PACIFIC WEEKLY

A NEWS-MAGAZINE OF WESTERN OPINION

DECEMBER 28, 1934

Freedom of the Free Press

The treatment of Redfern Mason by the San Francisco Examiner is a Contemptible Outrage

Movies as Propaganda

$2 A YEAR VOL. I NO. 10 10 CENTS A COPY

PACIFIC WEEKLY

VOL. I FRIDAY, DECEMBER 28, 1934 NUMBER 10

INTRODUCTION

I AM sending forth this issue of the magazine with hope and fervor. It has been endearingly nurtured; may it be sympathetically received. It has not reached what might be termed its Sunday presentation garb, either in text or format, but it is on its way and boldly.

PACIFIC WEEKLY intends to be much more than appears on the face of this issue. It intends to be—it is determined to be—an honest, straightforward, untrammeled magazine, presenting the truth as it comes and giving no quarter where it believes the truth is essential in clarifying any cause and providing weapons for the battle.

PACIFIC WEEKLY aims to provide a medium for the expression of opinions; it aims to provide a vehicle for the culture west of the Rockies. Space will be devoted to art, drama, music, science and such literary expression as short stories, sketches and poetry as well as to politics, finance and current events.

The policy as to politics and current events will be to report what is considered of interest and importance which may not infrequently include news that is suppressed in the newspapers. The scientific attitude will be taken in reporting, but no schools of thought in politics or finance will be supported editorially. Individual contributors may say what they wish on their own responsibility.

Above all, we shall print the truth as nearly as we can determine the truth and the chips may fall exactly where they will.

W. K. BASSETT

CONTENTS

NOTES AND COMMENT

THE JAPANESE have adopted to themselves hypocrisy. It must have been native to them as it is to the Chinese. They take to it naturally. Their "face" has none of the grace that the Chinese has. They have had none of the centuries of practice that the Chinese have had and so, you see, their hypocrisy is much more like ours, more obvious, brutal, stupid. The Japanese pretences to equal rank with us and the British are all on the surface; they cannot believe themselves the reasons they give.

* *

RECENTLY a correspondent from the east, in California for the first time in some years, remarked: "This is certainly the leading State in the Union. Class divisions are accentuated here as in no other State and the whole struggle is sharpened."

One has but to read his daily paper—no, that statement—a clichè—is incorrect. Reading your daily paper will not do it. For the daily papers are not reporting the news these days. As one wit put it, "I read the papers, so I don't know what's going on." They prefer not to call too much fascist action by its real name because more and more fascist action is being carried out under the name of the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, Democracy, Justice and Americanism.

It is only by this kind of veiled fascism that American liberals can be taken in.

Last week a discharged juror and the district attorney of Sacramento charged the International Labor Defense, the organization which provides legal defence for workers, with sending eighteen men around to threaten death to any who should serve on the jury which is sitting on the Criminal Syndicalism cases there. A few weeks earlier another man, a supposed witness-to-be, said he had been kidnapped and ridden out of town on pain of death. He was found in a different town from the one where he said he went, and his landlord disproved his charges. But the prosecution continued him as a witness.

This week a new high in chicanery has been reached. District Attorney McAllister and Deputy District Attorney Buchel are charged by Defense Attorney Leo Gallagher with tampering with the jury. McAllister had stated that the mother of one of the defendants, Jack Warnick, had called on one of the discharged jurors, Mrs. Rose, in order to influence her. Gallagher asked for court to be adjourned then and there to Mrs. Rose's house in order to get her version before she could be reached by the district attorney's office. They went, and Mrs. Rose testified under oath that she had never seen Mrs. Warnick, but she had sent a brace of ducks, and visited with, and had friendly telephone conversations with Deputy District Attorney Buchel.

The defendants, including Caroline Decker, stand to get 84 years in jail, tried by a jury picked by sheriffs and friends of *this* district attorney's office.

* *

THERE is a myth to the effect that America had (the extremist mythologists say *has*) a free press. An article elsewhere in this issue tells of the latest fight between the organized newspapermen in the Newspaper Guild and the employers-and-government. But the humbug of the Free Press claim! As you drive into San Francisco you see a huge billboard which reads:

SAN FRANCISCO NEWS
UNBIASSED, UNBOSSED
THE NEWSPAPER WITH NO
CONFLICTING INTERESTS

Several of the editorials of Heywood Broun, whose column is a feature of the Scripps-Howard syndicate which owns the *News*, have been suppressed in this paper recently. On December 21, when he remarked that Donald Richberg seemed to have lost his friendliness for labor by dining out a little too often with the great and the near-great, and anyone who attempted to stoop with him would lose the championship, the column was suppressed after the first edition in the San Francisco *News*...Like the column on the famous July 17.

Unbiassed and unbossed? Tommyrot!

* *

WHERE DOES the money in Russia come from—and go to?

The budget holds the key to the basic difference between Russian economy and that of the rest of the world. There is one budget for the whole U. S. S. R. It includes Republican and local finances. In 1933 it reached the enormous total of 48 billion rubles. This is three times greater than that of the United States and four times greater than that of Great Britain. Why? Because it represents not only administrative, defensive and social expenditures, but four-fifths of the national economy. Four-fifths of the national income of Russia is now socialized. This budget includes new capital for reinvesting. Private capital is insignificant. What society saves as surplus is now in the hands of the State. The needs of the current year satisfied, the savings are alloted to certain regions or industries that need strengthening in the planned upbuilding of society as a whole. These allotments make the real difference. They are never meant to be repaid or to draw interest. They are spent. It entitles the State as a stockholder to 10 per cent of the ultimate profits That is all. Practically speaking it goes immediately back into society, creating work and thereby new real wealth. It becomes consumer pow-

er. Savings in Russia does not represent debt to some one or some class, as it does in the rest of the world. Savings in Russia is outright ownership to new enterprise. There is no piling up of debt. No frozen capital looking for profitable investment. No unhealthy ratio of what the nation saves to what it spends. No stoppage of the circulation of capital. No export of savings drawn from the nation as a whole. It is returned to the people for creating new means of raising the standard of living. That free return makes possible the continuance of the productive process.

It is interesting to see how this "saving" process takes place. How does the State receive the means of expansion?

The bulk of the savings is made through a turn-over tax on all commodities. There are also direct taxes in the form of income, rent, agriculture, cultural, excess profits, excise and stamp tax. There is the wealth from the natural resources of field, forest and mine. There are the profits of nationalized industry, trade, transportation, communication and banking.

LINCOLN STEFFENS SPEAKING--

THIS COLUMN is going to offer everybody a very seasonable, original and sincere wish for these holidays: that they may change their minds. It doesn't matter how. The surest thing you know is the best place to begin. If you are a dyed-in-the-wool Republican, start there. It would feel like a bath to become a Democrat and wouldn't hurt a bit. Nor would it offend the country at large. Lots of men have tried it lately—millions; you would hardly notice any difference. Argyll Campbell tried it; he became a Republican without it making any difference inside or out. Two years ago I changed my party which made a difference only inside; hardly anybody noticed it. But I got satisfaction out of discovering that I could change my mind and be not hurt, but refreshed by the activity.

* *

Governor Merriam is doing a most un-American thing. He is levelling salaries down. We Americans have always believed in levelling up. We would rather have more millionaires getting a million dollars each than a lot of people getting five dollars a day.

* *

Reporters are discovering that they are Labor. And are they surprised? They thought they were gentlemen, whatever that is. I remember the time in New York when Richard Harding Davis and a lot of the star reporters came out carrying canes. They would no more have anything to do with a labor union than they would with any other class. There were no classes. But not long ago they began to organize the newspapermen into what looked like unions; they thought they were free to do this and they weren't and some of the best of them were fired. They may soon starve to death. They got up against the publishers and their organizations and they discovered that the publishers have power and are ready to use it and abuse it as any other possessors of power. So now the reporters, who used to be the freest and most impartial of persons find that they are not free and must not be impartial.

And these days reporters, fired and surprised, look around and they see there are plenty of "scabs" to take their places. The publishers were right about the reporters and now—well, now the publishers have got to find out about themselves, for they are in it, too. They don't know it any more than the owners of the paper know it, but they will find it out.

The parents of the quintuplets in Canada are evidently becoming jealous of their babies. Seeing how much publicity the little five are getting they are moving toward employment of a couple of publicity men for themselves.

* *

I would like to repeat an old suggestion of mine for the use of these economical days; the abolition of one house of the legislature (I would prefer two) and so save a lot of money and a lot of trouble and annual disgrace.

FUNERAL OF A PROMINENT CITIZEN

"Let us praise famous men and the fathers that begat them"

We sit within the so-called house of God
between tall pillars, hollow as the words
of this pale prelate of a bastard creed
who eulogizes, fatuously, the dead.
The slow, soft music plays; the scent of flowers
speaks to the senses, tempting to indulge
the masochistic luxury of tears.

Here sit the men and women whom he ruled
through his possessions and their bittter need.
He fattenened on their helplessness, their fears,
and when the rebel few protested, said:
"If you don't like it, get another job!"
Let only truth be spoken of the dead
whose feet were on the necks of those who toil!

—CLIFFORD GESSLER

FREEDOM OF THE FREE PRESS

by JEAN WINTHROP

THAT SMALL gray-haired man who walks about the streets reading Latin to himself—probably the most distinguished music critic on the Pacific Coast—well, he's the latest victim of the concerted attack of the American Newspaper Publishers' Association on the San Francisco Bay Metropolitan Newspaper Guild.

A scholar, an English gentleman, well past middle age—it's Redfern Mason of the San Francisco *Examiner*. You may have seen him at all the musical events in San Francisco in the last twenty-one years. He's been music critic for the *Examiner* that long.

Now he's out of a job, because he dared to be the chairman of the *Examiner* chapter of the American Newspaper Guild.

The publishers didn't say "You're fired for Guild activities". They didn't even fire Mr. Mason at all. They know too well the disturbance that follows employers who violate the famous section 7A of the National Industrial Recovery Act—the famous "guarantee" of the right of employes to organize in groups of their own chosing.

They merely made it intolerable for Mr. Mason to hold his job.

They merely said to a man who has lived music, and written music and whose whole forte has been music the best part of his life:

"You will not be required to handle music for the *Examiner* any longer."

"Does that mean I'm fired?" Mr. Mason asked his managing editor.

"Oh, no, you're not fired. You wait around. We'll find something for you to do," was the answer.

This was at the height of the opera season. Ada Hanifin, comparatively inexperienced in writing music criticism, comparatively ignorant of the entire subject, took over the opera reviews. Mr. Mason waited around.

He was not threatened with being fired. He was not threatened with a reduction in salary. He was just deprived of his function.

Finally he was told that he could have the hotel beat—a beat reserved for cub reporters, or for old, broken-down newspapermen, too decrepit physically or mentally for anything else. This scholarly, internationally known critic was told he could make something "very colorful" out of taking notes of arrivals and departures from San Francisco hotel registers. He was told there was no hurry. He could take all the time he needed to prepare himself for his new work.

Even at this he did not rebel—or, at any rate, resign—until Alexander Fried, music critic of the San Francisco *Chronicle* was hired by the *Examiner* at a substantial increase in salary, and hung his hat in Mr. Mason's office. Mr. Mason resigned.

Now, Mr. Fried was not a member of the Newspaper Guild.

Mr. Mason was an ardent, articulate and active member.

It was just ten days before his music column was taken away from him that he had been elected chairman of the *Examiner* chapter of the Guild. Oddly enough—a coincidence if there ever was one—Louis Burgess, editorial writer, had been fired from the *Examiner* just exactly ten days after he was elected chairman of the *Examiner* Guild chapter.

The regional Labor Board had decided after six months that there was "insufficient evidence to show" Mr. Burgess was fired from the *Examiner* for Guild activities. So the day after that decision against the Guild and favoring the publishers, was rendered, the Oakland *Tribune* fired three Guild members. And, oddly, Mr. Mason's difficulties with the *Examiner* began just two days after he had written a personal letter to all *Examiner* Guild members urging them to support more actively the Guild fight on the *Tribune* for the triple firing.

The only reason given Mr. Mason by the *Examiner* for taking away the music column from him after twenty-one years of service, was that his work, of late, had been "spiteful".

When Mr. Mason asked his managing editor for an example of the spitefulness, the managing editor replied:

"I have been told there was spitefulness. I don't know of an example."

With the *Examiner* it was "spitefulness".

With the *Tribune* it had been "inefficiency" on the part of the three employes, whose aggregate service amounted to 26 years—a sudden inefficiency just after they began leading the Guild chapter there—and "economy", so much economy that they were given two weeks advance pay each when they were fired. But with the American Newspaper Publishers' Association it's not "spitefulness', or "inefficiency" or "economy"—it's the American Newspaper Guild.

To be sure, Mr. Mason in a radio address, and in his column during the current opera season, had taken a few pokes at Society with a capital S; had suggested the opera was developing into more of a fashion show than a musical event—but then what music critic has not cried over this at one time or another? Mr. Mason had been taking pokes at it for years. Furthermore, Mr. Mason has been the stormy petrel of the music world in the West ever since he came here. That's why the *Examiner* hired him, kept him, featured him. They liked controversy and knew he started it. They knew it helped ciculation.

To be sure, they had some lettters this year from Socialites with wounded vanities (the chips fell where they might) who protested Mr. Mason's remarks. But then, jittery Socialites had been doing that for years. There had always been more letters of praise than letters of protest. Also, after Mr. Mason ceased writing music criticism there was a storm of mail from his following, including those who had objected to some of his observations, urging, demanding that he be restored to the music department. He was not restored.

It was even reported that the *Examiner* representatives went to the San Francisco *Chronicle* to arrange things so that Mr. Mason would not be hired by the *Chronicle* after his resignation. In some circles this would be called blacklisting. Whatever you call it, it goes to prove the solidarity of the boss' union in which to date, as Mr. Winthrop Rutlege puts it, there have been no scabs.

The Guild planned to take legal recourse to labor boards to fight the discrimination against Mr. Mason, the coercion of a Guild member. There was no attempt to make a public demonstration in a case the publishers had handled so craftily.

Although seemingly stymied before it started, the Guild demonstration against the Oakland *Tribune* nevertheless began to get results last week.

The "public demonstration" consisted of dodgers distributed to Oakland homes, telling how the *Tribune* violated the Recovery Act by firing three Guild members for organizing; of letters written to heads of organizations urging cancellation of Tribune subscriptions; of "spreading the word".

Results thus far are a reported decline of more than 3000 in the *Tribune* subscription list, and by the time this is published it is probable the *Tribune* will be boycotted by all the labor unions in the East Bay. The East Bay Labor Council passed a resolution to boycott the *Tribune* and possibly *Tribune* advertisers. The resolution was tabled until William Spooner, secretary of the labor council, could see Publisher Joseph Knowland, demand that he reinstate the three Guild members, and permit the Guild to continue to organize on his staff. If he refused, the boycott resolution was to be finally adopted. This was a voluntary move on the part of the labor council, and particularly encouraging in view of the fact that

the Guild is not affiliated with the A. F. of L.

A speakers' bureau of Guild members was preparing to speak before individual unions at their meetings, and ask funds for more dodgers.

It has been said that some persons buying the *Tribune* on the newsstands, have found the anti-*Tribune* dodger clipped to the paper. The newsboys, incidentally, have had no great love for Mr. Knowland's paper since they were fired for attempting to organize a newsboys' union.

Mr. Knowland spiked the best gun of the Guild through his control of the radio. Radio speeches had been written, and speakers engaged. When time was sought on the air—

"We're sorry," radio station operators told Guild members, "We don't dare sell you any time. We would like to. But our programs would be dropped by the Oakland papers if we let the Guild go on the air."

Each station has been "given to understand" it would become the "forgotten station" so far as the press is concerned if it sold time to the Guild.

It was a clear case of press intimidation of radio, of press ownership of radio, a clear case that there is no longer freedom of the air any more than freedom of the press.

One hope came when a radio station operator said he would give the Guild free time on the air for a debate with Mr. Knowland. When he approached Mr. Knowland, the publisher threatened him with a libel suit. Even though Mr. Knowland could not win the libel suit, the radio station could not afford the costs of fighting the case. So that hope died.

The Guild tried to buy advertising space in slides at the Ferry Building. The agents there, too, were "sorry". The *Tribune* wouldn't like it if space was sold to the Guild.

The sound truck operator in Oakland didn't dare advertise the Guild's case. He had been "given to understand" he would run into trouble with the police if he did.

When the National Labor Relations Board in Washington handed down a favorable decision in the case of Dean S. Jennings, for ten years re-write man on the *Call*, who had been fired from the San Francisco *Call-Bulletin* for Guild activities, no newspaper used the story. The next day, when, at Donald Richberg's instigation, the board went back on on its decision and decided to re-open the case, causing a Guild committee to walk out on an NRA meeting, all the newspapers used the story. But when the board re-affirmed its orginal decision, favoring Jennings, the information was withheld from newspaper readers.

In spite of all these things, the fight is still going on, helped by unaffiliated labor organizations, by national publicity, and by the few organs of local publicity which the publishers have not been able to shut off. The Guild's chin is still stuck out.

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE NEWSPAPERMEN'S GUILD

I have eaten your bread and salt;
I have drunk your water and wine,

and I know of no more fitting and appropriate manner to inaugurate my ownershp of this magazine than to pledge myself and it, body and soul, to aid you, as much as I can, in your battle against feudal journalism.

Feudal? It's an understatement. You have no way near the self-respect of serfs, or the soul-independence of slaves. "Press rats", Lincoln Steffens calls you, out of his love for you and his hatred for those who drive you. You are that, and you have been that, since first you took seats before typewriters in a newsroom. Since then you have done the bidding of your masters and there has not been a week go by that you have not buried your sense of decency and honor and integrity in order to carry out the wishes and demands of those who hire you.

For twenty-five years I served in the ranks of journalism, "on the line", and my early sense of loyalty, inbred in every newspaperman, took many of those years in which to die, but it did die and the phoenix that arose from its funeral pyre was contempt and loathing. If you have served half as long as I served, you know that contempt and that loathing. You know what you are paid to do—fabricate news, suppress news, distort news. You know the sacred cows of your publisher and how you must guard them against the odium of publicity; you know the targets of his wrath and how you must paint them in the unfairest light. You know how you sell yourself to further his ends, ends that have not one iota to do with the matter of providing subscribers of your paper with the news, honest, unprivileged and uncolored. You know his secret haunts and how you must draw a ring of safety about them; his clubs and how you must protect them from the barbs of type. You know his loves and you grant them the proper sanctity of silence, or, if in the professional category, that more remunerative sanctity of column after column of nauseous publicity. While in editorials he is preaching decency, you know how he practices indecency; while he preaches honor, you know how steeped in dishonor he is; while he preaches courage you know what a coward he is in face of powerful organizations, such as the Roman Catholic Church, for instance; while he preaches independence, you know how servile he is before his big advertisers.

You are in his confidence and you sell yourselves to further his ignoble ends. For your thirty to sixty dollars a week you are the tools of the most immoral coterie of big business men in the land.

Wouldn't you think that in the face of what you know about them and what they know you know, that there would be somewhere in their crooked manipulations a certain sense of propriety, of expedience, that would dictate a consideration of you? Why, it is as though a safe-cracker bashed his accomplice on the nose in the very act of cracking the safe!

Here they are, the publishers, whose bloody fingers have splattered gore over you, and taught you to like it, now telling you that you are to be permitted to do nothing for your own welfare and that of your families; that you may not cement yourselves in the common cause of personal betterment; that you may not organize to provide some sort of permanence to your pursuit of happiness.

I say the members of the American Newspaper Publishers' Association are immoral moralists, unfair, cowardly, small and vindictive. I know them—the Hearsts, the Metcalfs, the Howards, the Choates, the Chandlers, the Camerons, the Knowlands—what a lot of linen that can never be washed.

I owned a newspaper once that was honest up to and through the day it died, but if I owned the *Examiner, Chronicle* and *News* in San Francisco, the *Tribune* in Oakland, the *Star-Bulletin* and *Advertiser* in Honolulu, the *Herald* and *American* in Boston and the *Journal* and *Bulletin* in Providence, and knew, as their publishers know, what my reporters know about my papers, I'd be damned careful how I treated those reporters.

The wisdom of power is not great, dear hearts across the seas. You may not "get" them in time to profit for yourselves, but you'll "get" them for the reporters that are to come.

I'll try to help you.

—W. K. Bassett

THE CINEMA: TRUTH VS. TRIPE

by Winthrop Rutlege

Hollywood has never done so well at making pictures about honest artists striving to preserve something resembling integrity under a system that pays millions for tripe but not a red cent for truth. About the nearest it ever came to a sane treatment of the subject was in "The Animal Kingdom", and that, alas, was an adaptation of Philip Barry's play, which itself was a truth-tripe hybrid. No, it seems it just can't be done. In the first place Hollywood has come to confuse—and perhaps not without certain justification—artistic integrity with that type of artistic temperament whch refuses to sign a contract until the figures thereon are suffnicently imposing.

But Russia, wherein we are told the incentive to creation is a red bayonet or a bag of cabbage, can turn out such a work as "Petersburg Nights" (Columbia). Here is a film extremely difficult to dismiss with the label of "propaganda" and still one of the most powerful indictments of the feet-in-the-trough social order yet conceived. Moreover it is one of the cinema's artistic milestones, showing new and compelling ways to combine musical, visual anl natural sound effects.

It tells Dostoyevsky's tale of the young violinist and composer of the provinces, Egor Yemivov. Yemivov yearns for recognition of his genius and goes to St. Petersburg to find it. Instead he finds that the rising artist of the Czarist days must lackey and clown and kowtow to the fat patrons of the dilletantes. This demand for the surrrender of his dignity as a human enrages Egor; he speaks plainly to his prospective patrons, is catalogued an ingrate and a boor and relegated to his barren garret.

There he composes the music that aches in his blood—songs of the peasants from whom he sprang, songs of anger at the landlords' greed, songs of the wolf-winds howling hungrily over the barren steppes. Meanwhile his fellow musician, Schultz, is making the required salaams to the great and finding his monkeyshines profitable. He rises rapidly in the favor of the audiences that bulge with comfort and is soon—although a mediocre musician—renowned as a concert artist. Schultz becomes sleek, high-hatted, complacent; Egor grows old in a grizzled and threadbare dignity.

His triumph comes at the close of the film, when rebellion sweeps the workers out of a nearby factory. Attracted by their defiant chants, Egor comes close to listen and discovers that they are singing their rebel lyrics to his own compositions. They—the members of the singing horde streaming from the factory gates—have given purpose to his cries of indignation, significance to his erstwhile heartbreakingly futile life.

The soviet camera is eloquently ironic throughout the film. In one instance it introduces a "patron of the arts" by first showing a gold epaulet flowing over a bulging shoulder. Then it shifts to a rotund chest with a Czarist military decoration, then to the mustachioed gargoyle of the wearer. In another scene on the steppes a blizzard is raging. Snow pelts like blown sand and the wind screams an eerie song of hunger and hate. The shriek of the wind blends into a symphonic score and soon a great orchestra is telling the audience of the ancient woes and tortures of the peasants as only music can tell of them. These and many such episodes are the things that make "Petersburg Nights" an outstanding cinematic achievement. Without them the superb acting of B. Dobron Ravov and the able supporting cast would merely have resulted in another good picture.

* *

From the Gaumont-British studios comes another worthy and imaginative effort in "Little Friend" (Paramount). This film tells an old story and one not unfamiliar in Hollywood—the story of the domestic triangle. The story itself does not vary from the usual formula. There is the estrangement of husband and wife because of another man, a divorce court scene and a final reconciliation brought about by the couple's ten-year-old daughter.

Just another yarn about the ins and outs of Bourgeois family life insofar as plot is concerned, but in the manner of telling it becomes a highly stimulating piece of entertainment. For it tells its story from the standpoint of the little girl and the audience realizes the existence of the family estrangement largely through her consciousness of it. Thus the parents are rather shadowy and mysterious persons when engaged in anything but the intimate life of the household; their doings outside of it become matters of ominous bewilderment.

The circumstances of the family rift are revealed to the audience gradually and sketchily—in much the same manner as they might be absorbed and understood by the child. They are all a little unreal and terrifying; the solid and comforting things are Felicity's friendship for the errand boy around the corner who once saved her from being run down by a bus, the joyous business of being taken to the theater by her father, the solace of a visit to her bedroom by her mother and the fun of escaping her nurse on a scooter in the park.

Eventually she is dragged into the divorce courts and questioned by strangers who want to know family secrets that are none of their business. It is a terrifying experience and it drives her to an attempt at suicide, after which the wrangling parents discover the havoc they are playing with the life of their child. Nova Philbeam, who plays the role of Felicity, gives to the part not only an unusual histrionic talent but an amazing sensitivity of facial expression. Camera and sound effects are ingeniously used to symbolize the mystery and terror of adolescence. "Little Friend" is a welcome contrast to the "Annne of Green Gables" brand of honeyed hokum.

* *

"Broadway Bill" (Orpheum) is characterized by Director Frank Capra's peculiar genius for giving freshness to old yarns by his manner of narration. While it lacks the sustained qualities of gay music that characterized "It Happened One Night" and "Lady for a Day", it is still far above the run of the Hollywood mill. Its hero revolts against the life of a small factory executive and flees to the race tracks with a horse in whom he has unbounded faith. The horse justifies this faith by winning the derby over tremendous betting odds. This film, too, is more interesting for incident than for main theme. Warner Baxter has excellent opportunities as the hero, but Myrna Loy lacks the material whcih displayed her to such advantage in "The Thin Man".

ART AND PROPAGANDA

The discussion came up of art versus propaganda. It was at the stately Hollywood house of Walter Arensberg, greatest collector of modern art in the world. We sat in a room surrounded by Matisses and Picassos and Duchamps and Picabias, Kandinsky and Klee and Miro. In the next room Brancusi's gloriously graceful bird soared unnoticing of the humans below. Willard Van Dyke was showing his photographs. Scherrill Scheer was looking at them professionally: Sophie Treadwell, the playwright, and the rest of us merely artistically.

Van Dyke showed his latest: a picture of two men in front of a Barnum and Bailey circus advertisement. One is sitting, his boots in holes, his face creased; just looking, wondering, startled, perhaps, that this can be he. The other, standing, is twisting his fingers, looking straight out, too, and wondering, too: Can he be "Little man, what now?"

Can this be happening to *him*? The photograph, sharp, clear, unpretentious, is a miraculous statement of the depression come to self-respecting, strong, American working men. The attitude of the man standing, if seen on the stage, would be raved about as achievable only by the greatest actor. The photograph tells something about the depression in individual terms that has not been told before in any artistic medium.

"Well, is it propaganda?" someone shot into the silence.

"No", said Arensberg, thoughtfully. "No. That's art. Nothing in you negates anything about that picture."

So that's it! If art is great art it is also great propaganda. (Because your heart cries out at sight of these two men; your heart cries out: "Ths can't be! This must not be! We must not do this to these human beings!")

And if art is bad art, whether it has an avowed and conscious purpose or not, it is bad propaganda.

We always suspected that.

For not a "class-conscious communist" but would call that photograph great propaganda, and not an artist but would call it *tout simple*: art.

—Ella Winter

MOVIES AS PROPAGANDA

by Iris Hamilton

Recently a great Western banker said: "Let me make a nation's movies and I don't care who makes its laws". On all sides it is beginning to be realized that the movies can be great propaganda. But it is not known just how far the propaganda machine is already working through movies in the United States.

A few cats were let out of the bags durin the late lamented election. Then, W. R. Wilkerson, editor of the Hollywood *Reporter*, wrote:

This campaign against Upton Sinclair is the most effective piece of political humdingery that has ever been effected, and this is said in full recognition of that master machine that used to be Tammany.

This activity may reach much farther than the ultimate defeat of Mr. Sinclair. It will undoubtedly give the big wigs in Washington and politicians all over the country an idea of the real power that is in the hands of the picture industry. Maybe our business will be pampered a bit instead of being pushed around as it has been since it became big business.

Mr. Wilkerson wrote that a Sinclair victory was inevitable before the film industry entered the campaign.

But when it entered things took a different turn. Governor Merriam's party here in the south had a head, something that was missing before.

California should stand up and sing hosannas for their greatest state industry, motion pictures, and that same industry should, for itself, point to its work whenever some of the screwy legislation comes up in the various state legislatures during the coming months.

The industry can point with pride, and continue to point with pride. During the campaign Upton Sinclair charged Louis B. Mayer and Irving Thalberg with conspiracy to defeat him. Today one could point to conspiracy in the movies to bring Fascism to America, to put the American people into a frame of mind in which they will accept war as gleefully as in 1917, accept the crushing of labor, the labor movement and trade unions and install the totalitarian Fascist state.

Warner Brothers has taken under its wing Cosmopolitan Pictures (Hearst). Hearst is engaged in trying to cook up and lead a great Fascist movement in America. He is stressing all the trends of Fascism. He is stressing preparedness for war.

And what does Warner Brothers give us for film fare? A great epic glorifying-the-Navy picture ("Here Comes the Navy" with Jimmy Cagney), a great glorifying-the-Army picture ("Flirtation Walk", "made with the help and entire approval of the Army" San Francisco *Examiner*), and now announced is a great glorifying-the-Marine-Corps picture ("Devil Dogs of the Air"). There have been other glorifying-the-Marines pictures, and glorifying-the-Air-Force pictures we have always with us.

Columbia has recently finished "Call to Arms", advertised as a picture in which the son of a Civil War veteran joins a strike which is uttterly crushed.

There was "Gabriel Over the White House". This picture was sent to the President, who saw it—he and his wife and his secretaries—three times. Out of this picture as it was then (also a Hearst Cosmopolitan production) the President suggested cutting the war against the Soviet Union which it included, and he made a number of other suggestions that the picture present the program he intended to carry out himself. It gave the relentless war against gangsters, and the dealing with the unemployed by the fatherly goodness of the White House.

The national drive of the Roman Catholic Church toward censorship looked as if it meant only censoring too much leg, and generally salacious and vulgar scenes. But examine the pictures this censorship has declared (1) unobjectionable, (2) objectionable in places, (3) altogether objectionable. In the last list comes such pictures as "Ariane", "Of Human Bondage", "Catherine the Great" and "One More River". The middle list includes such pictures as "British Agent", "The Gay Divorcee" and the latest Mae West opus. The open Nazi pictures, the anti-labor and anti-strike and anti-Soviet and pro-war pictures have not been put on the prohibited list. What conclusion more obvious than that the censorship, starting out to make the gullible believe it is really interested only in "decency", will very quickly become political and economic? Why not? But let's not all be taken in all the time.

Then there's the lovely story of "The President Vanishes". Recently Hearst editorials have been foaming at the mouth about "disloyal pictures" and disloyal Americans who make up the disloyal audiences who go into the traitorous houses which present the treasonable pictures. "Pictures should not be propaganda; they should be entertainment only", bellows one editorial. And another (December 22):

DISLOYAL PICTURES

It is gratifying to record the failure in New York of a motion picture loaded with radical propaganda.

It proved, as it deserved to prove, a box-office flop.

In this radical and ridiculous film every government official, except the President, was held up to subversive ridicule as incompetent or corrupt or both.

Every employer of labor or owner of property was represented as a plunderer of the proletariat, an enemy of the people.

The picture was an attack on constitutional government and the American plan of industrial organization, the purpose being not to reform either but to destroy both.

Such pictures should not have to wait for the disapproval of a loyal public.

Their scenarios should be scrapped before production begins.

Now what do you think this "disloyal picture" was? None other than "The President Vanishes", directed and produced by Walter Wanger and released through Paramount. It tells the story of the making of a war by a newspaper publisher, a big financier and a munitions man for their own private profit, and how that war was stopped by the President who arranged his own kidnapping and broadcast to the American people that he was for peace.

But this is what happened before the picture was released: At a week-end party at the San Simeon ranch recently there were invited as guests, the founders of the Liberty League, then in California to start their branch here, E. F. Hutton, John J. Raskob and Irenee DuPont; German Fascist Ambassador Hans Luther, Italian Fascist Minister of Labor Rossoni, and members of the Navy League. Mr. Hearst telephoned to Mr. Wanger and asked him if he would send "The President Vanishes" up to the San Simeon ranch for his guests to see. Mr. Wanger did. There was consternation in the ranks. What to do? The next day the Will Hays' office, which had passed the picture, stopped it. There was frantic transcontinental wiring and telephoning. Mr. Wanger was reported to be threatening suit against the Paramount Company for non-release of his picture. (Gabriel made a lot of money.) Rumors flew. The picture was stopped, the picture was drastically cut, the President approved, the picture could not be shown.

Last week it was released. The New York *Times* reported that cuts were painfully noticeable. Walter Wanger, in the papers, fulminated against censorship.

But this is the best joke if all: *The Daily Worker* and the *New Masses*, far from considering it Communist propaganda and gloating over it, called it a "dangerous piece of Fascist demagogy" The *Daily Worker* said:

The fact that war is staged to safeguard and further the interests of a small group of capitalists, for instance, is a fact which has by now so thoroughly saturated the consciousness of the masses, that in "The President Vanishes" this truth is conceded in order that the fraud of the film's lesson might be carried to a higher level.

The President of the United States and his cabinet are our sole guarantee against wars waged for profit. Their only concern is to safeguard the interests of the "people", etc. The inescapable conclusion reached by the spectator is that should war be declared with the full concurrence and consent of the President, then certainly that would NOT be a war for profit behind which stand the bankers and the industrialists, but an honorable war, a necessary war deserving the support of "all the people". That is also the essential significance of the "take the profit out of war" sham. Call it subtle propaganda. Call it obvious propaganda. Call it what you will. It's there in the Capitalist press, radio, movies, etc.

HORMONES: MESSENGERS OF THE GODS

by D. T. MacDougal

The fact that growth of the body, and operations of all its organs are started, stopped, slowed down or accelerated by secretions from the glands is commonplace knowledge.

So thorough is this glandular control that it may truly be said that a man is a complex product of his glands. Incentives, ambition, physical vigor, mental activity, temperament, personality, morals, vices and virtues, accomplishments, tastes and capacities, all these are shaped by the action of these arbiters of individual destiny.

Defectives are mostly so because of defective glands. In some cases the failure may be remedied by transplantations from other animals, or by supplying the secreted substances. Once the active principle of a glandular secretion is identified, the chemist sets about the task of compounding in the laboratory. Sometimes he succeeds.

Naturally the attention of the scientist has been chiefly on these "activators" in the animal body. The univerality of living matter is such, however, that its fundamental characters are present in all living things, plant or animal.

Thus there is formed in shoots of green plants substances which affect activities n distant parts of the roots and stems. Growth promoting substances are produced both by plants and animals.

Some inkling of the matter began to appear in the writings of plant scientists some twenty-five years ago. Great progress was made in developing a knowledge of growth hormones by the eminent Dutch scientist, Professor Went, who was a visitor in Carmel several years ago, and who described the results of some of his discoveries to the Garden Club at the Highlands.

Now *auxin*, or growth hormone, is, as the term indicates, simply a messenger. New cells are not built from *auxin* or from *rhizocaline*, the special messenger to the roots. These Paul Reveres simply give the alarm and start the generative layers of cells into action. These elements, using leaf-products and minerals from the soil, form new wood-bark, roots, etc.

Growth hormones prove to be weak acids, like very, very weak lemonade, and are most easily extracted from bud scales and leaf tips, where they are in great abundance.

It perforce takes away some of the romance of discovery to learn that substances so nearly identical as to produce similar effects may be extracted from refuse of the lowest sort outside of plants.

If you were to moisten one side of the growing part of a stem or grass blade with a solution of growth hormone, using a small, pencil-pointed camel's-hair brush, a curvature would result, because the growth on the wetted side would soon excel that on the opposite flank.

As I write, the brownish scales on the buds of the Monterey pines are beginning to elongate, and those on their basal parts to spread out, uncovering tender, delicate greenish surfaces of the upper part of the bud. This condition indicates that the growth messengers have been released and are now well down toward the bases of the trunks of even the tallest pines. The signal of spring has been given, and the paper-thin sheet of cambium between bark and wood has already begun to develop new wood cells on its inner side, and new bark cells on the outer surface. The increase from month to month may be detected by accurately-made calipers or by specially-designed appartus.

The whole cylindrical sheet of cambium of the pine trunk generally wakens when signalled by the messenger. Not so the roots. These sprawling, wriggling, crooked organs do not show such regular behavior. Some elongate, pushing their delicate tips through the soil many inches in a month and at the same time increase in thickness. Some grow only at the tips. Others fail utterly to awaken. This unsystematic action is responsible for the lack of symmetry in root systems. The branches and trunks of some desert trees appear equally unbalanced for

similar reasons. All tapering, strong and beautiful tree trunks are the result of perfect reactions to growth hormones. So are all sound, sane and strong men whose full faculties have been wakened by the messengers of the gods. Both trees and men are living mechanisms more complex than any political state. Both are controlled by decentralized powers, from which messengers, as of the gods, transmit the signals for balanced action to all parts of the organism.

BLACK KITTEN

by William Saroyan

Everything got duller and duller in the city during the summer, so I got up one morning and took a street car to the waterfront. I got aboard a nickel ferry and crossed the bay to Oakland. I walked out of Oakland and began lifting my thumb, headed south. An insurance salesman picked me up and we had a long conversation. He was a man of sixty who was tired of working like a slave and wondered if all his efforts would ever come to anything. I don't try to answer his question. I rode about thirty miles with him.

Now I was in the hills and it is not easy to get a lift in the hills because the automobiles are going fast and the drivers are thinking of getting out of the hills as soon as possible and if you are standing on the side of the highway hitch-hiking, the people going by in automobiles hardly notice you.

I found a black kitten. It was wailing and after I talked to it awhile it was very affectionate. It was the most affectionate kitten I have ever known. It loved to be near someone so much it kept leaping onto my leg and running up. It was a splendid little cat, only very lonesome, and anything lonesome is a little pathetic. Everybody is lonesome, but certain circumstances make some people forget how lonesome they are, such as the circumstance of being married, but on the whole no one is ever wholly cured of being lonesome. It is a part of the heritage of man. All anyone ever does is conceal how lonesome he is, but this little kitten couldn't conceal how lonesome it was and it kept wailing so sadly I had to take it into my hands and stroke its head and talk to it. Some of the people who were going by in automobiles saw what I was doing and smiled and if there were children in the automobiles the children would point and wave and lean toward me and then turn around and keep looking until they couldn't see any more. Just a kitten, but maybe you get the idea. The communion of the lost. The fraternity of those unsettled. Something of the sort. I wondered if I would ever get a ride and if I did, I wondered what I would do about the little kitten. It was really a splendid little cat and it would probably be an excellent playmate for a small child and I hoped somebody would want to keep it and feed it milk.

An elderly man in a Buick coupe slowed down and opened the door of his car. I see you have a cat, he said. Yes, sir, I laughed. It is lost and very unhappy.. Ah, too bad, said the old man. How far you going? he said. All the way, I said: Los Angeles, maybe San Diego. I'm not going that far, he said. I'm going down the road about six miles. Want to ride? Sure, I said.

I lifted the cat toward the man, not wanting to ask him in so many words if he wouldn't consider keeping the little homesick thing, asking the question rather with the expression of my face, which the old man understood and answered with a frown. I got into the automobile, holding the cat. Do you mind if I take this kitten with me these six miles? I said. It is lost in these hills and I'm afraid it will get run over. It is a fine little cat and some child might like it very much. I'll turn it loose in some small town down the road and maybe it will find some little child.

The old man said he didn't know how such a little cat could find its way into the hills in the first place, and then he told me how much he hated cats because when he was a child a cat had once scratched his face and upset the balance of his mind for days, making him dream day and night of cats tearing him to pieces.

Anyway, the old man got me out of the steepest hills and I got another ride from a Jewish fellow who had an old Ford truck and said he was in the hauling business and business was bad because his truck couldn't carry much and people weren't sending stuff around much. He talked about the cat, too, and he said a dog was good to protect things, but a cat was best for catching mice. I told him it was true, and we didn't say anything more for two or three miles. Then he wanted to know if I had ever been in Vienna and I told him I hadn't. He said he was born in Vienna, and I didn't know just what to say because I couldn't quite figure out what he expected me to say. So I said Vienna was the home of fine waltzes. People think so, he said, but waltzes aren't everything. We were always half starved, he said, in Vienna. Jews have trouble everywhere, he said. But they get along all right, too, he said. They get by somehow or other. Lots of dirty work, but they get by. I know it, I told him.

I guess something made him remember his early days in Vienna. I didn't ride with him long enough to find out just what it was about those days that made him so sad and made him sigh while he talked. I suppose maybe it was nothing special, just the fact that he had been a boy in Vienna.

A young man from Texas who was driving a truck loaded with horse manure gave me a lift and told me the story of his life which I could barely hear because of the noise of the motor, but what I heard was that he was born in Dallas and went to school there and got into trouble from having been the biggest boy in the sixth grade and staying in after school and finally getting his teacher with child and then having to leave Dallas in a hurry because this woman was at least thirty-five and he was only fourteen and it looked like a tough spot. He went to Galveston and managed to get a job around the docks, then went to sea, then, five years later, went back to Dallas, married a girl, had two daughters by her, then left home because he was getting drunk too much, then worked in the oil fields around Bakersfield, and now here he was driving a truck, only twenty-five but plenty of stuff in his life, and his two daughters growing bigger every day.

In Tracy I turned the little black cat loose, and I saw it respond to the protective sight of streets, fences, gardens, front yards, and porches, and I knew it would find a place for itself somewhere in the town, which made me feel I had done my day's good work.

I got a lot of rides and finally reached Los Angeles, and then I got a lot of rides coming back and reached Frisco after ten days of rambling south and then back again north, and everybody who gave me a ride told me the story or at least part of the story of his life, and I found out one thing about everybody who is alive from these stories, and it is that no matter what happens and no matter how bitter living may be and how difficult, everybody goes on living and keeps on hoping for a better life, and the only thing about the whole affair that I regret is that I didn't take the cat all the way with me and bring it home, because the homesickness of that little kitten was so much more innocent and real than the homesickness of the good people who gave me rides. And I could understand and appreciate the predicament of the little kitten but could neither understand nor appreciate the predicaments of these people who were in automobiles going around, and if there was anything I might have done to relieve some of the loneliness in the world it would have been to bring the kitten home with me and feed it milk and just watch it grow up and like me, and feel that it belonged somewhere in the world, in some house, and feel that it belonged to some person, myself, just as all who live want to feel they belong to somebody.

PERSONALLY CONDUCTED

by Dorothea Castelhun

My train arrived in the Grand Central Station about six-thirty on Sunday morning and I was somewhat surprised, therefore, owing to the earliness of the hour, to be told by the porter that a gentleman was waiting to see me.

I was not expecting to be met. In fact, I had thought myself quite delightfully cut off from all social contacts and was thoroughly enjoying the sensation of traveling free from family supervision and protection

"He asked was you the lady what won a prize trip to Flor'da?"

I modestly admitted my good fortune. But even so, who was this gentleman? The thought of newspaper reporters flashed through my mind a bit dizzily. I began to form sentences that would have the proper nonchalant ring.

Carefully I finished my dressing and put on my new shoes, my new hat, my new gloves, my new and brilliantly-hued scarf, pulled up the fur collar of my not-new-but-still-reasonably-good coat in an effort to look as opulent as possible, and taking my new hand bag in one hand and my modest duffle bag in the other I drew a deep breath and stepped off the train onto the dim emptiness of the platform.

A gentleman approached me. He was a stocky individual dressed in sober grays, with a ruddy complexion and an air of having a job to do and being about to do it come what might. Steadiness and respectability so clung to every lineament of his features and every line of his sensible clothing that it was difficult to tell his age. It might have been anything from twenty-five to forty-five. One thing was perfectly obvious as he came up with a deliberate tread and a just-cordial-enough smile. He was not a newspaper reporter.

"Good morning. I am the representative from the Seaboard Airline Railway and I've come to take you across the city to the Pennsylvania Station."

"Oh? . . Oh—but I don't really need any help. I'm quite used to New York," I said. The thought that this strange gentleman had risen from his warm bed so early to escort me across New York made me feel slightly weak. Did his company consider it unsafe for a solitary female approaching middle-age to trust herself to the care of a taxi-driver? "You see, I used to work here." Then, feeling that perhaps I wasn't especially tactful in view of the Seaboard Airline taking all this trouble, I added hastily, "But it's very kind of you."

Not at all," he responded briefly. "Now, shall we go over right away? Your train to Florida doesn't leave the Pennsylvania Station until 9:30 so you have plenty of time to get breakfast somewhere before it leaves. Let me take your bag."

He relieved me of the duffle bag and started briskly into the station which had a strangely unfamiliar look in its early Sunday morning emptiness. I trotted obediently beside him, aware in the depths of my ignoble soul that I was not feelng quite so grateful for his guiding presence as I should, when suddenly he remarked, "You'd just as soon go by subway, I suppose."

A little dashed I murmured an unenthusiastic agreement. There had been times in my past when I had had no choice—it was subway or walk. This occasion was different. I had been looking forward to the taxi ride across the city. It was several years since I had done more than merely pass through New York and I wanted to see all I could. Anyhow,I had been provided by the King Edward Cigar people with a check for my traveling expenses quite ample to include a taxi fare from the Grand Central to the Pennsy. And I had started the trip feeling pretty grand at being just for once a member of the idle rich class traveling south in the dead of winter. Somehow the subway didn't fit into my uplifted mood.

As we approached the turnstiles I wondered whether I should be expected to pay my own nickel. But I decided a bit vindictively that if my escort wanted to cross the city by this low method he would have to stand the expense.

We got on the shuttle train to Times Square and then followed the green line for the west side subway. I had forgotten what a long walk it was. Before we reached our platform I began to have serious doubts about my new shoes. If this subway ride hadn't been forced on me I shouldn't have realized so depressingly early in the trip that my shoes were after all too narrow for comfort. I began to feel a bit melancholy about the whole journey and I was getting very hungry.

My escort chatted amiably and informatively about his duties. It seemed that his time was chiefly taken up with meeting incomings travelers and escorting them from one station to the other. He was a conscientious young man.

"I got up at five this morning to be sure to be on time for your train,"he told me. Every night last week I was up late, meeting trains that came in at ten o'clock in the evening."

"That must be hard on your family," I said, "if you have one." He seemed the solid stuff that heads of families should be made of but still—

"Fortunately I haven't," he answered gravely.

As we entered the Pennsylvania Station he remarked, "I can tell you several very reasonable places to get breakfast near here."

Reasonable, eh? So that was how I looked to this estimable young man. I began to feel a bit sensitive and rebellious. A vague desire that had been lurking at the back of my mind to breakfast at some nearby grand hotel took more definite shape.

"Or do you want to eat at a stand-up place?"

A stand-up place! Ruined forever was the pride in my new clothes with which I had so complacently started on my journey. I had almost forgiven him the subway ride, but this was too much. Coldly and emphatically I replied, "I do not."

"Well, there's a good restaurant right here in the station," he went on helpfully.

We proceeded in silence. Then he remarked, "This bag isn't heavy. I shouldn't check it if I were you. You can save a dime."

For one stunned moment I had no answer ready for this novel idea. Then I spoke up firmly. "Well, I think I'll check it just the same. I want to take a walk after I've had breakfast and I don't want to be bothered with it." He did not argue, but led the way to the parcel checking counter where he

let me, without protest, throw away my dime.

"Now I'll leave you. I had my breakfast before I met you. But I'll come back and see you on the train."

"But, really, that isn't necessary. You'll have to hang around and waste a lot of time. The train doesn't go for nearly two hours," I protested.

"It's my orders. I have to make a report that I saw you on your train," he replied imperturbably. "You can go right ahead and get on and then I'll just come and see that you're all right. Your train leaves from right over there, you see, and your car number is 156 and your berth lower 7. You can find it easily. You don't need a redcap. You can save a dime."

I stood dazed for a moment after his departure. Then,too hungry to care much where I ate, I went to the station restaurant and ordered the most expensive breakfast on the menu.

At quarter past nine I was settled in the train eyeing with disfavor my new hat, scarf, gloves and bag piled on the seat opposite. The lustre of their first glory had become dim so pitifully soon!

My escort appeared, a businesslike notebook in his hands.

'Well, good-bye, I hope you have a pleasant trip," He then wrote down something, shut the book with a snap, shook hands and departed abruptly.

The train pulled slowly out of the station while I reflected gloomily upon my thrifty passage through New York and wondered how I should spend the dimes the Seaboard Airline Railway had helped me save. I remembered that I would be in Miami when the new Hialeah race track opened and I began to feel more cheerful.

GHOSTS ON THE RADIO

AT THIS time of the year when thoughts turn easily to the spooky and unearthly, it was very fitting to get from Dr. E. E. Free a talk on the radio explaining the exact and scientific nature of the sounds made by those weird gentlemen (or ladies—are there lady ghosts?). It was the second in his series on "The Sounds of Silence", broadcast from the Flatiron Building in New York.

"What makes the sound of the Walking Ghost?" asked Professor Free. "The ghost who walks through empty rooms at dead of night—up the stairs and along the hall; his footsteps finally fading away?"

"What?" we echoed, our ears glued to the radio, shivering..

"Water, dripping slowly into a sink or bathtub," came the brisk, scientific voice, and we heard the slow chub, chub, chub . . . "That sound we just made into the microphone with a medicine dropper dripping drops into a bucket. The sound microscope magnified the sounds for you."

We breathed again—but only for a moment. Came a ghostly knocking, tapping, creaking . . . gooseflesh stuck to the radio . . .

"That's made by the cracking of furniture at dead of night, boards or wood cracking as they expand or contract with changes of temperature in the house."

Then came the breathing ghost, the gurgling ghost, the ghost clanking and groaning as he dragged his tired chains through the centuries of haunted houses. The strange and sudden cracks of a pistol—the pistol shot that laid low the laird or the Master of the Glen and Gilloogly.

"Wire snapping in window screens, contracting or expanding sharply or gently—a rusty door-hinge grating—that's the shrieking and groaning, or the sighing of the Irish banshee"—came the quick staccato vision-dispelling voice following the sounds in each case.

"The gurling ghost is rare in America," Dr. Free said. Aha! Then we have laid one monster low! Not at all. "They arise from water coming through a bad pipe—and out-of-date plumbing is to be found only in the older houses of Europe!"

A squeaky swivel-chair, trees twsted by the wind, old and rusty bedsprings—these are what our beloved ghosts were reduced to. Give us the clanking chains up and down the hallways of the lonely mansion, Dr. Free. Ghosts are illusions? Leave us our illusions. We want no rusty bedsprings.

—E. W.

PACIFIC WEEKLY (an outgrowth of Controversy, established October 25, 1934) is published every Friday at Carmel, California. P. O. Box 1300. Telephone Carmel 14.

Ten cents a copy. Two dollars a year by mail. One dollar for six months. Twenty-five cents for one month's trial. Advertising rates on application.

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(Application for entry as second-class mail matter is pending.)

BOOK REVIEWS

MY SHADOW AS I PASS. By Sybil Bolitho. (Viking) $2.50.

While written in the form of fiction this book is the loosely disguised story of William Bolitho, that remarkable journalist and observer, written by his widow.

Bolitho, brought up as a poor boy in South Africa, stoked his way across the ocean in 1915 to join the British Army. He was buried alive when his trench caved in, "and", is his conclusion from that experience, "there are just two kinds of men in the world—those who will dig out a pair of boots sticking out of a heap of mud and those who won't".

Having thus had the experience so many of us want—to know what it is like to be dead and yet be back in life—he loved actual living with a passionate intensity. The flowers in his southern garden, the loganberry jam his wife made, his unborn children, conversation—all, all he adored as if he knew he hadn't long to love them. In the early thirties he was killed in an accident in Marseilles.

His career was only begun. He had written "Twelve Against the Gods", "Murder for Profit", "The Leviathan" and a play, "Overture", which ran for a short time on Broadway. He wrote a column three times a week for the old New York *World*, and thousands who read it looked to Bolitho as one of the great and vivid writer-journalists of our time. Alexander Woollcott, Walter Lippmann, Mrs. Fred Howe were equally loud in their admiration. Bolitho could hold a drawing-room of sophisticated New York intelligentsia, writers, artists spellbound; he dominated a room as soon as he walked into it, his wife says. He must have filled all his days with the life so few know how to live.

His wife was a young, cultured English-born girl of Viennese extraction. She was devoted to him, living his zooming career with as much gusto as he did. She was aware of the joy they shared all the time. Their Provençal garden she filled with pets and peacocks, good things to eat, fun and puppies, as he filled it with rare plants, bulbs, friends, hopes and conversation.

The book tells the story of their separate lives before they met and their marvelous active life together—their travels to Germany, Italy, New York, England, their funny French peasant servants, their southern garden home.

The widow cannot understand a fate that took this treasure from her so young, when he had only begun to live. A man who had stood so much and come through all of it, to be run over by a car! She tells it all, and though the style is frequently too staccato, too grief-filled, it brings home vividly the warm vital personality of an extraordinary man. One shuts the book regretting as much as his widow that he is gone.

ELLA WINTER

I PHOTOGRAPH RUSSIA. by James Abbe (McBride) $3.00

THIS IS a book of beautiful and interesting photographs of the Soviet Union as she is, interspersed by a cheap running comment by the author-photographer trying to induce a picture of the country as she is not. It is a matter of wonder why so many anti-Soviet writers have to rely on facetiousness and conceited mockery to make their attacks. Mr. Abbe, however, succeeds in vulgarizing only himself; for he made the big mistake, if he hoped his captions and comment would carry conviction, of taking an unlying camera with him.

He does his best in his captions to adulterate or nullify the impression of hard work, effort, "religious" (for want of a better word) zeal and heartening faith the people in the photographs show. When he catches them on parade, laughing, singing, he hastens to tell you the parade was "forced" or "compulsory". Even the great spectacles of November 7 and May 1, when a million Russian workers and Red Army men march past their leaders in Red Square, proud and triumphant, Mr. Abbe squeals "forced". And when his camera portrays some exquisitely beautiful women on page 204, this caricature of a movie scoop-journalist and press-photographer evidently forgets that his caption on page 61 stated you "wouldn't find much pulchritude in Russia"! Even a stall-full of strawberries photographed in this book are not to be "eaten" but only to be "yearned for".

It wouldn't hurt this little mountebank photographer if he yearned for—and got—a little of the integrity of his own camera.

—IRIS HAMILTON

THE STEAMSHIP BOOK. by William Pryor. (Harcourt Brace and Co.) $1.00

THE FIRE ENGINE BOOK. by William Pryor. (Harcourt Brace and Co.) $1.00

THESE ARE two more of those "useful" books that teach children how their world is made and at the same time entertain them. Margaret, Laura and Christopher were going to Panama and from the first moment they board the ship to the evening they meet their father at Panama, we are told exactly what happens (through their eyes and ears) with page illustrations from photographs. They pass all kinds of other boats, tankers and sailing vessels and ocean-going steamers; they watch the little native boys diving for coins; they go to the engine room, and learn about steering and the bridge and the radio and the night-watch, and the social activities on a Panama cruise. They go to the kitchen and watch the Chinese cook, too, but there is less of the life-below-stairs. These books are still written for those who might make these cruises, not for those who never can.

The Fire Engine book tells Bill and Martha all about the workings of a fire engine, led by the Chief, and again illustrated with full-page photographs. The publishers have been generous and done a fine job with these well-gotten-up books, at a price possible for many parents. Martha and Bill saw a house on fire and learned all about what happens "behind the scenes" in the fire department in such an emergency. All children will appreciate the knowledge and it will make them conscious citizens to have it.

—E. W.

GOOD-BYE JESUS

Modern prophets are saying
"Good-bye Jesus".
They're Communists
And don't seem to realize
They're your brothers
(Though they're mostly Jews).
Maybe they're right.

Going to have a war, these Christians.
A bloody war;
Like the Tartars, like the Huns, like King Saul's
Like Brandywine,
(That made government of the people, by the people, for the people).
Like Gettysburg
(That freed the slaves).
Like Verdun
(That made the world safe for democracy)
Tears and hot red blood will flow,
As when they spiked you to the wood on Calvary
(And made Judea safe for the priests).

The Capitalists will fight the Communists
About economics and the brotherhood of man.
The Capitalists will be on your side
And keep your churches open and do a lot of praying.
Christ and the money changers against the brotherhood of man!
Leave it to time, or evolution, or biology,
Or "manifest destiny".

The manifest destiny of man is to be ruled by Tyranny
And to deify the Golden Calf.
He is become his own creator and image maker.
Where now are the Gods of his innocency?
The humble, the modest, the pityful?
Pan and the nymphs are a memory of a memory,
Your golden cross has beat them with despair.
Their thin bones are washed by sand and tears of cold rivers
Drowned in freedom of the seas.

But it's sad about you, Jesus,
You made two mistakes;
You weren't a Marxist,
("Blessed are the Meek", they shall go to heaven).
You permitted privilege to create Christ.

Perhaps we need another Jesus; one that can't be sold
Into a marble prison of stained glass and ritual;
Or we need some local gods,
Or love, or blood, or opium, or revolution,
But from her travail America conceives
The Corporative State,
Who doubts it is immaculate?
A sharpened spear for traffic with mankind;
The Tyrant merchant buccaneer.
What pity that the brotherhood of man must die, unkind!
A fratricide of greed and fear.

—ERIC O'DONOVAN

WILLARD VAN DYKE

WILLARD VAN DYKE has climbed to an enviable position in the art of photography, even in this state of fine photographers. His last exhibition of little forsaken wooden houses and shacks, from the deserted mountain mining villages to the agricultural fields, aroused a great deal of favorable comment. His lines are crystal clear and he does not compromise with his medium. There is no retouching to his photographs, no blurring, no sentimentalising. He showed the delapidated human husks of dwellings in the midst of the richest agricultural fields and orchards, making no comment. There were no people there. The crops flourished, the green of hills and ranches bloomed; the human habitations were relics.

Van Dyke has been chosen to direct a group of photographers under the SERA who are making a permanent record of this agency's work in California. Before that he was official photographer in California for the PWAP. They photograph transient shelters, research projects, art projects such as the mural in the Oakland Auditorium by David Park, scientific projects at the University of California, such as the effect of X-ray on plant organisms, museum specimens, schools for training social workers, nurseries for the children of indigent families,dispensing stations for federal food surplus, actors and entertainers' projects, students paid by the SERA to investigate this and that.

In addition Van Dyke photographs all paintings, illustrations and drawings made by artists under this giant relief project, and on the side he photographs the paintings and the works of art at the great exhibitions in San Francisco. He has just finished making 150 negatives for the Friends of Far Eastern Art for the Chinese Exhibition at Mills College. He has thought a great deal about his medium, its role and function in a changing world and what part the art of photography has to play in society.

Van Dyke has exhibited for several years and many artists are watching for his work as they watch for that of few recognized artists.

CAPRICE

I know how it will be with us when we
Have danced beyond the pale of proper things,
To mount the stage where high abandon flings
Her laughs to mock a dismal destiny.
We'll be alive only to ecstasy;
We'll wist not, care not, what's beyond the wings,
But take the paeans of a world that rings
To joy as earth's one simple verity.

That is, we will, if you will play your part,
And keep somewhere in sanity your cue,
To prove the lovely triumph of your art
That tells you when the play we've played is through.
Then, as the curtain falls, you will, I know,
Decline my proffered taxi, smile, and go.

—W. K. B.