have been organized by the trade unions. The farmers are in an even worse position with 38% of the value of all farm lands mortgaged, and farm laborers' wages reduced by 50% in the last four years. Recent investigations have shown that thousands of farmers and fishermen are slowly dying from malnutrition, while unemployment relief and all social services are at a minimum.

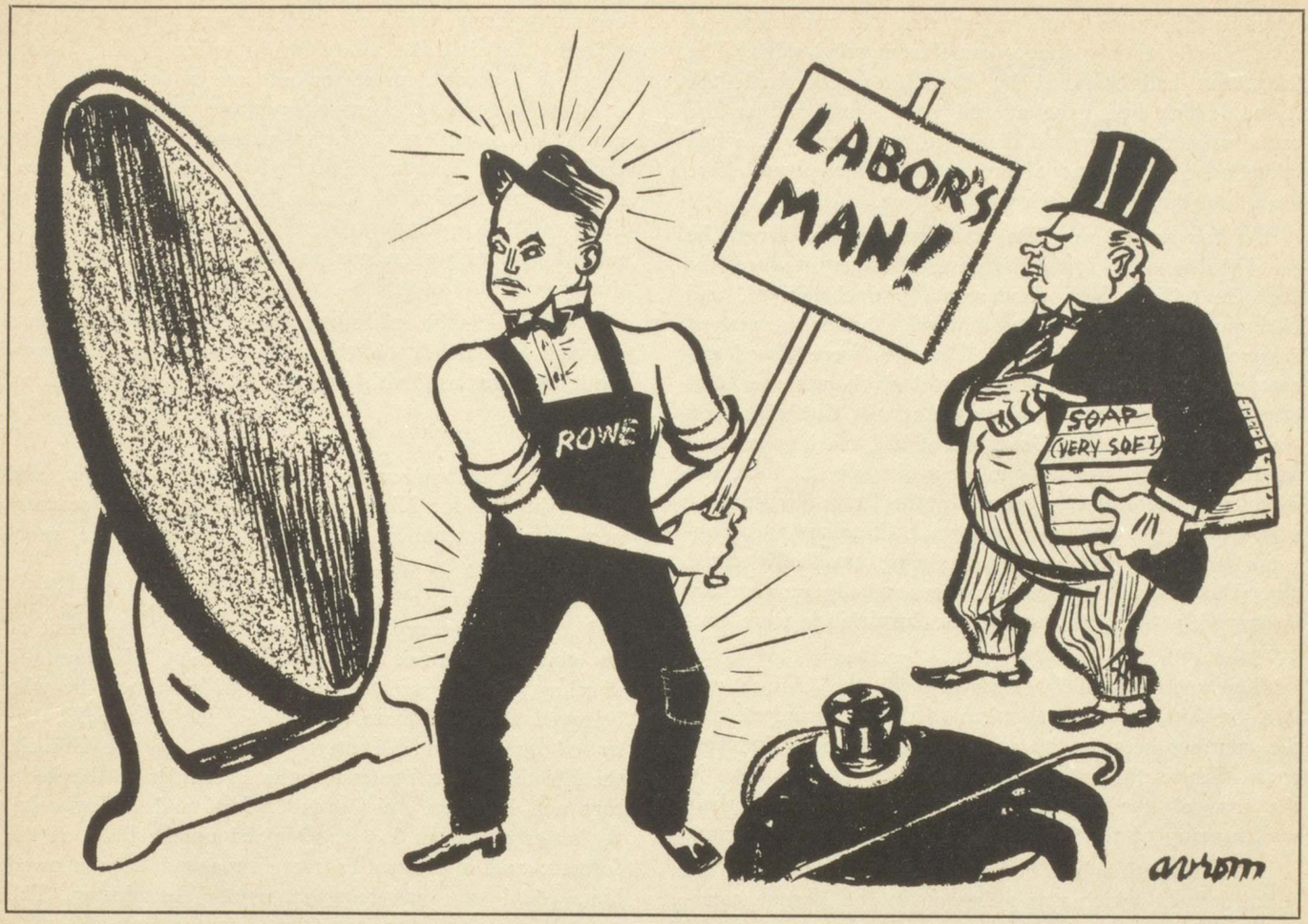
According to the Director of the Bureau of Statistics for the province, partial illiteracy in Quebec exceeds 20%. The latest statistics available (1932-3) show 400,000 children between the ages of 7 to 13 attending Catholic schools. Between the ages of 14 to 15 there were 50,000; from 16 to 17 there were only 15,000. It is officially admitted that some 118,000 children of school age are receiving no education whatever. But perhaps the state of public health is the most alarming condition in the province. Out of 68,000 Montreal school children medically examined last year, 54.1 per cent were found to be suffering from eye ailments, diseased tonsils and lymphatic systems, while 11.3 per cent were suffering from excessive malnutrition. Infant mortality in 1933, with an average of 73.1 deaths per thousand living births in Canada, stood at 94.5 for Quebec. The *Canada Year Book* for 1934-5 lists the infant mortality rates in fifty-eight of the largest cities in the world. Of the five with the highest death rates, including Madras and Bombay, two are the capital city and the metropolis of Quebec — Quebec City and Montreal.

Czechoslovakia--Another Spain?

DESPITE RUMOURS flying on both wings that the event would be co-incident with the Coronation, as we go to press the Reich has not yet invaded Czechoslovakia. Possibly the somewhat shaky position of Generals Franco and Mola is giving Hitler pause. Possibly he thought better of offending Britain by stealing a march on her day of days. Except in so far as Goering's motto "Make every day an M day" is acted upon, der Tag has not arrived. But events are shaping toward it rapidly.

Czechoslovakia is the only state of the Little Entente formed after the World War which has not joined or intimated its acquiesence in Hitler's anti-Communist bloc. It has a mutual defensive alliance with France and the Soviet Union, signed in 1935. It is the centre of the Berlin-Warsaw-Vienna triangle, always of strategic importance in Middle European history. Moreover it has a large proportion of German nationals within its borders; its coal, its new heavy industries, its sugar and textiles, its timber, its prosperous agriculture, and the fact that the great Skoda works are situated at Pilsen, make it a very attractive field for conquest by Germany. In preparation for this conquest, the Reich has been taking carefully calculated steps and carrying on propaganda both without and within the country. The alliance with Japan against Communism, the subjugation of Danzig, led up to the removing of all ministers friendly to France and the Soviet Union in the neighbouring countries, Roumania, Jugoslavia, Bulgaria, to strong efforts to make Poland fall in line, and to strengthen Anglo-German relations. During the last few months however Poland has been turning toward France and England, and Belgium has replaced her reactionary premier with an anti-fascist, both countries refusing to fall in line with the German thesis of a Europe divided into "Powers of Order" against "Powers of Disorder" i.e. the Soviet Union, France, Spain and Czechoslovakia. Goebbels' campaign to label Czechoslovakia "bolshevik", making use of the accusation that Soviet airports are established all along the border and similar falsehoods, appears to be less successful than he could wish.

Within the country German influence has made much headway, but it is far from overpowering the liberal



government of Premier Benes. A large proportion of the Teutonic minority in Czechslovakia is concentrated along the frontier of Germany, and Nazi agents pass freely back and forth, while powerful radio stations in Saxony broadcast their pro-Hitler "news reports" daily. A former Nazi gymnastic instructor, Konrad Henlein, has organized a National Socialist party now known as the Sudeten Deutschen Homeland Front, among the German nationals and proclaims that his followers are "proud to fulfill the grave tasks of being advance guards of the great German people." Were Henlein to start an armed revolt, Germany would, by the terms of her pact with Japan, be obligated to intervene on his behalf to put down a "Communist revolution" in a neighbouring state; thus making a deliberate act of war against Czechoslovakia in the guise of a crusade against the Comintern. When the Czech government at the end of last year granted liberal concessions and rights to the German minority, Henlein and his followers organized great objections and did everything to minimize the resultant good feeling toward Benes' government. In Bohemia and Slovakia Henlein has organized Fascist "autonomous" movements and last year he established a front of reactionary elements, the S.D.H.F., the Czech Fascists, the Slovak Autonomists, and a section of the Czech Agrarian Party which controls the government. By numerous acts of terrorism and threats of force, and also by wily persuasion, the Reich is trying frantically to get Czechoslovakia to drop her Franco-Soviet alliance. Meanwhile Czechoslovakia prepares for war, trusting that her allies will be far-seeing enough not to let her become another Spain.

The Dean of Canterbury On Spain

DR. HEWETT JOHNSON, the Dean of Canterbury, gave his impressions of his visit to Spain as a member of the English Religious Delegation, at a press conference held at the Spanish Embassy in Paris, on April 15th last.

Dr. Johnson, who had spent some time in the Basque Provinces, said that there food was the most pressing need. For three weeks the Basque people had had no bread, no meat and no sugar. The small children were suffering terribly owing to the serious milk shortage. It was not generally realised that the Basque country was completely surrounded by the enemy, and therefore could not get food from elsewhere in Spain. It could only be reached by sea.

In view of Mr. Baldwin's statement that the Basque coast was mined and so dangerous that British ships should keep away, he considered it essential to stress the fact that from their personal experience the English

religious delegation could report that the coast was not mined, and the only danger came from rebel ships. The delegation had travelled by French torpedo boat, the Aisne, which had gone at full speed, and neither the captain nor the crew had displayed any anxiety and had taken none of the special precautions which would have been necessary if the path was not free.

As far as the religious situation was concerned, he said the delegation found that in the Basque provinces the Catholic religion was fundamentally unchallenged, and Catholic practice was almost normal. But in the rest of Government territory all the Churches were closed except one or two Protestant Churches, though the Government was hoping to open some of the Churches soon for loyal priests. The Government had tried to restrain the natural anger of the populace against the Church, and in spite of the difficulty caused by the lack of militia for police purposes, the most important Churches and Convents had been saved and were being excellently cared for. But many Churches had been wholly or partially destroyed, at least as far as their furnishings were concerned.

The hostility which exists towards the Church was due, he said, to its antagonism to the Government, and the contrast between its wealth and its social indifference. Especially was this social indifference evident in the case of the Jesuits, who had controlled by their wealth many of the big business organizations of Spain.

The delegation had been specially impressed by the social activity which was going on in the Basque country in spite of the war. They visited prisons and spoke to the political prisoners alone. These spoke very highly of their treatment and said that they were well cared for. All looked cheerful and well nourished.

"I think the Government will win in the end," he concluded, "if the rebels do not bring in any more Italian or German troops, and no more planes and heavy artillery are smuggled in. My faith in the Spanish Government has been greatly strengthened as the result of my visit."

The Coronation

WHEN THE AMERICAN radio commentator Mr. Lowell Thomas entered Westminster Abbey to get an eyefull of the Coronation he was ushered into what practically amounted to a ring-side seat, in a row set aside for guests of royalty. Putting Mr. Thomas right up in front where he could see and hear everything, while innumerable peers strained their eyes from behind pillars, was more than a friendly gesture to America. It represented a new and up-to-date attitude on the part of those responsible for publicizing the Coronation; who certainly deserve a lot of credit for the way in which they put it across. On the whole everything went off very well; there was dancing in Piccadilly, and thousands of Canadians demonstrated in this country, while their social superiors perched precariously in the windows of Canada House to watch the royal procession. The ceremony itself was described as surpassing even the "Pretty Girl is Like a Melody" number in *The Great Ziegfeld;* although for reasons obvious to those who have seen the ladies of the English peerage, it lacked the sex appeal which endeared that monumental work of art to thousands of Canadians. Everybody had a good time, and the production of Union Jacks and paper crowns alone must have temporarily replaced the manufacture of munitions and poison gas as the Empire's leading industry.

For those who missed reading Sir Hugh Walpole's glowing despatches on the event, we offer comments made by foremost British writers on former coronations.

1714

'I am a citizen, waiting at Greenwich pier, say, and crying hurrah for King George; and yet I can scarcely keep my countenance, and help laughing at the enormous absurdity of this advent!

'Here we are, all on our knees. Here is the Archbishop of Canterbury prostrating himself to the head of his church. Here is my Lord Duke of Marlborough kneeling, too, the greatest warrior of all times; he who betrayed King William, betrayed King James II, betrayed Queen Anne, betrayed England to the French, the Elector to the Pretender, the Pretender to the Elector; and here are my Lords Oxford and Bolingbroke, the latter of whom has just tripped up the heels of the former; and if a month's more time had been allowed him, would have had King James at Westminster. The great Whig gentlemen made their bows and congées with proper decorum and ceremony; but yonder keen old schemer knows the value of their loyalty. "Loyalty," he must think, "as applied to me—it is absurd! There are fifty nearer heirs to the throne than I am. I am but an accident, and you fine Whig gentlemen take me for your own sake, not for mine. You Tories hate me; you archbishop, smirking on your knees, and prating about Heaven, you know I don't care a fig for your Thirty-nine articles, and can't understand a word of your stupid sermons. You, my Lords Bolingbroke and Oxford—you know you were conspiring against me a year ago; and you, my Lord Duke of Marlborough, you would sell me or anyone else, if you found your advantage in it. Come, my good Melusina, come my honest Sophia, let us go into my private room, and have some oysters and some Rhine wine, and some pipes afterwards: let us make the best of our situation; let us take what we can get, and leave these bawling, brawling, lying English to shout, and fight, and cheat, in their own way!' "

(W. M. Thackeray, from "the Four Georges".)

1831

'This morning I went for a frank, and half incidentally saw the coronation procession, which seventy or eighty thousand wooden-heads besides were looking at. It only detained me some five or ten minutes. . . . . Quantities of caps and feathers, and then at last the royal carriage all made of glass and gilding, more like a huge glass Lantern than anything I ever saw; and there the

poor old King and poor ugly Queen, dimly seen sitting like two foolish wax-dolls (which they were) letting themselves be trailed, in their lantern go-cart. What took me I know not: but I burst into the heartiest fit of laughter I have had for some time: and perhaps one ought rather to have cried; for it was the ghost of the Past perhaps taking *final* leave of the world, where as body or as ghost it has now walked for some three thousand years! Poor King! they will be consecrating and *clothing* him even now in that old Abbey; and what avails it to him or to me or to any man or woman! *Ex nihilo nihil fit.'*

(*Thomas Carlyle, from a letter to his wife, 8th September,* 1831).

1890

'The danger from it now is not so much political as social. It acts as a convenient screen behind which there is hardly a job too gross to be hatched. It is the standing symbol of that social injustice and inequality about the effects of which in the East-end of London so much has recently been written.

'Why, then, so many canting prayers, so many sickening eulogies of an institution so ridiculous, so noxious to the nation at large? Simply because the nation is not self-governed. England is ruled by a close oligarchy governing in its own interest, and to that oligarchy royalty is anything but useless. . . .

'This motley crew have one characteristic in common. They are all dishonestly bent on living luxuriously, and without toil, at the expense of the industrious portion of the community. To them the Crown is a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Let them be but deprived of its protection, and they would be like sheep without a shepherd. They would be taken in detail, stripped of their borrowed plumes and relieved of their booty. They magnify royalty and prostrate themselves before it, not because they believe in it—they are too near not to know how great an imposture it is—but because it effectively dazzles and stupifies the industrious classes—the fools—whose sore toil allows them neither time for reflection nor opportunity for study.'

(*From 'The New Book of Kings,' by J. Morrison Davidson, Barrister-at-law*)

Ottawa Notes

THE 1937 SESSION OVER, Parliament Hill has now sunk into a stupor of solemn complacency. The federal cabinet now meets once a week with a bare quorum, and no one seems to care. The eyes of political observers have swung east from the peace of Ottawa to the clamour and ballyhoo of London where the National Government has just staged a spectacle which for glamour, pageantry and box-office appeal has Hollywood film magnates and directors moaning with envy. Now that the Coronation is over and profiteers have nearly finished counting their profits, the Imperial Conference has been going on for over a week. Undoubtedly the British imperialists, who have so nicely exposed their "peace policies" in Ethiopia and Spain during the past year will seek to co-ordinate Empire rearmament to a greater degree of efficiency than hitherto; the accomplishment of which could only mean that the Dominions were falling in line with the war preparations of the British Tories. This must carry the most serious portent for the people of Canada who elected a Liberal Government to keep them out of war, but who in the past year have seen a huge increase in armament expenditure in Ottawa, an increase which has all the earmarks of only being the first step in the general direction of large scale rearmament. At the date of writing no reports have been received from the Imperial Conference; but undoubtedly the King government will be asked to make commitments for its share in rearming along with the rest of the Empire. All indications point to an acceptance of these commitments by Premier King and Defence Minister Mackenzie, although it is improbable that they will be known to their full extent till the next session of Parliament. Only a mass protest on the part of the Canadian people can effectively show the government that they want no part or parcel of British jingoism.

It is a well-known fact here that the only reason the marriage of Earl Rowe and Herr Hepburn within a Union Government was not consecrated recently in Ontario was that the two High Priests of the Conservative party, Bennett and Meighen, withheld their blessing. When Mr. Rowe came down to Ottawa to consult them about it, they rejected the idea of a united front of the Tories and reactionary wing of the Liberal party against the scattered forces of progress in Ontario; instead a "radical" labor platform has been drawn up and presented publicly in an effort to gain the support which the Hepburn government lost by its recent bare-faced support of the big interests against the people. We still maintain that only the very naive and the colour-blind will see even the palest pink in a program put forward and sponsored by two of the most fascist-minded and labor-baiting characters in contemporary Canadian history.

While touching the above subject it might be timely to compliment the Dominion government in not being stampeded by such mouth-pieces of reaction and the mining interests as the *Globe and Mail* and *Financial Post* into a war on the organizational activities of the C.I.O. . . . something their backers are striving day and night to bring about . . . the message of good will from Premier King to the Canadian Youth Congress now taking place in Montreal was a gesture appreciated by all progressives . . . it is to be hoped that the Liberal government will see fit to allow Canadian youth through the Youth Congress to participate actively in the allotment and spending of the million dollar grant which parliament recently advanced for the rehabilitation and employment of our young people.

THOMAS MCCARTHY.

"What's Wrong With Us, Webb?"

MARION NELSON

Woodcuts by Cawthra Mulock

WEBB got up from his table and crossed to the window. It was early evening. He looked at the two great pines outside and told himself, as he had been in the habit of telling himself for three years now, that they were mighty fine trees. But he didn't much care. He never had cared, not much. He saw the grass, still waterladen after the day's heavy rain. His eyes moved out to the playing fields, neat, well cropped and spreading far . . . the school's soundest advertisement. He pursed his lips in derision, and was glad that he was leaving.

Yes, for he had never been at ease here. A stop-gap he had felt it, always. And yet, three years! It was a long time. Why had he stayed? Chiefly, because there was nothing else to turn to. And partly, too, because, in spite of what he felt about it, the school had a fair name. He had thought of it as a possible stepping-stone. It hadn't been. He was going to something much simpler, less pretentious. But he'd have more liberty.

He was sure of this because it would be impossible to have less. And he hated Forrester, hated his eyes and his guts.

Forrester was a bully, and craven at the same time. You had only to see him in his dealings with the staff, and then in company with trustees or parents, to realize this. His bullying was not of the conventional blustering type. It was noiseless, wearing and constant. Criticism filled the air. A word to shatter your peace and security. A gesture to condemn all that you had built up in a class room. A look to suggest that for some reason you had incurred displeasure. A silence and an ignoring of your existence that were hardest of all to work in.

But what Webb had always disliked more than anything else was Forrester's refusal to take the staff into his confidence. Unity would have made for better team work, but there was no unity. The masters were like so many subalterns performing under sealed orders. Boys erred to the length of threatened expulsion, but they were not expelled. The school, after all, could not afford to lose them. It had a huge debt on its buildings and yearly its scholastic standards were sinking.

And again the masters suffered. The boys knew that they had the whip-hand.

Webb slowly drew the back of his hand across his forehead. He was deadly tired of it all. Only his hate of Forrester could put life into him. He remembered with vivid anger how he had gone to the Head for support in his punishment of Giles and Crewe. Giles was the son of a benefactor and Crewe had been sent to the school by a trustee. The support, though promised, was never forthcoming.

The other boys had taken advantage of Webb's seeming leniency to Giles and Crewe. You couldn't blame them for that.

It was nearly over, thank God. He'd soon have stopped teaching little gentlemen. He was going where nobody, he hoped, cared a damn about public school spirit and the English tradition. There would, at least, be a new set of things to get under his skin.

Frances had said he had a permanent grouch, that he wouldn't be happy without it. Oh, goddam it, couldn't he stop thinking of what Frances had said! That was all over a year ago. The thing to do was to get another girl . . . but he offered himself this prescription grimly, without interest. He remembered still with a cold excitement round his heart how unflatteringly quick Frances had been at the end to accept his suggestion of a parting, a suggestion thrown out in anger and intended to reduce her to tearful apologies for neglect of him. "We bicker all the time," she had agreed quietly, "except when we're making love. I'm sorry." And although the small face she turned to him was of a sudden bloodless and pitiful—this he had noticed almost impersonally—it was for him the face of a stranger, for she was making no offer to reform, to meet him more often, to sacrifice for him a single one of those activities which had become so important to her. The trouble was, he thought in revived annoyance, that she had permanently lost her sense of humour . . .

Webb's strong point was his sense of humour. He amused people, he said witty things, often without thought. Frances had suddenly wanted him to grow serious. Once, he remembered, she had wept at a joke of his—something or other about Ethiopia, the details escaped him now. She had wept bitterly and he had comforted her, only dimly understanding her pain then. After that she began to give him pamphlets and a string of novels about people on relief.

And yet, he told himself, he was quite as aware as Frances that all was not well with the world. The difference between himself and her was simply that he preferred not to discuss unpleasant things like war, fascism and unemployment. He knew they were outside his sphere, while Frances didn't. He remembered, with a smile now, that she had accused him of having a Platonic belief in the perpetuation of a trained governing class. The truth was much simpler than that. Actually he didn't give a hoot in hell who governed so long as *he* was left undisturbed. As for the working class, poor devils, he couldn't feel strongly about a section of the community so far removed from himself. Why should he? *His* experience and *his* concerns lay within the school. It was about his own work that he wished to think and talk.

He could, in fact, be extremely serious about the school and his profession. These were not, after all, radical questions. They were less than a system of government; though, of course, he might at any moment have declared that they were more. Webb's world was made up of little things—a lost book, illegal carving on a desk—the little things that impinging on himself became great.

He saw Paley, hatless and in a raincoat, on the doorstep of Old Hall, built circa 1925. Christ, he thought, as the man turned in the direction of his building, he's coming over here!

Paley was a small man with a rather short neck. The staff were in the habit of regarding him and Webb as friends chiefly because they were about the same age and occasionally managed to split a bottle of beer or do a movie together.

Paley had a lot of glossy dark hair. People who had met him only once or twice usually carried away the impression that he wore a moustache. But he didn't. He was younger than he looked. His eyes were bright and darting and in talk he always appeared flushed, almost dewily flushed. This somehow made him seem not quite sure of himself; ingratiatingly. He talked a lot, spate-wise, and while never expressing a definite point of view of his own always managed to differ in some essential from everybody else, or so it seemed. He had the merest suspicion of a burr, which Webb had at first hated as effeminate. But in reality there was nothing womanish about Paley—his sports were beyond reproach and he was a first class swimmer and canoeist—so that, as one grew to know him, the burr ceased to be noticeable. The masters on the whole did not greatly care for Paley. His questioning of their complacency was irksome. Webb had often thought that Paley would be more popular among women than with men. He sometimes wondered in idle curiosity how Paley spent his holidays. Paley never mentioned women. But that meant nothing. None of the masters did, not intimately as connoisseur to connoisseur. Yes, women would fall for Paley.

Paley was coming in, sure enough. Webb could see his face plainly now. He was whistling under his breath—whoppling, Webb called it. Abominable habit! He thought of turning back to his trigonometry exercises on the table, pretending that he was busy. "Sorry, old man, I've got to get this lot under way." But he hadn't the heart. He was damned sorry for Paley. It was tough being fired. From the triumph of his own resignation he thought pityingly of Paley's case.

"Come in, old chap," he said with spurious enthusiasm. "How are things?"

Paley removed his raincoat and sat down. He drew a packet of Peg-tops from his pocket. "Cigar?" Webb took one, for the moment rather liking Paley, thinking after all that he'd miss him next year.

"I hear you're for it too," Paley said, puffing energetically. "I'm sorry, Webb. It's a bloody shame."

Webb stared at Paley, for a second completely at sea. And then it dawned upon him. Paley had heard that Webb was leaving and had concluded that he too had been fired. Webb almost laughed aloud. It was damn funny.

"I didn't think it had got about yet," he said. "Happened only yesterday." He rather enjoyed his mystery.

"Oh, they're gossiping in the common room. In fact, they've all got the jitters. Nobody knows who's going to be the third. Superstitiously certain of a third, you know."

"Too bad," Webb said. "But it's a hell of a life for a man. Seven-thirty till eleven, Sundays included. Celibacy. Meals with the boys—that's the worst part

of it, Paley. You forget how to enjoy your food." Webb felt his gorge rising and was annoyed with Paley for his lack of corroborative vehemence.

"Masters ought to be organized in some way," said Paley thoughtfully. "Some sort of union."

Webb gave an ugly, ironic laugh. "You're forgetting something, aren't you?" he said. "We're gentlemen! Anyhow, who's going to be the sucker to start it?"

Both men drew at their cigars.

"By the way," said Paley suddenly, "was it a murmur in your class too?"

Webb looked at him blankly. "Don't get you," he said.

"That's the reason the Head gave for firing me. Murmur in my class. Poor discipline. I asked him why he'd taken two years to hear it—which didn't exactly help."

Webb leaned forward. "*Why* did Forrester fire you?" he asked.

"I haven't an idea," said Paley honestly. "That's all he told me."

Webb wondered. Paley was a good teacher; everyone knew it. If indeed he had a fault it was in overconscientiousness. The boys liked him, and his games were a distinct asset. His matriculation results had always been creditable; no one could criticize him there. What was it then? A matter of personality? The clash of characters, Forrester's and his? Possibly. Forrester, being Forrester, could not but dislike the questing, ferreting, contrary intellect of the man. But surely that was not enough to cause the dismissal of a satisfactory teacher, simply that he sometimes rubbed the Head the wrong way? Forrester was not a lunatic. Within his limits, on the contrary, he was an excellent organizer, capable of subordinating his prejudices to his need for efficiency. He was wise enough to hold on to good teachers when he could.

Webb wondered. Could there have been anything in the rumours he had heard? Paley had told a class that most of the wealth of the country was owned by a tenth of the population. He now and again inserted questions in examination papers that assumed that socialism and the Soviet Union were respectable. He taught history without laudation of famous heroes. He stripped it of its traditional picturesqueness, joking over the approach that set wars down to trivial accidents, always digging deeper for their causes to the conflict of money-interests involved. At one time, Webb remembered, there had even been some gossip over a parent's complaint that Paley's teaching was unorthodox, and Forrester had preached a vague sermon inveighing against "half truths." But nobody had appeared to take this little incident seriously, for Paley's fireworks were long established as a common room joke. "He'll outgrow it!" said the older men. Paley was no bolshevik. To accuse him of socialism would be absurd. Politically he was anonymous. As Webb was. Of course he was often an infernal nuisance, conversationally wearing to men whose leisure was by preference given to the reading of comic strips and to the cracking of dull jokes concerning them. But a socialist—no! Webb had once heard Paley describe himself as an old-time liberal, and really that seemed to hit him off pretty well. But might not Forrester have felt his questioning to be "destructive"? To Webb it was very obvious that "a murmur in your class" was *not* the final reason for Paley's dismissal. It was not even a good excuse.

"I was saying, old man, why has he let *you* out? If it were merely a matter of economy he'd be more likely to lop off Staines. He knows you're worth the money."

Webb was on the point of putting Paley right, but suddenly he changed his mind. Why not? Poor bastard, let him go on thinking they were both fired, if it gave him any consolation.

"Oh, I don't know," he said lightly. "We're not very popular, I suppose. Perhaps they think we're Reds."

Paley's face became animated. "Do you think there's anything in that?" he said. "I've wondered."

Webb thought of Frances suddenly and wanted to say "Have you ever seen a Red?" But he was merciful. He saw that Paley was prepared to derive comfort from a little martyrdom—and maybe, after all, he was entitled to it. So he said merely: "You never know."

"You know," said Paley, "that murmur business sticks in my gullet. It's so damned unfair. If the Angel Gabriel himself were a teacher and honest he could be got rid of on those grounds."

Webb did not answer. Presently, however, he said: "Have you any other job in mind?"

"There aren't any jobs," Paley replied. And then, with an intimacy that to Webb was faintly indecent: "What's wrong with us, Webb? Are we cowards — or just fools?"

"Probably both," said Webb, and deliberately thought about his dinner.

Later, when Webb was again in his room, there came a knock on his door. He opened it abruptly, expecting a boy, and quickly hid his surprise.

"Come in, Dr. Forrester," he said, immediately hating himself for the geniality in his tone and for the shame that touched him that the Head should see his study so untidy, Paley's cigar ash still on the floor and an open newspaper thrown over the couch.

"I trust I'm not disturbing you, Webb," said Forrester. "I should like just a few words with you."

"Not at all," said Webb. "Certainly, sir." And then, in an effort to be at ease: "Will you smoke?"

"Thanks," said Forrester, waving aside the packet of cigarettes. "I'll stick to my own. Milder." And he drew out a silver case with the school crest large upon it.

Webb looked at Forrester's face and knew that he hated it, quite irrationally, but more than he could ever say. It was a long face, really very like a lemon, even down to the little nipple of chin.

Forrester lay back in his chair. "I have your resignation, of course," he said. "Are you going to something better, Webb?"

"No," Webb replied. "Possibly not."

Forrester smiled, in formal appreciation of the candour. "What, then, have you against us?" he said in an attempt at a humorous twinkle.

Too late Webb remembered his long list of grievances. He said only: "One gets stale after three years. I feel that I need a change."

Forrester smiled again so that the corrugation of lines on his face assumed new shapes. "I appreciate your work," he said. "Would an increase of two hundred interest you?"

Webb concealed his amazement. "I'm afraid not," he said. "You see, Dr. Forrester, the hours are very long here. One has little time for oneself."

"It could be arranged to relieve you of house duty, Webb."

"But wouldn't that just mean putting extra duty on to some other man?"

Forrester appeared to consider this in some surprise. He was silent for a moment, and then he renewed his attack. He talked at length, blundering in his effort to get at Webb's reasons. He did not fully believe that Webb was not to be deflected from his purpose of leaving the school. He was merely exasperated by Webb's obstinacy, and the more unyielding Webb showed himself the more valuable did he seem in Forrester's eyes.

And as Forrester talked Webb's hatred grew. Couldn't the fool leave him alone? Would he never get out? Why was he so persistent? It irked Webb to realize that he had found favour with Forrester. Forrester who could fire a first rate teacher like Paley. Maybe Paley was a bit of a character, but Staines — and Hunston — were worse. They were all characters, all freaks, if it came to that. The school had done that to them. Webb didn't want to see any more of Forrester's dirty little school. To hell with Forrester and his lousy board of trustees. Webb was going to teach kids who would have to work for their living some day—kids who would be engineers and aviators and sailors and miners, useful people, not merely the warmers of comfortable chairs in their fathers' chromium-plated offices. Christ, there was a lot he could say to old lemon-face if once he started . . .

But he didn't start, he couldn't. Here's my chance, he thought, and I'm nothing but a coward.

"I'm sorry, Dr. Forrester," he said, "but I've accepted the other job. It's quite final now."

"But, my dear fellow, aren't you being foolish? You're making a sacrifice both financially and in reputation."

"It's going to be more satisfactory," said Webb vaguely.

Forrester paused. Then: "Have the staff re-arrangements anything to do with your decision, Webb? Has the —er— other departure influenced you in any way?"

He means Paley, Webb thought quickly, and was amused. How they all insisted that he and Paley were David and Jonathan! But it wouldn't do Forrester any harm to think that there was a feeling of antagonism to him, however small, over Paley's dismissal. So he said, enjoying his own untruth: "Yes—it has."

Forrester's corrugations became straight and tight. "I see," he said, and rising, turned to the door.

"Good night, Dr. Forrester," said Webb politely, holding the door for the Head.

"Good night," Forrester replied.

Alone, Webb stood smiling gleefully. "That'll give him something to think about," he said aloud. He sank down loosely in a chair, his long legs stretched before him. For some moments he felt particularly pleased with himself.

And then he began to think. Where was it leading? What the hell! He was looking into the mirror of the future and the mirror was crooked. It had been fun to win that round, but the fun was over now and he was lost. He didn't even know which side was his own.

Frances . . . yes, she would know. Frances would straighten out the sides. Frances could rehang the mirror. But did he want to look? She was damned lucky to be so sure.

Paley and he were both groping for their sides, two little boys lost. Memory stirred in Webb and over him there swept a longing for the days when living had not seemed so complex a thing as now; when it had pretended to hold promise and to offer hope. Hope! He felt for his pipe and laughed. Hope like a bunch of carrots before the nose, as though man were a mindless beast . . . slaving and obedient at the sight of food.

Violently he wrenched himself free from his thoughts; and with an effort buried his loneliness and his doubt in the waiting pile of exercises.

Spain Is Different

JEAN WATTS

SOME INSPIRED publicity writer, tired of blurbs on "Sunny Spain—The Tourist's Paradise" once designed a poster which said simply "Spain Is Different". That man, if he is alive today, must be amazed at his own perspicacity. For Spain *is* different. There has probably never been a city in the world where it was possible to walk out to the trenches and get back "in time for tea". But you can do it in Madrid. Or never another city where life goes on so normally amid the sound of guns and the whistle of dropping shells.

Those who come to Madrid expecting to find the population living in cellars or skulking through the streets ready to dive for cover whenever a car backfires, are due for a surprise. When they are taken to a hotel, given a comfortable room, eat not too bad meals at tables covered with the usual white cloth, served by waiters who are not only unarmed but wear white jackets, they must hide their chagrin. It is true, they will not be given a room at the front of the hotel, nor above the fourth floor, for shells sometimes find their way to these locations. They will probably be awakened the next morning by the sound of shells exploding in the street, but usually all they will find when they emerge is a hole in the roadway not more than six inches deep and two feet wide—not the sort of hole they could fall into and break a leg.

Rarely will they find blood or parts of a body near the hole. The ambulances are efficient, and workmen in brown corduroy are always at hand with hose and pick and shovel to tidy up after the ambulances have left. Until recently, the number of killed and wounded was surprisingly small, considering the number of shells which have been sent into Madrid in all these months. Bombs are different, of course; but it is a long time since the fascist aviation has appeared over the city for more than a hasty visit of observation. The government aviation and anti-aircraft guns have inspired a healthy respect in the hearts of the enemy.

Now things are changing. During the past week hundreds of people have been killed or injured by the persistent rain of shells. One dropped neatly into a lineup outside of a moving picture theatre; another in the doorway of Madrid's most popular cafe. The fascists time their shelling so as to be sure to get the maximum crowds on the streets, which is between three and four in the afternoon, after the noon-hour siesta is finished. Their aim is excellent: up and down the Gran Via, the street where cafes, cinemas and shops draw crowds, they spray death. Hospitals are filling with civilians now, rather than soldiers. The Canadian Blood Transfusion Institute reports as many as five transfusions a night, all on civilians, many of them children.

Shellings such as this occur after a successful attack on the part of the government forces. The fascists have suffered a severe setback in nearby Casa del Campo, and are retaliating in typical fascist fashion by taking it out on the civilians. The safest place to be right now is in the trenches.

But the civilians fool the fascists. For every one who is killed, there are hundreds who are unharmed, and who go about their business as calmly as before. The young ones have become rather proud of the distinction of being shelled. I heard a young girl say, as she came to work the other morning: "A shell knocked off our veranda last night!" to an admiring crowd of colleagues. Living so close to death, you don't take it so seriously any more.

Our visitor, being a curious person, would like to get a glimpse of the trenches. He would be told to take the Metro to a certain station, then walk west for five minutes to the headquarters of the commander of the section, to have his front-pass signed. In the crowded Metro he would be squeezed and jostled by the usual crowd of extremely pretty and extravagantly made-up girls, women with market baskets, soldiers on leave, children to whom life is one long, if somewhat perilous holiday now that the schools are closed; his ears would be deafened by the

cry of newsboys shouting the morning and evening edition of one of the innumerable Madrid papers. Emerging into the dazzling sunshine again he would find himself in the midst of a working-class neighbourhood where the streets are filled with small boys playing marbles in the dust, with all the serious concentration that small boys put into such an occupation in the spring, war or no war; and small girls, braids flying, turning their skipping ropes to strange incantations exactly as they do in America. He would be sure he had lost his way, that this could not be the outskirts of the city near the trenches. But the armed guard at the corner would tell him to

keep on straight, past the next two barricades and to the right. The sight of the barricades has a sobering effect. They stretch right across the street, solid and reassuringly thick, with little holes for the guns to speak through. Only a small passage a couple of feet wide, allows pedestrians to pass.

The commander's headquarters is in a beautiful modern apartment house, now evacuated of civilians. It is protected by a higher building from shell-fire, but from the windows can be seen a peaceful looking expanse of country with rolling green hills. Only the puffs of smoke which follow each dull explosion tell of hidden trenches where shells are exploding. The commander is optimistic. He predicts the end of the war within three months. Our visitor may look surprised, since all his acquaintance among the journalists shake their heads and talk about next year or the following. But the commander speaks of the demoralization within the enemy ranks; that will be a decisive factor, as well as the military one, he thinks. He calls a young guard, a boy surely last year in school, to accompany our visitor to the trenches. The medical building? The philosophy building? Yes, it is possible to go there, so long as he keeps his head down. The trenches are only a hundred yards from the Clinical Hospital.

The way to the trenches lies through a beautiful suburb which flanks the north-west section of Madrid. Everywhere are gardens, full of unknown flowers and trees bursting into deep pink or white blossoms. Little villas with blue painted windows and eves look absurdly bucolic in the sunshine: it is the sort of suburb where the little business man returns from a hard day in the city to water his lawn and pull the weeds from his flower-beds as he talks to his neighbour about the need for a good rainstorm. A large round hole in the walls shatters the illusion of suburban peace; these now empty houses are in direct line of fire of the fascist batteries.

It is almost three o'clock, and sure enough . . . . wheeeeee . . . . a shell screams past, apparently only a few feet overhead. Our visitor remembers the instructions he has seen posted in the trams and on the walls, complete with illustrations, and throws himself down on his stomach beside a convenient wall. When he gets up he finds that a couple of guards half a block away are still smoking and talking quite calmly. Their ear has become accustomed to tell just how far up a shell is, and whether it will fall near them or not. This one went straight on into Madrid. Our visitor, with his untrained ear, feels that it is better to play safe, and continues to throw himself down each time a shell comes rushing overhead. He feels thankful that it is not a wet day. Mud is so much more difficult than dust.

Quite suddenly the suburb ends in a park, Montcloa, and the guide leads the way into an efficient-looking trench. It has been quiet on this sector, north of Casa del Campo, and the soldiers look brown and fit as they stand guard at their peep-holes or lie in their dug-outs reading and talking. One dug-out has the sign "Hotel Jose Diaz" and a picture of this workers' leader, pinned over the entrance. At the intersection of two trenches "Avenida de Rusia y Mexico" is neatly painted on a piece of board. Some of the dug-outs have doors, requisitioned from nearby houses, some have rugs or blankets pinned over the entrance by empty cartridges, in lieu of nails. Inside they are dry and quite clean. Mattresses and the occasional bed or couch, even chairs, with their velvet or brocade coverings looking absurd beside the sandbags and machine-guns, grace the interiors. Soldiers pop their heads out to ask our visitor if he will take their picture. He has to tell them regretfully that he has been asked to leave his camera behind.

Peeping through one of the little apertures, the red brick building, almost completely wrecked, which is the famous Clinical Hospital, looms surprisingly close. It is so full of holes that it is impossible to imagine that it still shelters a human being, but a soldier warns at staying at the hole too long. The building is not empty, in spite of its appearance.

The trench winds and twists through the park, then runs quite suddenly through a tunnel five feet high, bang into the medical building. It too had seemed deserted from a distance but now the sound of voices can be heard, and it turns out to be a hive of activity. The central courtyard, which is sheltered from fascist fire, is full of men in their undershirts, some washing at the fountain, some playing ball, one singing a flamenco at the top of his lungs. The walls are covered with slogans a foot high in blue paint: FROM THESE WALLS WE ARE DEFENDING THE LIBERTY OF SPAIN . . . WE HAVE A SPLENDID COMMAND, WHAT WE NEED NOW IS DISCIPLINE . . . BY ARMS AND CULTURE THE WAR WILL BE WON: WE MUST BE CULTURED, COMRADES. . . .

And cultured they are. Can you imagine an ordinary army occuping a building like this, with its temptingly white plaster walls (it was not quite completed when the war broke out) its shiny new lecture benches and blackboards, and not covering every available space with bawdy drawings and other evidences of primitive self-expression? But there is nothing here which would bring a blush to the cheek of the purest New England spinster. Occasionally a hammer and sickle, arrows pointing to the various supply-rooms, a few political slogans, mark the walls of the interior. Obviously these men respect the building because it is theirs. Their sons and daughters will study here when the war is over, and democracy triumphs.

The philosophy building stands a few hundred yards from the medical building. What was to be a green and pleasant campus with newly planted young trees and gravelled walks, stands between. Off to one side is a little campus restaurant. The only way to get from one building to another now is by another stretch of winding trench. A far cry from the carefree students who would have wandered in the warm spring sunshine between lectures are these sandbagged trenches, built at night when the moon was down, by sweating soldiers and workmen with rope-soled sandals and rough hands.

Where are the students and doctors and philosophers now? Our curious visitor is told that many professors and students are fighting in a special regiment on a front not far from Madrid. The doctors, of course, are working night and day at the front and behind-the-lines hospitals. They will come back, those who are alive when the war is finished and the university doors will be thrown open to workers' children, a new generation which will spring from the old who have been denied even the simple right to read and spell. And those who do not come back will be remembered for what they have died to make possible; remembered long after the trenches have been filled in and covered with grass. long after the shelled walls have been rebuilt and the painted slogans faded in the sun.

The philosophy building must have been beautiful last summer. Its great circular lecture-rooms were tiled in soft greens and blues, its central reading room was walled on three sides by glass, and its entrance hallway was bright with sculptured glass and murals. Now it hurts to look at it. Great heaps of glass and masonry have been swept aside, but even so, walking through the corridors is like walking over a recently-erupted volcano; boulders, fissures, gaping cavities.

It is almost dark inside. The windows are filled from top to bottom with sand-bags, with only a small opening for machine-gun or rifle. Men stand at each window, oiling machine-guns or cleaning rifles. One machine-gun bears a German trade-mark. Its owner fondles it lovingly. He explains that it is a very efficient machine—it is better to have it on this side than the other.

The guide leads the way down the wide stairway, where occasionally white marble shows through layers of rubble, and through the heavy doors into the library stacks. There, as far as the eye can penetrate, stretch row on row of green metal shelves, each with its neat row of volumes, catalogued, untouched, just as they had been placed there by librarians to await the opening of the building last fall. Only in one corner had a shell penetrated, and the metal shelves had fallen and spilled their load. The books were piled neatly in one corner. Old vellum bindings gleamed in the semi-darkness. It was perfectly silent behind the heavy doors. It seemed impossible that this academic calm would not embarrass a shell into turning around and going back where it came from.

No need to keep the doors locked. It was obvious that the soldiers respected the books. It is true, there was little temptation to read them in their brief periods of rest—war-time reading rarely includes philosophy—but then, stories of other armies in other days who used books for lighting fires and for other decidedly material purposes, made the fact that the books were unmolested an important one.

In the hallway outside the library men are cooking their dinners over a little fire built in a bucket. This floor underneath the ground is the safest one in the building, if the word safe could be used of a place which was the constant target of fascist batteries. The trenches outside were positively cozy by contrast.

And our visitor, as he reaches the outskirts of Madrid again, when the sun is setting, almost wishes that he had remained in the trenches when he sees the gaping holes in the pavement which had certainly not been there when he passed before. Eight-inch shells had caused these; fifty people had been killed in Madrid that day. What a war, when quiet on the front meant death at the rear! Trenches in the parks; barracks in the universities; shells in the houses and cafes and cinemas. But people working and riding in trams and facing death without excitement, without heroics; soldiers keeping Plato and Kant and Hegel from being harmed—a war?

Calling Eagles

Slanting the ragged peaks of the mind, Eagles,
Swift thinkers, readers in books and the bones of nature, construing
Life at its conflux, observing nebula, sifting fact from suppose, swooping
With noble talons arched for the scrap of truth;

Hurl from the frozen roof of the world, splitting
Air with breast feather, diving
Outward and downward, scattering
Hawks with the fear of your purpose noble plunge;

Come down into life, Eagles, where iron grinds bone, hands falter
And brave men perish for a tyrant's peace;
Come where Spain strangles in blood, Ethiopia
Groans at the ironcased heel, Vienna
Numbers the dead, remembers Weissel and Wallisch;
Scream for Brazilian dungeons where Prestes rots
And fascist madmen rattle gaoler's keys;

Drop from your eyrie, spurning the misted heights,
Plunge to the valley where life is and verdure,
Join with the groundlings, multitudes, with hope and passion
Lifting their fists with the steel clenched, towering
A new state from the crumble and wrack of the old;

You are part of this turmoil, Eagles, knit to its glory.
There is work for your strong beaks and the thundering wings,
For the clean flight of the mind and the sharp perception:

There is only a glacial death on the lonely crags.

LEO KENNEDY.

Deep Cove

I

It may have been the sun's unstudied art,
Shallow on green water and smooth stone;
It may have been someone there, standing apart
On the clean beach, alone:

Here was a peace more sweet than life to find,
When colored life was lost in weaving grey,
The mind an empty pocket, the heart blind,
The fingers quick no more on living clay.

He had come back—home to the long beach
And weathered roofs below the timbered hill.
Dun meadows bared their stubble still to bleach,
And far surf called familiar warning still.

Here whence incessant wings had driven him,
He had come now to shed the soft load
Of coursing wings brought earthward, and the dim
Ghost of a dream; he took the down road.

II

"John Black's son John is back," the village said;
Back after years of study and more years
Of raising images to the grave dead,
And bringing critical shafts about his ears—
If they had known it—in the large emprise
Of carving life and drawing its blunt line
So near the truth that even his own eyes
Feared the sharp candor of the clear design.

Here he was tranquil and his mind at rest;
Surf rang on granite, and the spirit's blight
Flowed out of him. No more the uncertain quest
And baffled dream destroyed him in the night.

Day followed day. He knew the sea and sky
Fit mates to live with, and his blood rejoiced.
He came to watch for beauty going by,
Mary, the girl—grey-eyed and quiet-voiced.

"Always I've tried to show life as it is,
Seize in the clay my fingers touched a true
Picture of men and women in their time:"

Only to Mary could he make it plain,
Tell the brief story of an aimless hand—
With eyes unshadowed by dissolving pain
And sculptor's fingers moving in the sand.

"I did too much of it. No man can stand
Forever to make his mind a laboratory,
His heart a microscope, alert for the flaw,
Alert for the pure strain of human virtue,
And hold them up forever to the light.
I could never raise my hand to do it now,
To show life as it is—life in the clay—
And what except this truth is worth the showing?"

III

Mary alone he found of all Deep Cove
Possessed of quietness and a tranquil sense
That destiny goes beyond the table and stove,
And broken lobster pots and flattened fence.

Some recrudescent and archaic strain
Emerged to make her flesh and spirit one,
Lived in the breast she bore against the rain,
The brown young face she lifted to the sun.

IV

Deep Cove had altered since his boyhood there;
Or so it seemed to him; it may have been
His own mind dwelling on the broader share
Of the world's freedom he had gone to win.

Men in the cove had new and duller ways;
He listened always for the drawling wit
That held him to the beach in other days,
And caught only the echoing ghost of it.

Boys in the cove were stealing city slang
As flaring gulls went seaward overhead.
"It ain't gonna rain no more" was all they sang.
"It won't be long now" was all they said,

Only when Mary passed, and laughed, a light
Born in her body and spirit touched them all
With some faint kinship to the gulls in flight,
With some far answer to the morning's call.

"Here I have always thought the answer was
To crime and war and bitterness in living:
In taking the crowds out of the tall towns,
Marching on sea and soil,
Sending the fighting strength in men against
The muscle of earth.
So I still think. But first the broad sweep
Of simple and flexible and vibrant life
Must feel its heartbeat coming back at last
In men who are here already."

V

And so it was that in the brooding peace
Of this long leisure and these days of grace,
In the deep quiet of this new release,
A newer discontent took pride of place.

Suddenly then he stopped, and suddenly knew
That he was driven by incessant wings
Beating again out of the broad blue,
Beating him forth to new imaginings.

He told her of it on a sunlit day
When surf piled high beyond the seaward rim
Of circling reefs, and gulls a mile away
Flashed the white message in their wings to him:

"Always I tried to show life as it is,
And when my fingers lost the will to it,
I thought my work was done. It is not done.
These busy years were only the beginning;
You and the beach have taught me something else.
When I shaped life I shaped the stolid cove;
Now it is something else that wakes and calls:
A will to make the chiselled book complete,
To write your message on the plastic page;
Not to show life's unfolding as it is,
But as it can be."

Then the girl answered him, and all the flame
That lived in her and gave the rugged beach
A meaning never compassed in a name,
Was gathered up to burn within his reach:

"We have walked here and said things to each other
Out of the deepest truth there is in us;
I know your spirit and you know my heart.
Now, take me with you."

"No, Mary, no. You are the last bright thing
That lives in this low garden of bleak rock.
Except the warm sun and the green bay,
Dark beaches and this rim of drying spruce,
What is there now that anyone can see
Of telling beauty?

I know it is here:
Warm plates on lamplit cloth, and a kettle singing;
Women with sleep in their eyes, and silent men
Stuffing their pantlegs into rubber boots;
Gravel ascrape, the competent gruff bark
Of engines, and the bay coming alive
With morning light.
The very core of life
Is in these things. But Mary, they don't know it.
They never know life's grand ability
Beating along the blood.
Their words are borrowed from the slang of cities,
Their conduct settled by a rigid code,
Given them variously in church and school,
And hammered home in every waking act—
Or governed by rebellion from the creed
By some who see a smartness in rebellion,
A cleverness in contempt.
More than the strict mechanics of work and play
Have cut the people of the towns to pattern,
Our people here have been cut and dried to shape
By little rules long rooted in their flesh.
In want to see the stature of their soul
Go up until a man can walk this field
And see another, drunk and stained with dirt,
And never think: 'Well, here's a poor lost fool.'
I want to see the day a man can go
Into the church there, and come out again
Without hearing a snicker from the road.
And the day a man can swear, and swear again,
When he knocks his knuckle against the gutting-table,
And not draw frowns from some disgruntled elder.
Do you think it will come? . . . When a girl may find
a lover
And not become the butt of whispered talk
Among good women, and considerate grins
Of young men speculating under the breath?
When that time comes, my dear, Deep Cove will know
There never was any ordered set of rules
Fit stuff to live by.
Here are the things Deep Cove will live by then:
The day and the moment and a man's own strength;
A man's conviction that the man next door
And the one next to him, and he himself,
Are all joined branches in the growth of life;
That no one living can be set apart
From any other living—even the dead
Live on in us through strange and tenuous threads;
The children our women carry here on the beach
Go back to the den . . . and on to a far door.
It cannot be said in words. But you will tell them.
The laughter in your eyes, the swing of your walk,
Your body's grace going from house to beach
Will plant perennial dream in human soil.
Your children will be big and casual men,
And quiet women caring a lot for the sun,
Caring a lot for the fields at dusk and the sea.
Words cannot say it. Only another's way,
Beauty and life together,
Can make men feel akin to everything
And glad to know it.
Stay here, Mary. You are the last bright thing—
I am going where the memory of the place
And the dream of all your presence makes of it
Shall give my hands a new power with clay.
That you have done for me—you and the beach—
I must leave you now and turn my sense of you
In separate strength, into the living stream
That flows in us and everything we know."

Mary said nothing; rose, and gave him her hand;
Looked at the sea a while, and then at his face.
The late sun's light streamed over the land,
Touching the beach and the fields with a new grace.

Perhaps it was only the sun's bright play,
Shallow on grey stubble and cold stone;
Perhaps it was just a woman's lithe sway
As she turned to the beach alone:

He saw tall men and women, as time stirred,
Knowing themselves a part of the long flood,
Facing the world with a laugh and a light word,
Feeling the urge of life in their swift blood.

He turned again to the wooded hills beyond,
And thought again on the spring dream that flowed
From mind to flesh as crying fingers conned
The vocal clay; and took to the steep road.

CHARLES BRUCE.

Spain

When the bare branch responds to leaf and light,
Remember them! It is for this they fight.
It is for hills uncoiling and the green thrust
Of spring, that they lie choked with battle dust.

You who hold beauty at your finger tips
Hold it, because the splintering gunshot rips
Between your comrades' eyes: hold it, across
Their bodies' barricade of blood and loss.

You who live quietly in sunlit space
Reading the Herald after morning grace,
Can count peace dear, when it has driven
Your sons to struggle for this grim, new heaven.

DOROTHY LIVESAY.

Admonition

(*To any adolescent*)

Yes, you should marry young, lad,
While life's kaleidoscope,
Entrancing with its glamour
Belies your horoscope.

Yield to that cosmic urge, lad,
While spring breathes a rose mist
Upon life's quickened mirror—
A suave illusionist!

While still the parchment's white, lad,
Inscribe your tale of bliss!
Foresee the happy ending,
Forestall dark Nemesis!

But audit your list well, lad,
Millions are doled relief;
War looms on all horizons,
Drought sears the unswathed sheaf!

Use finesse in life's game, lad,
Be no progenitor
Of farrow for the breadlines,
Or fodder for the war!

GORDON LECLAIRE.

Sweat-Shop

Nathan Petroff

Those Poor Russians!

MARGARET GOULD

SINCE MY RETURN from the Soviet Union I have been asked about the standard of living there. Some tourists have said that Soviet citizens exist on a level comparable to that of our relief recipients. The Russian standard indeed is different from that of the American or Canadian workman. I confess that my university studies of working men's family budgets gave me little help in gauging offhand, the Russian standards.

The American or Canadian family budget which is labeled "A Minimum Health and Comfort" level, contains two sections: "necessities" and "sundries". The necessities are food, clothing, shelter, and household amenities. The "sundries" contain such items as the cost of medical care, vacations, entertainments, lodge, church and trade union dues, insurance for old age, musical or other higher education for the children, etc. It is by the amount spent on "sundries" that the standard can be judged high, medium or low. The column "sundries" represents the state of independence and security of the family. This column however is usually the meagre section of the American worker's budget, the most shifting part and the first to be sacrificed; food, clothing, shelter and furnishings take the bulk of the family's income. The amounts expended on these items vary according to the size of the pay cheque. Protection against sickness, old age, unemployment or other social handicaps is left to chance, to the vagaries of charity. In our country all "rainy day" assistance to the working man and his family is given in the form and spirit of charity, either by private philanthropic bodies or by the state. Nevertheless we continue to judge a worker's standard by his external appearance, by his clothing, his motor car, his household equipment, usually bought on an insecure instalment basis. Even the model budget setting forth a "minimum of health and comfort" which is used by the stronger trade unions in wage-bargaining, contains inadequate provisions for security against sickness, unemployment periods and old age.

The Russian housewife has today few "gadgets" for housekeeping. Electrical apparatus is not yet on the market in quantities; indeed in several apartments we visited meals were cooked on primus stoves in the hallway. There is not a wide range of choice in clothing or furniture. There is not yet mass production of motor cars and few families possess them. Neither is there yet much range of choice in the variety of houses or foods. Living is modest for everybody.

The Russian family budget is exactly the reverse to that of the American's. In the Russian budget "sundries" bulks large. Medical care, vacations for the worker and his family, entertainments at the club, in the park, in the theatre, higher education for the children, savings for old age and other rainy day contingencies are fixed, secure items in the budget. There may be vagaries in the variety of clothing or furniture. But there are no vagaries in the matter of health protection, employment protection and security of income for old age. These items are not left to chance or to charity. These are national social services.

As a matter of fact security of the entire budget is assured by the constitution. The worker is guaranteed "the right to work", whereby to earn his livelihood. Should he be unable to work through ill-health or other misfortune, he and his family have "the right" to social aid from the state. His child need not stumble into a "blind alley" occupation but has "the right" to technical and higher education, to train for a vocation according to his ability.

No wonder we Americans get confused. We are accustomed to judging "comfortable" people by the cut of their clothes, by the make of their cars, by the linen on their tables. The Russian workman and his family do not look comfortable in this sense. We materialistic Americans need to revise our measure of values. We have to apply psychological and spiritual yardsticks when we go there. Over the Russian family's head does not hang the deadly sword of fear. They need not fear sickness, incapacitation or old age. At present they do not fear unemployment either. These fears eat the hearts of better dressed workmen in other parts of the world.

What price the vanity of silk stockings? The Russian woman, poor thing, wears cotton stockings, but she has free medical care before birth, at birth and throughout her own and her child's life. If she is employed in industry or at a profession, she has sixteen weeks leave from work, on full pay, while her job is kept for her. This also is her right if she is a student attending the university. The Russian workman does not flash a motor car or a stock of neckties. But if he falls ill he has free medical care and his wages are paid to his family during his absence from work. His child may go to the university as a matter of course. He has two or more weeks annual vacation on pay. He has time to spend with his family or friends at home or at the club. When he reaches the age of 55, after fifteen years of service, he can retire. His pension will not be less than 50% of his salary rate, but it can be up to the full amount of his annual earnings. To all this he has a right.. It is not a charity. He has paid for it by working at his job. It is his share of the profits from the country's industry, agriculture and commerce. As profits increase his share in them increases in a twofold manner. He gets more roubles in wages and more social services, more schools, more doctors, more health resorts, more libraries and theatres. As wants are satisfied, more are created.

Our last glimpse of Russian life was in the third class railway carriage which was taking us out of Leningrad,

westward-bound. It was about six-thirty in the evening and the coach was filled with workmen commuting to their homes in the suburbs. They were factory workers and apparently of peasant stock. There was a visible difference in appearance between them and American workmen. Their stockingless feet were encased in handmade "laptjes" or straw sandals. Their white cotton shirts were open informally at the neck. They wore no ties. Their trousers were of cheap cotton.

There were other, intangible, differences. These Russian workmen were returning home from a seven-hour working day. At four o'clock that afternoon they had "knocked off", cleaned up, and gone to a class in mechanics connected with their plant. They were now poring over and discussing their text books filled with technical drawings. The classes they had attended will help them to increase their skill, bring promotion and higher pay. Their higher skill will help produce more goods. More goods on the market mean lower prices. The worker and his family can have more variety in food, can buy more and better clothing, can live in a larger apartment with more and better furniture. Higher productivity also will bring a shorter working day. It helps to increase the national wealth by which he can have more abundant living. It is entirely up to him, the worker. He is part of the Gosplan (Five Year Plan). He helps to work it out and he reaps the benefits.

There is still another difference, in attitudes. To us the phrase "getting ahead" means to get ahead of the other fellow. To the Russians it means to get ahead *together with* the other fellow, city with village, black with white.

Those poor Russians! They have hitched their wagon to a star.

New Horizons In Canadian Art

G. CAMPBELL McINNES

I MAY PERHAPS be forgiven for misquoting, as a title, the name of an American periodical, for in its own way the new movement in Canadian art is as important to us as their own movement is to our friends south of the border. The leaven which has been slowly working in the contemporary field has recently begun to have a noticeable effect, and the tenth annual exhibition of the Canadian Society of Painters in Water Color, and more especially, the exhibition of the Canadian Society of Graphic Art, held last month in the Art Gallery of Toronto, were showings whose quality was in general dictated by this new movement, and whose outstanding excellence was largely due to it. The position may be briefly, if imperfectly, summed up by stating that the dominant feature of these exhibitions was an interest in people rather than in things, and, secondarily, the development of a social consciousness among our artists.

To understand the significance of this, a brief glance at the history of Canadian art is necessary. Up to the turn of the century, Canadian art was, broadly speaking non-existent.* This was due partly to the pressure of pioneering work, partly to a lack of national consciousness, and more particularly to the fact that what artists there were worked in the currently fashionable European tradition. True, engineers and military men made valuable documentary records, Kane and Krieghoff recorded Indian and habitant life; but the bulk of artists were content with neo-Barbizon landscapes, neo-Dutch genre pieces, and the founding of societies to perpetuate these empty imitations in a rigid hierarchy. It is tragic to realize that so young a country as Canada already has its own Royal Academy, where mediocre practitioners, secure in the possession of three magic letters, regularly present us with their sterile little universe, boxed, taped, wrapped in cellophane and provided with a little price-tag, and atrophy the creative spirit.

That, however, is by the way. For no art institution can stem the true creative impulse, and by 1910 the influence of Impressionism and to some extent, Post Impressionism (though it was not yet called that) had begun to be felt. Morrice, Cullen, and in his own way Homer Watson, were experimenting with new colors and techniques, discovering the snowscape, and painting work which for almost the first time looked as if it could have been painted nowhere else but in Canada. To state that work is recognisably Canadian is not to insist on its goodness; but it remains true that until artists react to their own immediate environment, their work, no matter how well it be executed, has an inherent falsity.

Then, along with the great war, came the Group of Seven. Irrespective of what one thinks of their work (and personally I greatly admire much of it, despite a somewhat obvious poetic-romantic approach) one has to credit the Group with tenacity, sincerity and courage, and these tremendous facts: that they discovered the Canadian landscape for their contemporaries, completely changed the course of Canadian art, and laid the foundations on which the young men of today are building. What happened afterwards was not their fault. Any student of the history of art knows that when a vital and original school comes into existence, there follows in its train a shoal of disciples who imitate its outward forms, without its inner creative fire. That Canadian art swung too far in the direction of pure landscape, that during the twenties there appeared all over the Dominion people who painted innumerable rocks, trees and lakes, should not blind us to the achievement of the Group. And it is to their eternal credit that when they saw what was happening, they disbanded themselves, in 1933.

* For the purposes of this discussion, I deliberately omit references to the totemic art of the West Coast Indians, and the ecclesiastical and domestic architecture and wood-carving of the French Canadian School.

But their imitators had done their fell work. Visitors to our art galleries would have imagined that Canada was denuded of people, and that its landscape consisted only of the Pre-Cambrian Shield. These people, painting north of lat. 45° and beyond, forgot the eleven million Canadians living, working and creating to the south. There is nothing wrong with painting rocks, lakes and trees. The artist should paint what inner compulsion makes him feel he should paint. The trouble was that this annual trek north had become a fashion; it was the "done thing" in artistic circles. In this Pre-Cambrian tower there was little real feeling, and as a result, painting was in a fair way to become as false and artificial as the most mannered academicism. To save Canadian art, three things were needed: artists who felt for the new Canada that is the work of millions of active people and thousands of indefinable cross currents and feelings and desires—a new set of media to work in—and some event which might shake the lat. 45° painters from their complacency, and make them question their narrow and repetitive standards. There could be little doubt that in a young, vital country these would be found.

About a decade ago a group of young artists in Montreal, and one or two solitary workers in Winnipeg and Vancouver, began to depict and interpret what they saw about them. Montreal is a great city and a Canadian city, and these painters, characteristically, both French and English, were enthralled by what they saw. While the majority of painters were religiously hiking north, they looked out of their back windows and saw two things: an immediate, interesting activity of people, and significant formal relationships. These they fused into creative ideas which they externalised on canvas. At the same time, in and around Toronto, a small group began painting the new Canadian landscape—the land as it looks after Canadians have tilled it, lived by it and died in it—the land which has left its mark on a people and has in turn been marked by them.

Concurrent with this new activity, there was a slight, but definite movement away from oils toward water color and the various graphic media. It was realised that oils offered too easy results, put a premium on the amateur and the dilettante, encouraged the large canvas, the imposing easel picture. The new media demanded complete mastery as a means to expression, but once mastered, enabled the artist to express himself with vigor, immediacy and powerful concentration. Following on this, came a renewed and more realist interest in mural painting.

Finally, there was the depression. The broadening of the contemporary arena, the added complexity of life, the pressure of word events, all pointed overwhelmingly to the truth that the very great artist, while he transcends his age, must at the same time be inescapably part of it. It was hard to do this north of lat. 45°.

These three causes combined to turn Canadian art in a new direction—a direction manifest in the exhibitions of which I have already spoken. This new direction expresses itself in a vivid interest in contemporary life in all its moods, set down with technical mastery in an essentially Canadian manner, and above all, in a manner disciplined by the rigid requirements of the visual arts. This latter point is important, for to seek out contemporary life, when it is not felt through aesthetic means, to become socially conscious in an aggressive and literary manner may be fine propaganda, but is almost certain to be poor art. In fact, in the last resort, it is not even good propaganda, for the best propaganda is that which is expressed, with technical excellence and honesty, through essentially artistic means—truth to material, selection and suppression, emphasis and synthesis, an appreciation of form, and a depth and sincerity of aesthetic emotion.

In these two showings, certain artists have accomplished this task, and others are on the way to accomplishing it, and in doing so they point out the path along which Canadian art is most likely to develop, and most fruitfully, within the next few years. I am not going to go through these exhibitions name by name for without illustrative material that would be a pointless task. But for those interested in spotting young talent, and in the development of Canadian art, I nominate for the hall of fame in the vanguard of this new movement Nathan Petroff, Lillian Freiman, Laurence Hyde, Paraskeva Clark, Pegi Nicol and Carl Schaefer, of Toronto; Louis Muhlstock and Fritz Brandtner of Montreal; Miller Brittain of St. John and Smith of Hamilton. Already discernible among the rank and file is another group which includes Samuel Reindorf, Caven Atkins, Rody Courtice, Conyers Barker and Gordon Webber of Toronto; Paul Goranson of Vancouver, Leonard Hutchinson of Hamilton, and Ian MacIver of New York. Not all these artists are of the front rank; some of them are not of the second, but those that are not have youth, enthusiasm and sincerity, which is worth a great deal. When one considers that there are also quite a number of artists who did not exhibit here, yet who are working along similar lines,† I think one is justified in saying that this new movement, though still in embryo, has definitely begun to gather way, and to influence contemporary Canadian art. Ten years may prove me a false prophet; but today there is no denying the strength and vitality of this young art.

† Such as Aleksandre Bercovitch, Samuel Borenstein, James Beckwith and Marc-Aurèle Fortin of Montreal; André Biéler of Kingston; Jori Smith of Baie St. Paul, P.Q.; Orville Fisher of Vancouver—to name only a few.

Agenda: Fascism for Vultures

It well may be that vultures pick my teeth clean—
A thankless task for any bird or mammal
(Even the stain of cigarettes will fade
On memory). What vultures need
Is a union! Not much bread has passed
The ivory barricades—
Rugged individualism
Will not help the vultures.

NORMAN MACLEOD.

The Truth About Tear Gas

JACK PARR

THE USE of irritant gases by law enforcement officers or private guards is now a recognized and widely practised form of violence against demonstrators and strikers on this continent. Disguised by the deceptively innocent term "tear gas" this inhuman and highly dangerous weapon has been placed in the hands of the metropolitan police forces and wielded by them with results which have disgusted even rabid supporters of the iron heel policy. It can be truthfully said that only cowardice on the part of the attackers (for all poison gases are potential boomerangs) and fortuitous combinations of circumstances have prevented serious proportions of fatalities in recent industrial conflicts featured by gas attacks. Nevertheless, because of the widely publicised and zealously nurtured lie that "tear gas" is harmless, it will be necessary for us to marshall our facts and prepare an argument with which to face those doctors who mouth their pseudo-medical prattle to the tune of company public relation counsels.

Let us first understand that "tear gas" is *poison gas,* by all chemical, biological and military standards. There is only the difference of degree between mildest eye irritants and the deadly Mustard or Phosgene. The classification of poison gases into Lachrymators (gases irritating and finally destroying the eyes and other tender membranes) and Lethals, as adopted by all Chemical Services, is simply a distinction of desire on the part of the attacking force and is no indication of the actual effect which may be produced by either type. Lethal gases often cause nothing but mild inconvenience. Lachrymators very frequently result in blindness, sometimes death. Poison gas is no respecter of the user's pious intentions.

"Tear gases" when used against civilians, are more effective than any gas possibly could be in military operations. This is true not only because of the exceptionally favorable conditions under which they are dispersed. It is true because Lachrymators have peculiarly deadly properties, as we shall see; properties which are possessed by only two or three military chemicals. But first it is necessary to consider the problem in general.

Since the use of irritant smokes by the Spartans, when they besieged the walled city of Plataea twenty-three hundred years ago, there was practically no advance in the science of chemical murder until the present century. Although elaborate plans for the destruction of the Russian army defending Sebastopol were drawn up by one Admiral Dundonald in 1855, involving the use of thousands of tons of coke and sulphur, the first recorded gas attack in modern times was that of the German army, in October, 1914. This was a relatively harmless experiment, consisting of a few rounds of artillery shells loaded with corrosive liquid, but the French accepted the invitation and replied promptly with an irritant gas. The first large scale attack was likewise made by the French, on February 21, 1915, with very effective use of Lachrymator mixtures. The frightful chlorine attack of the Germans, which amounted almost to a massacre of French and Canadian troops, took place at late as April, 1915, many months after poison gas had become an accepted weapon on both sides. And it is of great significance that the French began operations with a "tear gas", being followed by the Germans with chlorine, a gas which is predominantly irritant although lethal in high concentrations.

The truth is that there can be no labelling of any poison gas as irritant or lethal without a detailed analysis of the conditions under which it is to be used. For example, two of the most common "tear gases", bromobenzyl cyanide and chloracetophenone, while correctly termed Lachrymators in ordinary concentrations found in military operations, are most deadly if used in confined spaces from which the victims have no immediate escape. This fact is of extreme importance in considering the tactics of strike breaking gas squads: firing explosive gas shells into factory buildings, frequently into tightly closed rooms.

But there is another factor most interesting from the scientific point of view, and vital to our approach. It is that practically all "tear gases" are not gases at all, but

smokes or mists. Smokes and mists, chemically speaking, are clouds of extremely finely divided solid or liquid particles which, like ordinary coal smoke or sea mist, may hang low or be blown away as a gas. Their advantage over truly gaseous poisons is twofold: First, the particles which come into contact with the body tissues remain active until washed away by body secretions or removed by neutralizing liquids; second, very efficient and perfectly preserved masks are required to protect the wearer. It is easy to understand how fine powders or

liquid sprays of a poisonous or corrosive nature are far more effective than gases, which depend for their action upon chance condensation upon the flesh or at best a very brief contact. The most deadly war gases resemble "tear gases" in this respect. They never give up until their fearful work is completed. They penetrate all but the finest protective devices. Whether or not they kill depends on the luck of the victim.

Only two gases have been mentioned, and to extend the list would serve little purpose. Several dozen lachrymatory gases were tried in the last war. Diphenylchlorarsine and diphenylaminechlorarsine were first used by the United States forces as Sternutators, or sneezing irritants. When it was learned how to disperse these materials sufficiently finely they became much more violent, producing marked toxic effects. Nausea, vomiting and great prostration followed their use in the field. Scores of deaths were suffered by the Germans due to heart failure brought on by excessive sneezing, coughing and general shock. Yet American authorities insisted that D.A. and D.M., as they were rather affectionately known, were not deadly but simply sneezing gases! The Germans, who used these chemicals in artillery shells, rightly termed them Lethals. They will be used extensively in any future wars, mainly in gas mixtures. Their purpose will be to penetrate defective masks and render the victims insane with an agony which will be climaxed by desperate removal of the mask and exposure to more rapid killers.

We must turn now to consideration of the effects of such "tear gases" as are employed by police forces in America. It is claimed that poison gas is a gentle weapon, designed to incapacitate the victim for a brief period, during which time he will be unable to offer resistance to the forces of law and order. Much preferable to riot guns and blackjacks. A little sneeze, a cough or two, a few tears and it's all over!

So the officials would have us believe, and frequently they refer for support to Doctor So-and-So's opinion as published in the booklets of numerous chemical firms dealing in this dangerous commodity. What are the facts?

First: All "tear gases" are poison gases and will kill when in moderately high concentrations.

Second: Used by unskilled police or in confined spaces *direct hits* are often made, in which the victim receives an undiluted stream or cloud of chemical. Military authorities use Lachrymators only in excessively small concentrations, otherwise they would be lethal in effect and cheaper killers are available.

Third: The symptoms of poisoning by Lachrymator gases are almost the same in mild and severe cases, in early stages. Like all poison gases "tear gases" give wounds which cannot be kept free from infection. *A large percentage of victims of "tear gases" become blind as a result of chronic infection of the eyes. Death may result from this or from throat infection.*

Fourth: Blindness or death rarely occur in less than two or three weeks. Public indignation has disappeared in the interval and the victim is given a "septicemia" death certificate and a quiet burial. Worse, perhaps, a lifetime of total blindness.

This is the scientific truth about "tear gases". It is not surprising therefore, to learn that the police of many cities, even though equipped at great expense with elaborate gas arsenals, have abandoned the chemical weapon after a single trial. In Canada, the city of Winnipeg is an example. The first and only gas attack staged in the Manitoba capital was on a downtown demonstration several years ago, and resulted in blindness for two workers. Others were more or less seriously affected and it is known that at least one officer was sent to the Mayo Hospital in Rochester for extended treatment. In the United States the use of gas was quite common until recently. The disastrous raid on dock pickets in Seattle has no doubt made it difficult for poison peddlers to interest municipal authorities in scientific property protection. In the west coast debacle a score of policemen were taken to the hospital in serious condition from having inhaled gases fired by their fellow-officers.

But I find it impossible to conclude without drawing attention to the dangerous exaggeration which frequently reacts against those who want to emphasize the dangers of "tear gas". The exaggeration, I mean, with which numerous writers discuss military poison gases and their menace to civilians. *New Frontier* sinned in its April issue, by quoting General Pouderoux, a notorious yarn-spinner where warfare is concerned. By making the statement that carbon monoxide can penetrate any mask devised, and is deadly in action, he implies that gas masks will not protect us from the death that rains from the skies.

Carbon monoxide cannot be employed in warfare. In the city of New York hundreds of thousands of automobiles continuously pump thousands of tons of carbon monoxide into the congested streets, yet headaches are no more frequent than on the prairies. It would require a thousand times as many airplanes as exist in the whole world to flood Toronto with monoxide. And the same thing is true, to a great extent, for all war gases. There is no super gas, no poison which can wipe out whole armies and cities. Poison gases cost money. If General Pouderoux would only check up on his army budget he would find that killing off a million people is not only a job for the armamenteers but also for the mass production engineer. Poison gases are made only from materials available in enormous quantities, and cheaply. That is why every nation knows everybody else's poison gases. They can almost be deduced from natural resources and imports.

And there are no poison gases which can pass through a modern mask. If war comes again, chemicals will be used widely: to embarrass the enemy, to slow up activity behind the lines and to increase the death toll. But the bogey-man stuff exists only in the addled brains of Goering and Rosenberg, to be fed to the gagged populations of the fascist countries as a desperate stimulant to their fast waning lust for battle.

Poet's Progress

DOROTHY LIVESAY

INTERPRETATIONS of literature are always being restated and renewed, with each succeeding generation. The novelists however, have never been flayed by their critics as the poets have been. The novel by its very nature has a subject matter and a form which has not varied vastly or violently in the past hundred years. Man in society has always been the general theme.

When it comes to poets and poetry the issue is quite different. Poetic themes in the past have emerged from nature, from love, from mythology and religion; and the critics, in dealing with the result, have sometimes felt the earth moving from under their feet. Instead of trying to understand the phenomenon, they have sometimes, in desperation, merely barked at it.

This perhaps is one reason why today criticism is in such a confusion before the poetry of men like Auden, MacLeish or Spender. In order to see the road clearly it is necessary to clear away the heap of misconceptions which have been imperceptibly growing up around the question. To do this I would like to begin by trying to determine the real functions of the poet.

In the past there have been three definite attributes necessary to a poet. He must have an individual personality: he must associate himself with "pure ideas"; he must be the conveyor of emotional values. In my opinion the modern poet is not attempting to go beyond these limits. He is merely interpreting them somewhat differently in terms of the present day world.

Take the question of individualism. No modern poet can be accused of trying to lose his individualism in the "collectivist spirit". But he has developed a wider conception of the meaning of the word, possibly with the aid of the psychologist. No matter how distinct a personality the poet may have achieved, he is primarily a person like the rest of us, reared from birth onwards among other human beings. His character and the general trend of his ideas are moulded by the group of which he is a part. At twenty, his point of view cannot and does not differ radically from that of his contemporaries. Being creative, he will express this point of view in his poetry. Because it has meaning for him, it will have meaning for others. The individuality only truly enters into the question when the creative idea takes *actual form*. A poet's individual mark appears not in his thought content, but in his style, form and technique. This is as true of T. S. Eliot as it is true of Auden and Spender. And in an historical survey of, let us say, the nineteenth century poets, I think it is equally apparent that there is not one original thinker among them. Poets are not independent philosophers: they are gleaners. The experience is common; the way it is transmitted is personal.

This brings us close to the problem of what we mean by experience and the expression of "pure ideas". Here there are further misconceptions barring the way. It is generally believed, particularly in Canada, that the poet can only experience creative emotion before such topics as love, death and nature. This derives from a curious habit of accepting poetry as the playground for a few nineteenth century writers, and ignoring the vast realm outside, inhabited by such worthy souls as Horace, Dante and the creative cataloguist, Walt Whitman.

Consider for a moment those ancient topics, for they are good. Sappho, Shakespeare and Keats have explored the ecstasy of love. Wordsworth and Houseman have considered death. Many others have rejoiced in the contemplation of nature. Yet the poets are legion who were not concerned *directly* with any of these things. Beginning arbitrarily with the prophet Isaiah and passing on from John Donne to William Blake and the agonized cry of Gerard Manley Hopkins, we find a series of poets who are facing the issue of humanity itself, of human destiny. Love, death and nature are parts in the general philosophical whole with which they are wrestling. It is impossible to name a great poet who was not in some way engaged in linking up "pure ideas" and "poetic experience" with the philosophical, political and social concepts of his time. As Babette Deutsch has made clear:

"It is, however, the exceptional poet who in a society that is out of joint fails to hear the bones crying to be set right. And if hearing, he offers them a living language, he need not fear the judgment of posterity. Even in a more satisfactory world than this, great poetry dealing with the social conflict would have the validity that the Divine Comedy retains for those who reject Dante's theology."

When we come to the question of the emotional value of poetry it appears to me that even here there can be no avoidance of the broader issues involved. Pity and irony, tragedy and comedy are admittedly essential elements in poetry. But can any honest writer disassociate pity, for instance, from the ideational content described above. There is, in good writing, no abstract tragedy or comedy. It is not these abstract qualities which make Shakespeare's characterization of Shylock so moving. Shylock is an economic product of his time and it is Shakespeare's thorough understanding of the tragedy in the man's relationships which produces, inevitably, the emotional value in the portrayal. In the same way we could conceive of a modern poet concerning himself with Hitler and urgently stirring our aesthetic sense.

I have attempted to show in the above that there is an intimate relationship between the three functions of the poet. One can only arbitrarily distinguish between formal expression, philosophical content and emotional value in a poem. The three are related together in such a fashion as to create in the hearer a sensation of identity

with others, and to release in him an individual creative comprehension.

If these premises are accepted we can go on more fearlessly to an understanding of what modern poets are attempting. Recognizing that we are living in a time of transition, their concern is to identify themselves with those forces in society which are working towards human development and expansion, as opposed to other groups, identified with capitalism, which are seeking to hold the clock back. That is the general philosophical direction. To those who still cling to the more static conception of society such poetry is "propaganda". Fifty years hence it will not seem so, and the critics will again have time to concern themselves with the highly varied individual differences between poets who are now lumped together as being ruined by the "collectivist complex."

*Death of The Innkeeper "Quitapenas"**

Muleteers of Aragón,
carriers, you robust fellows
who walk the roads
from Huesca to Monzón:
Don't dream in all your travels
you'll ever find that inn
with the good name "Quitapenas",
for its fire is out
and the doors off their hinges.

"Quitapenas", the innkeeper,
weather-worn in the struggle
with his hostelry, was free
and a friend of those who hope
to find a better world
without landed estates and churches.
"Quitapenas" was the folk
who travel along the highways,
and the traitors do not want us
to walk along them:
bishops and generals
incarnadine all Spain.
Cursed be the assassins
who buried him alive!

Three children he had, three,
and an honourable mate.
When the rebels entered
at the doors of the inn
they violated the women
murdered the man-servant
who defended that handful of land.
Three children he had, three,
and an honourable mate.

"Quitapenas", prisoner
they take him to the castle.
Not far from the wall
they have a grave dug.
Alive they bury him, alive
they throw earth upon him,
and in his agony he was able
to thrust his hand out,
a talon that the winds scratch,
a tower with five banners,
that begged for vengeance there
among worm-eaten stones.

Muleteers of Aragón,
carriers, you robust folk
who walk the roads
from Huesca to Monzón:
You shall for ever remember
the death of "Quitapenas".
There was here in other days
the joyful shouting of his inn.
Three children he had, three,
and an honourable mate.
Cursed be the assassins
who buried him alive!

RAFAEL BELTRAN LOGRONO.

*Quitapenas: the comforter.

This Is How We Live

Are your eyes larks or wasps in my flesh?
A dark weeping, a dense dark weeping surges in the sky, in the earth.
My blood is an itch that inflames my body.
Open your eyes, comrade,
open your eyes.
Look:
The world is a cloud on which we walk
on foot, on our knees, seated,
with eyes closed or open,
among the living and the dead,
among unutterable ghosts;
among blacks who can change into angels,
who know the colour of the air
and the asphyxia of a rope around the neck;
among men taken to the wall,
to that wall whence they return not,
to that wall where a hair is a sigh,
a life a handful of earth.
Listen, listen to me, comrade.
This is how we live,
we pass through tempests,
preceded, surrounded by weeping,
by the weeping of the farm-house, of the city, the cemetery,
by that weeping which invades everything,
which inundates everything,
which unites us in body and in blood,
which will end by mingling us in a single star.
Among ghosts, comrade;
among ghosts, woods, or sobs that shake us,
are your eyes larks or wasps in my blood?
The whole world is a round tear.

PLA Y BELTRAN.

(Translated from the Spanish by W. E. Collin.)

Old Comedy, New Style

F. V. KEYS

FOR ALL but hopeless party fossils, the performance lately put on at Queen's Park afforded the delectable spectacle of a first-class revival of Attic Old Comedy, brought up to date. From the start, it cast aside the mellow Gilbertian humour, to burst into the glorious farce of Aristophanes.

When the voice of Hepburn first zoomed into the political skies, we warned an enthusiast that its accent was indubitably Cleon's. But we had no prophetic inkling that it proceeded from a close student of the Attic stage. Yet how account otherwise for the matchless skill in adadjusting the national theatre of the Athenians to the requirements of our post-depression-near-boom Ontario? Unless certain psychic influences proceeding from the classicals of the imminent Academes have found lodgment under the spreading roofs of the House?

For the whole Aristophanic cast is there. The role of the re-actionary War-Party, bent on continuing violence, falls to the Mining Interests; and that of their dexterous demagogue, Cleon the Tanner, to Hepburn the Onion-Grower. Those decent servants of Demos,—the timorous and superstitious Nikias, and the forthright, brave, and able Demosthenes, are neatly fitted to Messrs. Croll and Roebuck, thrust out of their places in the household by their wily fellow-servant Cleon, who has filched Roebuck's pasties and 'Pylos' cake,—the succession duties and Hydro rehabilitation,—and presented them to Demos as his own baking. The bundle of oracles is there too, in the frequent invocations of the British Tradition—so tolerantly amenable as the sanctifier of anything and anybody who may need it—and the appeals to the Ottawa Oracle, which sent forth Delphic tones as discreetly ambiguous as oracles always must be.

No less admirable was the management of the Chorus. For no more impressive impersonation of the Knights on their hobby-horses is imaginable than that of the Mounties on their high-stepping steeds; the sole variant being a mere matter of their professed sympathies. Inevitably, under the prevailing Ottawa mandate for Strict Neutrality, they remained in the wings (at Exhibition Park), nobody quite knew at whose disposal; but they got the equivalent of the Knight's five talents by presenting to the Onion-Grower the bill for their excursion. But their withdrawal was only the occasion of our Ontario Cleon's displaying how far his inventive genius outshines that of his prototype. He suddenly created the Hepburn Hussars, who are alleged to have been audible drilling in the basement, no doubt with the implication that, like the Ghost in the cellarage, there will be no out-manoeuvring them. But the top of our Cleon's performance as sleight-of-hand man was when, to the stupefaction of a dazzled public, he produced out of his hat that handsome live rabbit, Col. Drew.

Paeons of praise from the most unexpected quarters have saluted the dramatic activities of Mr. Hepburn; but a cheer is still due him from our Ontario aspirants for the playwrights' prize in the next Canadian Dionysia. For he has made the wan wastes of Provincial politics sprout a crop of comic raw material as full of savour as his own onions. The action and characters are ready to hand, and the whole force of originality may be applied to the treatment. We would venture to suggest that the plot turn upon clearing up the mystery that hangs about the affair,—whether it was an overt Fascist *Putsch,* or a covert incitement to a Communist rising, with the Onion-Grower as alleged *agent-provocateur* in the pay of Moscow. There would be sallets in the lines in answering the conundrum: if a Canadian organizer is a "foreigner", then what is an American firm on Canadian soil? Or in a full-dress Hart House debate on the question: if, as alleged, there were 'university lads' among the Hepburn Hussars, who should be held to account for them, the Faculty, or the Board of Governors? The auspicious ending so endeared to our Anglo-Saxon public, together with a lyric touch in the form of a pastoral Ode, would be supplied by the antiphonal singing of a Chorus of garlanded Farmers and Laborites, while our Ontario Demos, no longer senile and credulous, would step forth fresh and hearty to accept the services of the New Party now on the knees of the gods.

The situation now awaits only its Poet. Should he hesitate from shyness, let him remember what we owe to our recent admirable Adjudicator, M. St. Denis, who was so sympathetic, so helpful and so hopeful, and who pleaded so movingly the cause of ideas, and for a native subject. How it would delight him to be met with a theme at once local and universal, "actual" and timeless, imbued by the playwright with that Comic Spirit which is the sovereign air-conditioner of the general mind, which withers panic, arouses common-sense, aligns the true frontier and with a gay gesture assigns to our public figures their final place in the eternal scheme: in short, a play that shall be frankly, rankly Canadian, and a classical masterpiece.

The Drama Festival

DAVID PRESSMAN

THIS YEAR'S Dominion Drama Festival, which took place at Ottawa during the week of April 26th, demonstrates how far Canada is from a national theatre movement of any sort, and especially from a people's theatre movement; but it also proves that the requisite elements exist, and indeed are striving to break through the surface. Out of the nineteen plays presented, only three were of a progressive social nature. These were *The Secret* from Kingston, *Relief* from Saskatchewan, and *Bury The Dead* from Toronto. A play from Vancouver, *The Last War* by Neil Grant, promised in the first few moments of presentation to be an interesting satire on the various follies of man, but developed into a namby-pamby sort of religious-philosophic acceptance of man's evil. Although the performance was beautifully directed and staged, because of the play's weak ending and lack of real social significance, it was not successful.

The prize-winner, John Coulter's *The House In The Quiet Glen,* presented by the Toronto Masquers, rightly deserved the Bessborough Trophy, but it is somewhat difficult to accept the fact of its being the best Canadian play, receiving the Sir Barry Jackson Trophy and the hundred dollars award. Mr. Coulter himself was delicately non-plussed at being so readily accepted as a Canadian playwright, for the play hardly represents anything of Canadian nature. With so many possibilities inherent in every town and city, in every newspaper article, in every home from coast to coast, it is almost incredible that a play about Ireland, and so typically Irish, with an inconsequential plot, should be blessed as a representative of Canadian contemporary drama. Unquestionably the play is charming and well written. The production was expertly staged and beautifully acted by some of Toronto's finest players. Mr. Frank Rostance from the cast, who won the Lady Tweedsmuir individual award for acting, gave a brilliant characterization.

A play much more representative of Canada was *Relief,* written, directed and the main character acted by Mrs. Minnie Bicknell from Marshall, Saskatchewan. Although the adjudicator did not accept it as a play sufficiently strong in theatre values to warrant the Jackson award, he would perhaps have done greater service to the development of Canadian drama if he had considered it more with an eye to the future.

The Barrets of Wimpole Street presented by the Strolling Players of Vancouver was perhaps the best acting job of the week. But the adjudicator was thoroughly justified in keeping it from the award on grounds of imitative work. The festival should certainly incorporate more creative and original productions. The French Canadian groups, for instance, did plays written exclusively by continental dramatists. The adjudicator made a plea for French Canadian plays written by French Canadians. Certainly there is much material in the provinces where the French Canadian problem is acute and sources of plots for Canadian social plays abound.

The Cradle Song, presented by the University College Alumnae Dramatic Association of Toronto, which shared the runner-up award with *The Barrets,* was delicately handled by its director, Edgar Stone, with interesting movement and fine direction.

One of the major disappointments of the Festival was the lack of imagination, creativity and originality. So much imitative acting and playwriting is indulged in, that one begins to think there is no one who has any imagination on this side of the border. *Bury the Dead,* presented by the Theatre of Action of Toronto, was one of the few productions which brought forth a comment from the adjudicator on "experimentation". "Although not always successful," was his qualifying remark. The play itself suffered from the cutting which the time limit of the Festival necessitated, and the adjudicator remarked on that fact. His criticism of the production was confined to an insistence that the message of the play was allowed to overshadow the theatrical elements and possibilities inherent in it. But it was one of the few plays and productions which created a controversial interest, and M. St. Denis remarked on the play several times after the close of the festival.

If the festival as a Canadian institution is to grow and mature into something in which the entire population of the country may be creatively interested, it will have to change some of its policies. At present, there is keen competition between the east and the west, and among the various participating groups; but the audience is almost exclusively upper class and regards the festival as a grand social affair of the year rather than as a review of the country's work in the theatre. It is remarkable to realize that outside of the Festival Committee and the competing groups themselves, very few people are really interested in the progress being made in the theatre as a cultural and educational force. The Festival runs the danger of remaining a conventional outlet for a drab and highly traditional one-act nightmare. It is encouraging to know that next year the Festival will be held in Winnipeg, where a large theatre can be obtained and perhaps prices lowered, so the doors can be opened to the "people" to participate in an art which is the most basic art a mass of people can lay claim to. The inclusion of full length productions is an important development.

The adjudicator, M. St. Denis, before he left, made a plea for more original and people's material to be presented at the Festival. This can be interpreted as a desire for the festival to develop into something that will be accessible to the greatest number of people. A Drama Festival should be a review of the year's work in creative theatre, not an instrument for the social enjoyment of the few.

Books

Madrid and the International Brigade

The Defence of Madrid. By Geoffrey Cox. Ryerson Press. 75c.

THIS IS THE FIRST BOOK dealing with life in Madrid during November and December of last year, of the period that saw the throwing back of the Fascist forces just as it appeared that the city would be taken. The writer, correspondent of the London *News Chronicle,* explains that the correspondents were not spoon-fed with news; they had to go to the front to get facts from the Commanders, from the troops in the line. Also, the truth was better news than fiction. Why are correspondents who write on phases of the Spanish War accused of "propaganda"? They write what they see.

In November, Franco counted on a successful drive into Madrid from the south-west. His belief that the people of Madrid were ruled by Red terror and that a large portion would take his part on the approach of his troops, was based on the mental instability of a reactionary. The militia, strengthened by the International Brigade, turned from retreat to resistance when they had left the open field, where efficient control by trained subordinate commanders is necessary, for house-to-house defence in their own city, with streets blocked by barricades against attack by tanks and infantry. This book describes the fighting on the western fringe of the city, where the tanks crossed the park Casa del Campo but could not pass the obstacle afforded by the cement embankment of the Manzanares River. The advantage passed to the Government forces, advantage given by the short interior lines of communication, where troops and supplies could be moved by street-car, soldiers could be fed in restaurants instead of at makeshift field-kitchens. The members of the Defence Committee had had organisational experience and were competent in dealing with the militiamen and citizens. This in contrast to the entire lack of sympathy between the Fascist officers and the Spanish people in districts behind their lines, (it is plain that Franco never succeeded in building up a Spanish army, but had to rely upon Moors and legionaries, before the arrival of German and Italian soldiers).

Cox paints clear pictures of life in Madrid at this period, showing the way in which control was established and life became calmer even under bombardment. There was no more shooting at shadows and lighted windows in the drive to clear out the 5th column of Franco.

During the attempt on the University city on the north end of Madrid, the International Column showed its capacity for dogged tenacity, combined with dash on occasion, in the gruelling fight from building to building and room to room. The value of this force of trained and thoroughly convinced men is apparent, both for the immediate task of the defeat of Fascist invasion in Spain and for future clashes in other countries between the two class groupings. The task on the University City sector was particularly difficult, since the suburbs on the north are open, with fields right up to the Castellana Avenue, leading to the heart of the city. The losses in dead and wounded suffered by the first two brigades of the International Column in the first *month* after their arrival are significant; they are estimated at 900 out of 1,900 and 700 out of about 1,500. Cox gives short accounts of the outstanding members of the Column, who they are and what they have done: Beimler, Renn, Hans, Richard, Kleber, Galliani, Nicoletti, Cornford, Macartney, Ralph Fox and many others.

An account is given of the bombing of Madrid. It is plain that batteries, barricades and concentrations of troops were not the only targets. The Fascist aviators evidently received photographs of the military objectives, but loosed their bombs for the most part over crowded points such as the Puerta del Sol, or over hospitals. After attempting to destroy the morale of the inhabitants by bombing, the planes would swoop down and open up machine-gun fire on the crowds. Cox's account should give the lie to the excuse of bombing military objectives. At the same time, it is necessary to realize that Franco did not send masses of planes to blow Madrid off the face of the earth, for his supporters possessed valuable property in the city.

The book gives us an impression of order and calmness in the defence; Madrid became a well fortified stronghold, with firmly cemented barricades, a stronghold able to keep out Franco once he lost the advantage given to his trained troops by operations in the open country. *The Defence of Madrid* is a chronicle of the smashing of the myth of Fascist invulnerability.

J. SANDERS.

A Literary Challenge

The Novel and the People. By Ralph Fox. Francis White Publishers. $1.50.

THE FRESH MIND and vigorous pen of Ralph Fox is no more. Fox gave up his life in the first days of this year while serving with the International Brigade in Spain. In this posthumous book, however, he has left a literary testament that will—or should—arouse controversy among readers and writers of all shades of opinion.

In it is expressed a definite viewpoint on literature of the past, a caustic comment upon its condition to-day, and a challenging hope for its future. In short, it is a Marxist analysis of literature and its place in the world.

Touching as it does upon so many controversial matters, it may be difficult for the average person to evaluate such a work as this with an open mind; yet above all it needs to be read without bias. Fox may have been aware of this danger, but does not always, I think, make sufficient safeguard against it. The Marxist will accept his conclusions; the ordinary person may find it hard to do so without additional evidence, because Fox has not always been explicit in his logic.

Nevertheless readers, and writers particularly, will find a great deal of food for thought in his thesis. He discusses "the supreme humiliation of the artist . . . of not knowing what to think about life," and states that at present "The artist does not know what to think of life. Yet the artist cannot create life unless he dares to think about life. He may make a little picture of unimportant people, or he may dissect a harmless emotion very nicely, but he will not create life without thought." The solution of this problem he puts in this fashion: " . . . the solution to the difficulties of the novelist, the solution which can alone restore the epic character of reality to his art is a revolutionary one, one that recognizes the truth of our modern society." And again: "Without Marxism there is no approach to that essential truth which is the chief concern of the writer."

Fox answers those who will declare that he takes the narrow view of life and the functions of the novelist by asserting that "there is no human character, no emotion, no conflict of personalities outside the scope of the revolutionary novelist."

His chapter "Death of the Hero" is a plea for the recognition of the scientist, the modern big business man and capitalist, as well as the worker, their place and their powers in the present social order, as live material for the serious novelist. He uses the story of the Reichstag fire and Dimitrov's trial as an example of a modern epic "which demands that the artist should give it life."

The Novel and the People is a book to be read and pondered over, whether in the end one can accept its conclusions or not. In any event the reading of it will provoke the thoughtful

writer to a deeper consideration of his art. "The revolutionary task of literature to-day," the author says, "is to restore its great tradition, to break the bonds of subjectivism and narrow specialisation, to bring the creative writer face to face with his only important task, that of winning the knowledge of truth, of reality."

R. S. ANDREWS.

Behind the Campus

The Tree Has Roots. By Mary Jane Ward. E. P. Dutton and Co. $2.50.

THIS FIRST NOVEL is a story of the underpinnings of a small university. It deals with the living problems upon whose mechanical surfaces a university depends for efficient operation. Such people as the superintendent of grounds, the spinster dietitian, the Common Room waitresses, night watchman, repairmen, are the principal characters. The novel is concerned, in fact, with those persons in and about a college whom the staff and the undergraduates scarcely see.

These people emerge from the pages of the novel with complete conviction. Now that you come to think of it, that's exactly what you remember too, about the old organist, and it's what you deeply suspect about the little secretary in old Bundert's office. The characters are more than probable, they are authentic, clearly recognizable on any college campus. At times, although the treatment is sympathetic, the author shows an almost uncomfortable degree of penetration into human motives. The novel is skilfully constructed, compactly built up, with an interesting accelerando of movement which ends in the crashing crescendo of a night fire at its conclusion.

The author of *The Tree Has Roots* has provided thoroughly good reading entertainment, and seems very adequately to have solved one of the most difficult problems of the fiction writer—that of successfully combining honest, realistic, noncompromising writing with a strong popular appeal.

LUELLA CREIGHTON.

The Latest Straw

Straw Without Bricks: I Visit Soviet Russia. By E. M. Delafield. Macmillan Company of Canada. $2.50.

Give Me Liberty. By Rose Wilder Lane. Longmans, Green and Co. $ .60.

ONE MIGHT quite properly dismiss E. M. Delafield's *Straw Without Bricks* with the remark that it is entertaining but slight. But the author lays herself open to more serious criticism this time by the last sentence in her foreword: "One can only add that straws, in their frail, irresponsible fashion, are sometimes thought to show which way the wind blows." The implication is that *Straw Without Bricks* may be taken to suggest trends in the Soviet Union. It is more likely to suggest which way Miss Delafield's opinions blow. She noses out details of exasperating inefficiency, political repression, self-satisfaction, the stifling of individuality. Yet what are we to make of a sweeping statement like this– "It is evident," she says, "that enormous progress is being made all over the country in civilization, and that the coming generation is to have a fair chance of acquiring health, and education, and a limited amount of culture." She concedes this progress, "admits" it several times. But twice, at least, she speaks of the "reversion" to barbarism.

You feel that it would have been better, even for the purposes of a book of this sort, if the author had looked into the literature "which", she confesses, "I know myself to be more or less incapable of assimilating intelligently". In her diary books E. M. Delafield endearingly (if you like it) makes much capital of her own frailness and irresponsibility, and that is the secret of her popularity as a humorous writer. Here the humour is pretty thin. To write a really funny book about the Soviet Union, or even about herself in the Soviet Union, far greater comprehension is required than she possesses.

Rose Wilder Lane is neither frail nor irresponsible. She has a very definite axe to grind, in *Give Me Liberty,* and she grinds it very well. She, too, has a trick to disarm you. "Sixteen years ago," she writes, "I was a Communist." Here, we are led to believe, is no naïve acceptance of things-as-they-are. The author has been about, has investigated life and ideas at first hand in many parts of the world. Knowing the very worst about America, she loves her just the same, and tells you why, in dignified, well-considered, language. Her stand is this: there is no social order in America, no system; there are no capitalists because a clergyman may be a financier to-morrow and a dirt-farmer the day after; Americans are a free people and the price they willingly pay for their freedom is insecurity and individual responsibility. She begs us to forget charts and statistics, to look at America instead. We do, through Rose Wilder Lane's own eyes. We see city police and militia driving the unemployed from closed factories and city streets forty years ago (probably in the name of the "order" which does not exist). We see "patriotic Americans, from American families as old as my own, who have been tried and sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment for editing a magazine friendly to the Soviet experiment"—(in the name of order?)—just after the war. She neglects to show us the parallels of these happenings in 1936, but anyhow these particular pictures are not significant to her. She simply knows they are there and can take it. We can't.

MARJORIE KING.

Front Page Drivel

Front Page Editorials. By Frank Carrel. *Chronicle-Telegraph,* Quebec.

FEW REACTIONARY Canadian newspapers devoting column space to attacks on labor organization and progressive thinking, under the red flannel petticoat of bolshi-baiting, are as disarmingly frank in explaining why they do it as is the Quebec *Chronicle-Telegraph.* In this small pamphlet of "Front Page Editorials" devised by Frank Carrel and reprinted from that sterling publication, the following has prominent place:

> For more than twenty-five years
> Socialism and Communism
> Have been knocking
> At the doors of Capitalism
> And slowly, but surely,
> Forcing their way
> Through the doors—
> With Capitalism ever looking on,
> In quiet complacency.
> Is it not time,
> That Capitalists
> Joined in a body,
> Without fear or trepidation,
> To use the only medium
> To hurl back attacks on Socialism and Communism
> In full page advertisements
> In all daily newspapers–

It is hardly likely that the *Chronicle-Telegraph* lost out in the scramble for just such advertising plums that Mr. Bennett distributed as part of his last fatal federal election campaign. Tearsheets of display advertisements fulminating against the Moscow Menace with which the ex-Prime Minister plastered Quebec Province are still treasured as heirlooms by wags with a flair for the fun in party politics. Now that such manna no longer falls, the *Chronicle-Telegraph* licks its chops recalling the flavour, and hopes piously that Capitalists will "join in a body" and replenish the diet.

The editorial, "A Sad Retrospect" might be more explicity captioned "Lament for Samuel Insull". It sets a new low for vulgarity.

> Can you see with us
> A man becoming wealthy, cultured,
> Buying a big house
> Employing many servants,

Entertaining and spending money,
All of which gives employment . . .
And then a market crash—
And all is sacrificed . . .
That was the story of Samuel Insull's
Rise and fall
In the gambling world,
But through it all
This man rendered a service to mankind
In a constructive way
Which gave employment . . .
We should not forget him
For his good deeds,
For such men are less in evidence
In our present day civilization.

The S.P.C.A. and domiciled Nazi will root for this one:

The easiest way for every German citizen
To get himself into trouble
Is to ill treat a horse.
Germans have made heroes
Of their war horses,
Giving them every care and comfort.
What an example
To those of other nations
Who ill treat their animals!

Making hay out of Quebec's miserable living standards, the lowest in the Dominion, Carrel writes:

According to the Dominion Labor Department
Quebec is the cheapest Province
In which to live . . .
With such a record
Quebec should attract more factories than Ontario
Why does she not do it–

Rudolph Hess, Hitler strong arm man who minimized the June purge of high ranking Nazis to "a dozen deserved deaths" is applauded for restraint and pious soothsaying:

Speaking of Spain, Hess said:
"Month after month,
Year after year,
Germany has raised its voice in warning.
As proof
Stands the frightful bonfire of Spain.
Men and women are burned alive,
Children are crucified,
Irreplaceable treasures are destroyed,
And the mortal remains of the dead are violated.
In Spain Bolshevism shows itself
In its true nakedness."
Hess is right!

This morsel is captioned *How True!*

A word on the typographic mannerism of Herr Carrel. His curious presentation is reminiscent of the Archie and Mahitabel free verse poems of Don Marquis. Scorning the conventional typographic formula for editorial matter, Mr. Carrel chops his text into irregularly spaced lines and sets them one on top of another like a column of figures in simple addition. The impulse to draw a line horizontally under his word column and work for a total must be overcome, however. The *Chronicle-Telegraph* editorials add up to nothing.

EDGAR ROBINSON.

Life Among the Communists

This is Your Day. By Edward Newhouse. McLeod. $2.50.

THE LIFE OF A COMMUNIST is no facile way of escape from individual problems. This is made clear in Newhouse's current novel where we again find the Gene Marsay of *You Can't Sleep Here,* now a more balanced Gene as a party organizer. Early in the story he marries Alma Darvas, an undergraduate who is also in the revolutionary movement. No sooner are they married than Gene is sent out for an indefinite period of organizational work in a farm area. Newhouse writes of the difficulties facing young people in and on the verge of the Communist ranks with simplicity and understanding. When the story opens Alma has more charm than conviction, more zest in living than intellectual curiosity. Not that she ever questions the necessity for accepting the Marxian conclusions, but rather that she feels little individual responsibility for action. After the separation she ceases to drift and plays a more co-operative part. She is suspended from university for her work in an anti-war strike. Finally, in a paper mill, she comes up against the sweating reality of the workers' lot.

Staking everything on economic security, Alma's brother Harold has deserted the left movement. His fate is that of the toad whose desperate attempts to retain his self-respect by rationalism fail to convince even himself. He is the best drawn character in the book. Possibly the conception of Gene is autobiographical; at any rate, while we know what he does and thinks on the surface, we do not find the same sharp analysis of motive that so superbly rounds the characterization of Harold. The latter's pursuit and seduction of his rather pathetic little student Dorothy is developed with clever incident and suspense. In fact, it is rather a fault in the novel that there is too great a shift of interest from the main characters to the secondary ones.

Since he matured in a world of depressions, for Newhouse there is no gulf between his convictions and his habits of life and thought. He accepts the struggle for change without the waverings and doubts which torture and hamper the proletarian writers who have not cut their wisdom teeth in left circles. He knows his generation—what is important and what is unimportant to its values. Thus his utterance of the new standards is completely unselfconscious. He writes easily—and as he feels, and this gives unfaltering movement and power to his story. What he lacks in profundity he makes up in vigor. In portraying human relationships Newhouse excels. He has a sure touch in revealing the fine nuances of feeling. The emotional episodes are sketched with brevity and are never lost in the maudlin. If interest is what one seeks in a novel *This Is Your Day* has a generous measure to commend it to the reader.

C. WARREN.

The Soviets for Children

Red Comet — A Tale of Travel in the U.S.S.R. By Geoffrey Trease. Francis White Publishers. 75c.

WHEN PETER AND JOY discover the secret of the locked shed in Dalton, their great adventure begins. Dalton is a "grey mill town on the steep flanks of the Lancashire hills". The secret is a red and silver monoplane which the inventor, Houghton, had tried to market in England without success.

After Peter and Joy courageously foil the attempts of a mysterious marauder to damage the plane, Houghton offers to take them to the U.S.S.R. where he hopes to sell it. And so, on a lovely April morning, they take off in the "Red Comet" and soar into the flaming sunrise of the north east.

In Leningrad and Moscow they visit the new workers' apartments with huge windows to let in the sun. They gaze in wonder at grand old St. Isaac's Cathedral whose domes are inlaid with wonderful stones, jasper, malachite and porphyry. They thrill to the glorious May Day spectacle of streaming banners, tanks, aeroplanes and happy dancing crowds.

After a tour of golden Kiev and the Children's Theatre, the expedition has a thrilling escape from death when they are rescued by a group of camping pioneers. They make many new friends and are impressed with the happiness and completeness of the life of a Soviet child in school and at home.

As in *Bows Against the Barons* and *Walking in England,* the author, Geoffrey Trease has told a splendid story, simply and well. The psychological effect of the "escape" adventure situation, so common in tales for children, has here, however, been constructively used. *Red Comet* should prove popular with girls and boys from 10 to 14 years of age.

ANNE GUSAK.

Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Unhappiness

Let Me Live, The Autobiography of Angelo Herndon. Random House, $2.50.

MOST READERS will be amazed and indignant to learn to what lengths the reactionaries and Negro lynchers have gone in their efforts not to let Angelo Herndon live. But this surprise will quickly give way to a growing bewilderment as to how this young Negro class hero has actually survived in the face of the incredible tortures of body and soul to which he has been subjected.

Angelo was born into a background of black poverty in both senses of the adjective. He was a Negro and his father was piteously poor. Poverty forced Angelo to go to work in the mines at the age of thirteen. The fact that he is black and his heroic pride in the right of his race to equal consideration with white people, led at once to the series of frightful persecutions which ended in his being sentenced to 20 years in a Georgia chain gang. The charge was one of insurrection, based on the fact that Herndon had organized an unemployed demonstration in Atlanta. The demonstration was entirely orderly but Herndon was a Communist and he had preached the necessity of black and white uniting against their oppressors. The state demanded the death sentence. While his lawyer appealed the case from court to court right up to the "nine old men" at Washington, Angelo rotted for more than two years in an Atlanta prison surviving bestial beatings and deliberately degrading conditions that make descriptions of Nazi persecutions pale by comparison.

Herndon's story is one of breath taking courage made human by flashes of indomitable humor. Although he admits that the greatest terror haunting his life is the threat of lynching, he was capable of laughing in the face of the Ku Klux Klan itself. During the period just before the charge of insurrection was laid against him, Herndon was arrested almost every fortnight on various flimsy charges. On one occasion he was picked up for "vagrancy". To his surprise the judge released him on probation and gave him a letter to a man he said would give him a job. Instinctively Angelo opened the letter and found it was addressed to the Kleagle of the K.K.K. He re-addressed the letter to the *Daily Worker* in New York which played it up on the front page. Herndon clipped the story, autographed it and sent it to the judge with his "compliments".

The book is a terrible indictment of the United States South but its descriptions of Nazi-like beatings of innocent workers should serve as a warning to complacent Canadians. Only a few months ago a case of similar police brutality occurred in Calgary. A small group of unemployed men were taken into police cells and so badly beaten that several had to receive medical treatment. Their lawyer prosecuted the police but the case was dismissed by a magistrate who was a member of the police commission.

AUSTIN BEER.

Country Gentleman

The Gentleman of the Party. By A. G. Street. E. P. Dutton and Co. $2.50.

THIS IS A STORY of an English farm laborer from the year 1872 when at the age of ten he goes to work as a bird starver till 1936 when he potters about keeping an eye on the dairy herd and pondering the long history of Sutton Manor. George Simmons, hard-working, contented and loyal, is a type of the English farm laborer and the long life in which he milks cows at Sutton, helps with the haying, sees his children grow up and leave home, is typical of the lives of a vanishing class. He had never seen London or the sea. "He had given his whole life to Sutton fields with no thought of ambition or money gain; with no other desire than to obtain enough to satisfy his belly and provide a humble roof over his head."

But the book is even more the story of Sutton Manor itself. Gentlemen, farmers, carters, auctioneers crowd the pages but the land is the real hero of the piece. The land, under the hand of frivolous, grasping or obstinate masters, goes through a cycle of profound and tortuous changes, corn raising, sheep raising, dairying, war exploitation. One sees very vividly the effects on the life of the community of the fall of rents, the low level of laborer's wages, the shortage of cottages, the coming of the motor car and farm machinery. Some of the characters are slight but others, such as Bob Marsh, Sidney Pike and Silas Meade are strongly alive and their dialect is delightful. The book draws upon all Mr. Street's profound knowledge of Wiltshire farming and Wiltshire farmers.

The author's earlier book *Farmer's Glory* described his experience of homesteading in western Canada and the present novel shows the repercussions on English farming of Canadian wheat exports. Canadians who were enthusiastic over that book will enjoy this one.

MARY Q. INNIS.

On the Bottom

Rainbow Fish. By Ralph Bates. E. P. Dutton & Co. $2.50.

RALPH BATES is one of the most important of the new writers. He is a man who sees clearly, reports accurately, and has a keen sense of awareness. As if working on the wrong side of a tapestry he makes us conscious of the cause of his characters' actions, yet, in showing us this cause, he does not blur the outlines of the picture presented, as so often happens.

In his latest book, *Rainbow Fish,* Mr. Bates tells the story of a group of men who, marked by the circumstances of their lives, rejected by the world as completely as rainbow fish are rejected even by gulls, find themselves, an isolated group, at Skarpa Island, diving for sponges. With brilliance, and an ever-increasing intensity, the author sketches for us the events in the lives of a sea captain, a murderer, a poet, an anarchist, and a crook, which led to their being thrown together in intimate contact, at the camp of the Greek sponge company. We are told of their work,—of their hatreds and friendships, and of their essential qualities displayed at the test of their final dissolution.

Those critics who complained of the slow tempo in parts of *The Olive Field* will have no reason for a similar complaint in *Rainbow Fish.* The story moves rapidly, with strict economy of phrase. Mr. Bates' power of description is as vivid as ever and the book ends with a magnificent description of the struggle of a rotten vessel to weather a storm at sea. It is a book too significant to be neglected by those who would keep abreast of the best in contemporary literature.

FLOS WILLIAMS.

Emotional Socialism

The Road to Wigan Pier. By George Orwell. Ryerson Press. $2.50.

THIS SEMI-AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL WORK, an English Left Book Club selection, should serve as an excellent "first reader" for those whose sense of humanity protests at the present treatment of destitute dole-drawers and those working at starvation wages. The first part of the book is an extremely realistic and well-written picture of how the poor live in English industrial areas. Coupled with the recent Orr Report, and others, which declare that nearly half the population of Britain is undernourished, it presents an unanswerable indictment of the existing system. This part may appear to have no direct interest for Canadians; but in fact many of the conditions apply and the remedy is the same.

With the second part Orwell invites controversy—from both Left and Right. A member of the middle class educated in an English public school, he came by rather tortuous mental processes to be a socialist; but his creed will not please the orthodox. His is the attitude of the emotional socialist. Many phases of the movement to-day come in for his criticism. Half-truths and personal prejudice mar some pages; but at the same time there is sufficient truth to serve as a warning to those socialists

who are inclined to extreme dogmatism and bigotry to put their house in order. They must do so, he believes, if they are to swell their ranks from the middle classes and office workers.

Taken as a whole, the book has a special interest as an exposition of the decent middle-class mind striving to overcome its snobbishness and prejudices and side with its natural partner, the working class. Orwell admits these mental hurdles—but his book indicates that he has not entirely surmounted them all. A Foreword, written by Gollancz, the publisher, for Left Book Club members, adds considerable interest to the whole. Taking the view point of the scientific socialist, he gives battle to the author on some of the most contentious statements, leaving the reader open to make his own choice.

R. S. Allen.

Libel on Lucifer

Lucifer in Pine Lake. By Samuel Rogers. Little, Brown & Co. $2.50.

There must be several thousand people in the University town of Pine Lake, and each individual must reflect something of his milieu, whether academic, mercantile or artisan. Out of them all Samuel Rogers picks the least interesting hero, the most boring and limited social set, and the lightest reflection of that narrow environment around which to write a novel. Hugh Trowbridge is no Lucifer. After a boyhood and youth absolutely centred in the straitest of egos, pillowed in selfish complacency, what heights of glory had he known to fall from? What he might have been does not suggest Lucifer; the flaming arch-angel acted before he became arch-devil, and there is no indication that Hugh was capable of any action. Even the rape of his quondam mistress, while definite enough for such a short-circuited receptivity as his, was forced on him by the repulse of his wife, and he raped as an animal hunts, by instinct. Lucifer was capable of planned wickedness, and when his plans fell to earth, firmaments clashed, and the voids resounded. Hugh never left the earth, and grovels there still, for all we know or care. Then why "Lucifer"?

Jane, the mistress, and Maggie, the wife, are human beings; old Professor Trowbridge might have been a man; Jane's husband, Babbit though he is, has possibilities, and would make a better subject of a novel than does Hugh, even though we are told that the work is a perfect study of hedonism. Again, why write a perfect study of hedonism, and if one must, why not write of the perfect hedonist? Unless he shares that distinction with every grub on a lettuce leaf, Hugh is no more a hedonist than he is perfect. The perfect hedonist must be conscious of his philosophy, must savour it, sniff the bouquet and roll the wine beneath his tongue. Hugh is a snivelling spoiled boy. This book has been highly acclaimed and the publishers in their blurb say it is a novel "which in every way fulfils the expectations aroused by the author's earlier work". We have not read Mr. Rogers' earlier work, and after *Lucifer in Pine Lake,* are still wondering why we should.

B. A. Ward.

Earthly Discourse. By Charles Erskine Scott Wood. Vanguard Press. $2.00.

By using the device of imaginary dialogue, Mr. Wood has landed devastating blows on such evils as William Randolph Hearst, the reactionaries of the Supreme Court, the Vigilantes of California and the fascist dictators of the world. Nothing more powerful has been published than his conversations between God, Satan and Hearst. The passages between James Madison and John Marshall are not only an education in American history but a slashing indictment of the usurpation of power by Marshall for the benefit of the ruling classes then operating through the Federalist Party. The discourses are brilliant, witty and extremely effective. They are the outspoken opinions of a man who hates sham, injustice and the reactionary forces wherever they may be found.

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