

BASEMENT

PACIFIC WEEKLY

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A WESTERN JOURNAL OF FACT AND OPINION



APRIL 26, 1935

MR. HEARST SQUEALS - - AN EDITORIAL

FASCISM IN A SMALL TOWN - W. K. BASSETT

**CREATIVE EFFORT IN THE SOVIET UNION
- - ALEXANDER KAUN**

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PACIFIC WEEKLY CONTRIBUTORS IN THIS ISSUE

ALEXANDER KAUN is professor of Russian language and literature at the University of California, and author of a life of Maxim Gorky and other books.

HARRY CONOVER, Teaching Assistant in the Department of Economics at the University of California, has been reviewing books for New York magazines.

MARIE De L. WELCH, whom Edward Arlington Robinson considered one of America's most promising poets, is preparing a fourth book for the press this fall. She is the wife of George P. West, associate editor of the San Francisco News.

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DOROTHEA CASTELHUN is the author of several books and contributor to magazines. She is the wife of W. K. Bassett, editor of PACIFIC WEEKLY.

WINTHROP RUTLEGE is a San Francisco newspaperman.

Next week's issue of PACIFIC WEEKLY will contain:

A stirring poem by Winifred Gray Stewart.

"Will Libraries Live?" by Jay F. Otis.

Another illuminating installment of "Twenty-Eight Years in a News Room".

"Everyone Still Talks About Those Executions", by Anna Louise Strong.

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NOTES AND COMMENT

WINTHROP RUTLEGE has written an editorial for us. We've put it, however, over on the theater page where he doubtless will expect to find it, but he will be laughed out of countenance if he thinks he can get by with any objection to our mentioning it here. It's a swell editorial. We wish we could have written it.

THIS is from Arthur Caylor's column in the San Francisco News of April 22:

"San Francisco businessmen are quietly getting ready [and] police with a prepared plan to maintain order have talked things over with certain vigilante groups, and 20,000 more pistols than normal recently have been sold in the local market."

It all depends on your viewpoint whether you call it a prepared plan to maintain order or overthrowing the government by force and violence.

IT is the glamor and poetry they paint and write into war that gives it the pulling power with our young innocents. Stories of the lice and the stench, of the horror and disease, are silenced until it's all over. War propaganda draws on the most beautiful in language and music and deliberately so. The newspapers, of course, are the best medium. Under the date of April 23, the Associated Press sent out a dispatch from Paris anent the new drafting of mere boys for the Army. The first paragraph read:

"War babies", 120,000 strong, streamed to the colors today to swell the number of Frenchmen under arms in France to 420,000.

Inspiring, isn't it, that "streamed to the colors" and how it must have pleased the French war office. Wonder what the reaction is on the part of 120,000 mothers of those 120,000 "war babies".

RECENTLY a prominent member of the American Legion, in this delightful part of California where we do our editing, made quite derogatory remarks about us, charging that we advocated "overturning our form of government". He

said the Legion was against us and the Communists for no other reason than this. The following quotation from an article by Henry S. Pritchett, president emeritus of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, as published recently in *Atlantic Monthly*, and re-printed in a condensed form in the *Reader's Digest*, is herewith presented for this legionnaire's consideration and, possibly, his edification:

On a February day of 1931, I had occasion to visit the Library of Congress. As I climbed the steps my attention was caught by the movement of hundreds of men, many of them in khaki, who filled the great steps and portico of the House of Representatives just opposite. I inquired of an elderly bystander the meaning of this semi-military display. "That," he replied, "is the charge of the bonus brigade; and," he added, "it is the only charge that many of those boys ever made." The occasion of the charge, as one of the legionaries explained to me, was "to put the fear of God into the Congressmen" so that they would pass the bill providing for the immediate cash payment of the present values of the adjusted-service certificates. The charge was highly successful. Without debate the measure was passed. Ten days later the bill was passed over the President's veto by a vote of 328 to 79. There was no doubt that the fear of God had been put into the hearts of the members of the House!

Probably none of these joyous young legionaries realized that he was engaged in overturning our form of government. But this is precisely what happens when the pressure of group lobbies supplants orderly parliamentary discussion and action. It was by this process that the legionaries of Rome started their government on the way of destruction. For no way has yet been found by which the liberties of a people can be preserved except through a free parliament chosen by the people; and no parliament can remain free if it is subservient to a dictator or to a militant group.

MR. HEARST SQUEALS

IN HIS papers of April 21 Mr. Hearst publishes a two-column editorial on the boycott of his papers that has resulted from his unprincipled falsehoods and distortions of fact and his attacks on colleges and schools in America and their right to teach freely what they feel true teaching demands. Mr. Hearst believes that no student should be allowed to hear of the actual happenings over a sixth of the earth's surface, because he doesn't like them. He does not seem to feel that American students should not hear about Hitler's bloody rule in Germany; Mr. Hearst happens to like Hitler and to approve of his Fascist rule.

Hearst's newspapers have long since ceased to be distributors of news. You can't make head or tail of a strike as reported in them; you can't understand foreign politics, nor the doings of the Administration, nor tax programs, nor activities of liberal bodies. Propaganda has thoroughly displaced reporting. In the name of patriotism, Americanism and the Constitution, the Hearst papers traduce all American ideals. They stand for a rigid, regimented suppression of all liberties

and economic plans for better distribution; they stand for the dictatorial rule of the minority of owners of the nation's natural resources for their own benefit, not in the interests of the general welfare. Mr. Hearst, who once posed as the friend of labor, now openly attacks the working class and compares it to "feet". The owners of great wealth are the "head" in Mr. Hearst's estimation; and, he proceeds, a body can live without feet but not without a head.

Unfortunate indeed are those who find their patriotism expressed by Mr. Hearst. There are some liberals left who really mean the Jeffersonian ideals, when they speak of them; they do not mean the sad travesty of these ideals that appears in the Hearst press. But they find their patriotism and their Americanism dragged down in shouting headlines and foaming editorials to the level of "the last refuge of a scoundrel".

Hearst in his editorial proceeds to state what he thinks his papers stand for, and what he would like to fool people into believing they do stand for; but all he succeeds in doing is to discredit those virtues further. He stands for liberty, he says, of speech, press and assemblage—even while calling for an investigation against the University of Chicago because some economics professors teach economic theories there. He is opposed to class conflict, he says! Hearst, who agitates for the calling of troops and national guard to shoot down workers on strike; who sets the owning class against the working class by every means in his power; who tries even now, daily, to create the impression that the working class is a mob, a mass, a rioting, undisciplined, violent group of alien malcontents, because they go on strike for enough to live on. If anyone "creates" class struggle, eggs on the fight of class against class, fosters the snobbish belief on the part of owners of wealth that they are destined to be the inheritors of the earth, it is William Randolph Hearst. Calling workers criminals, gangsters, crooks, aliens, malcontents, reds and Communists does not inspire the American working class with confidence in Mr. Hearst.

The working class and its allies among the intelligentsia and white collar workers have proved it by calling for a boycott of all Hearst newspapers, and the fact that the boycott is effective is proven by this indignant editorial.

It is said that the day after his editorial appeared reviling the workers the San Francisco *Examiner* had three thousand cancellations. Its Circulation Manager has resigned; its circulation department no longer calls on those who cancel subscriptions to ask why or try to persuade to re-subscribe. They know only too well how the policy of the paper outrages and disgusts decent people. Recently when Harry Lang, Managing Editor of the *Jewish Daily Forward*, wrote a new set of fairy-tales about Soviet starvation for the Hearst papers, the *Forward* was inundated with indignant protests and cancellations. And it wasn't the attack on Russia that the Socialists minded as much as the fact that Lang had sold himself to Hearst. Even Stanley Beaubaire, who recently succumbed to the siren song of San Simeon, has received an uncomfortable number of letters, and has tried to justify his fall in his college paper—to the cynical amusement of his fellow-students.

The methods whereby Mr. Hearst upholds freedom of speech, Americanism and the Constitution are illustrated in a letter to the *New Republic* of April 17 from Professor Frederick L. Schuman, Assistant Professor of Political Science in the University of Chicago. Says Professor Schuman:

On November 14, 1934, the *Chicago Herald-Examiner* published a report of a meeting of the University of Chicago Student Union Against War and Fascism,

in which I, as well as several other people, were grossly misquoted. In a letter to the editor, Mr. Watson, I protested against this misrepresentation and incidentally called attention to the fact that the alleged quotation from Lenin on the dictatorship of the proletariat, which was then appearing at the top of the editorial pages of all the Hearst papers, was nowhere to be found in Lenin's writings. Mr. Watson sent my protest to Mr. Hearst, who asked Mr. Charles Wheeler of the *Herald-Examiner* to "investigate". I received Mr. Wheeler in the presence of a third person and was shown material from his files showing conclusively that I had been "accidentally" misquoted—a fact that Mr. Wheeler blandly conceded. He also conceded that the Lenin "quotation" was pure invention. "We just do what the Old Man orders. One week he orders a campaign against rats. The next week he orders a campaign against dope-peddlers. Pretty soon he's going to campaign against college professors. It's all the bunk, but orders are orders."

This is but one of numerous instances of slanderous and libelous attacks upon American educators in the Hearst press. This strategy is exactly comparable to that of the Nazi press in Germany between 1920 and 1933. . . . If American universities and colleges are to be spared the fate that has befallen such institutions in Germany, if American scholars and educators are to be protected from Fascist bludgeoning of this type, if American traditions of freedom are to survive, Mr. Hearst must be recognized as the propagandist and forerunner of American Hitlerism and must be met with a united counter-attack by all Americans who still value their liberties.

Mr. Hearst has driven his opponents to the weapon of the boycott. Nothing should be so heartening to liberals and those who hope that the United States will remain a true democracy and not be turned into a Fascist fatherland, than the Hearst squeal at the pressure of the boycott against him.

LINCOLN STEFFENS SPEAKING--

PATRIOTISM, YCLEPT the "last refuge of a scoundrel", is collecting a lot of men I never knew were scoundrels. Maybe it's a front for other sorts of need, some more moral and mental desperations.

JUST BEEN reading a corking book, by Vincent Sheean, a correspondent I used to see around Paris. "Personal History" is the title, and it tells well how a reporter thought about, understood and turned into a conscious learning the events he saw. Fascinating, unprofessional, wise, the autobiographical narrative is a model for modern high-brows. Unable to accept evidence and reason, because they called for action and deeds he could not do, he was released to see and think by the remark of the ghost of a girl he had adored. She asked: "Why act? Why not just write—straight!"

Some intellectuals think writing a book or an editorial is not action.

"LOOK AT all those people going into church on this rare and lovely day. Can't they see that God is out of doors on a

day like this?" She failed to see that those people were going to church, not to God. That's how they always miss Him.

THIS COUNTRY set out once upon a time to establish liberty by planting it deep in the Constitution and it did stick. A weak foundation. Now some men are rooting liberty in a social system. They are removing the sources of all interests which they have observed to be against liberty and we are watching to see if they haven't got it. Nobody has any cause now to be against liberty.

THE MEN and women who fit a crooked system are apt to be crooked, aren't they? The more comfortable, the more content they are, the more crooked? But nobody can be straight in a very crooked social system. The crooks and I are the only misfits that seem to know that. The radicals don't, else they wouldn't hate the conservatives; they would understand them.

HITLER IS a practical man. Contemptuous of our hypocrisy, he is substituting his and he is making the hypocrites like it. Or pretend to.

I ONCE, long ago, interviewed and wrote an article about William Randolph Hearst, and I liked him. I have liked him ever since; must have got stuck in some affection, for I never could get over it. Can't now. I notice, for instance, that he is screaming that there is a boycott against him and his papers. That means to me that it hurts him; he is hit where he is sensitive. And I regret it. My sympathy goes out to him. And I hear that a lot of the people whom he has hurt rejoice that he is in pain. I like some of those enemies and victims of Hearst, too. As some hard-boiled guy once remarked unsympathetically, I like 'most everybody. I know that all men are victims one of another; they cannot help humiliating and hurting one another. I saw in a Hearst paper the other day that a wild animal in a cage reached out and clawed an innocent stander by his cage to death. But I could see, can't you, that that wild animal was bored or miserable and took it out on a citizen who wouldn't vote to free himself and the poor beast. Well, Hearst is lonely and savage like the wild animal, and the labor skates who are boycotting him, will not free him and themselves. They are all scared, Hearst and the innocent bystanders, frightened, ignorant, helpless, desperate. Why can't they and we see that, and be sorry for one another; and fix it? Yea, I can answer that question also. I can even see why the poor devils here in Carmel want to boycott our paper. Like Hearst their heads are not very strong and their claws are older and handier. So I say, let the savage boycott go on for a few more hundred years. Till our heads can stand thought.

Meanwhile, the boycotters of Mr. Hearst might remember that he has something to lose beside his chains and that he loves his handicap as some labor loves its chains, deeply, ardently.

WE HAVE on the radio every Sunday a stroke of culture, a symphony concert from New York or somewhere with a toothwash. That's the culture part, the toothwash.

A MAN had a frog in his garden, and the frog called to him at night, cheerfully. But the man waked and he hated that bully frog. And he had a neighbor whom also he hated. So the hater laid for and caught the merry frog and he removed the robust animal from his garden to his neighbor's garden. He moved it one night, and the next night and the next. He moved the frog again and again because verily the frog liked

his garden and always came back to it to sing again to, I guess, his lady-love. The frog was put upon earth probably to prove that love is stronger than hate.

THERE'S AN article in the *New Masses* of April 23 just made for Carmel and such places. The title is "Soviet Asia Sings" and under it Joshua Kunitz tells—he almost sings—what the once wild people of Asia sing, then and now, noting the difference a short time has made.

"We Tadjiks sing of what we see.

If we see a fine horse we make a song about it."

And then Kunitz listens to all the songs of all the Tadjiks, Uzbeks, Turkomans, Kazaks, to see what they see and sing; and what they sang. Read it and smile—or weep, but I warn you that that unbelievable Kunitz is trying by another way—a way calculated to make a dent on nice people—to prove that the Revolution was worth having. And it is.

OVER ON another, duller page in this number of the magazine is a definition of the term "fellow-travelers", fellows who are not revolutionaries, but do go along with the progress of this revolutionary world. Read that and you will understand what I mean when I report that five fellow-travelers have been granted Guggenheim fellowships: Edmund Wilson, Kenneth Burke, Jack Conroy, Newton Arvin and Langston Hughes. Langston Hughes was almost driven out of Carmel once when we had a spasm of Fascist fright and is now in old Mexico, which once came so near having a revolution that it is now pretty Fascist. All five of these Guggenheims are going to use the \$2,500 grants to complete useful studies they had already begun to write.

WHAT DEMAGOGUES the British are, in our sight. They are cutting the taxes of the poor, and saying so in Parliament. Right out. Preparing for the coming election. They haven't the bold, class courage of our statesmen.

DUMB AND CHEERFUL. That's a combination often seen, so often that one suspects a connection. As close as cause and effect, apparently.

REPORTS ARE whispering around about a cracking down of a terror at San Quentin penitentiary, but I don't believe them. Not my conception of the men in charge.

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FASCISM IN A SMALL TOWN

BY W. K. BASSETT

ASITUATION exists in Carmel or, perhaps, we should say, is threatening to exist, which in its import extends far beyond the boundaries of this little town. It involves a principle, the very principle which we have long been arguing, the very principle, in fact, which is at the root of *PACIFIC WEEKLY*'s inception, and will continue to be the basis for its continuance.

What is happening in Carmel, or rather, what is definitely trying to happen, is Fascism in a most ugly and menacing form. It is Fascism by those who have been repeatedly denying the existence of Fascism; who have been terming it only an empty charge made by liberals, socialists and Communists in their fight against so-called "Americanism" and efforts on the part of "patriots" to maintain "American traditions and ideals".

There has been started in Carmel a boycott against the sale of *PACIFIC WEEKLY*. This has been extended to the *Carmel Cymbal*, a weekly newspaper of which I happen also to be the editor. It is charged by those attempting the boycott that *PACIFIC WEEKLY*, by its editorial, news and article content, is detrimental to the best interests of America and is encouraging revolutionary assault on the American government. This, of course, is not true, as any intelligent reader of the magazine knows. In order more effectively to strike at *PACIFIC WEEKLY*, these boycotters have also driven from several of the Carmel newsstands *The Cymbal*, which prints only local news and comment relative to that news.

It is not a boycott against the magazine and newspaper, but a boycott against those who have been selling them. I have no quarrel with anyone who wishes most decidedly not to buy *PACIFIC WEEKLY*, or to read it. That is the privilege of anyone. But these boycotters are using threats against newsstand dealers to prevent them from selling the publications even to those who might happen to want to purchase them. They have been partially successful.

So far the boycott has been effective in five out of eight newsstands which had been selling either the magazine or the newspaper, or both. At only one of these five was *PACIFIC WEEKLY* on sale, I having previously withdrawn it from the other four because of small sales. These four were selling only *The Cymbal* and stopped this on the Fascist threats. Three newsstands have so far withstood the threats and are selling both *PACIFIC WEEKLY* and *The Cymbal*. Since the boycott a book store has opened a newsstand and is selling both magazine and newspaper.

As far as I can learn with any authority, two men have led the assault against the newsstands. Both are active members and officers in the American Legion. Byington Ford is chairman of the Legion's subversive activities committee for the district in which Carmel is located. James Regan is commander of the Carmel Post of the Legion.

Byington Ford is a scion of an old California family whose members have played important parts in the history of the state. He is a nephew of Lewis F. Byington, formerly district attorney of San Francisco who was drawn from political retirement to stump the state in what was advertised as an inspired determination to help "save California from Upton Sinclair".

By Ford is the nominal head of the Carmel Realty Com-

pany, a recognized subsidiary corporation of the Del Monte Properties Company, devoted to the sale of land in the select, quite expensive and exclusive Pebble Beach and Cypress Point sections of the Monterey Peninsula behind the 50-cent toll gates of the famous Seventeen-Mile-Drive. By Ford has a beautiful home at Pebble Beach. He is personally popular, recognized as quite a man-about-town in Carmel and possesses more than ordinary thespian ability which he occasionally displays, not without considerable persuasion, on the Carmel amateur stage. His reputed financial standing, his popularity, his representation of a fine old family on one hand and indirectly of Mr. Herbert Fleishhacker on the other, has given him a not unjustifiably high opinion of himself as a man of influence in the section where he lives and maintains his office. His position, both social and financial, is one which would be considerably menaced by any drastic change in our present economic system. Contrary to the workers of the world, as Mr. Marx saw them, he is motivated in his fight against liberalism not by what he has to gain but by the horror of all he has to lose. He is educated, but less than ordinarily intelligent for a man of his education; he is smart, but not very clever. He is slow to anger, but not slow enough. It overtakes him before his mental mechanism is ready and his resultant action is unthinking and productive of remorse. His activity in the present Carmel affair is a case in point.

There is less to be said about James Regan. He is neither well-educated, intelligent nor clever. His vocation is driving a cleaners' delivery truck or, rather, paying a boy to drive it for him as he has temporarily lost his driver's license. He is what might be termed a typical legionnaire. You know what I mean—some men are members of the American Legion, others are legionnaires. Knowing him only slightly you would quickly judge that he attends all legion meetings, likes the politics of it, glories in wearing a uniform and marching in a parade, reacts childishly to ceremonies, patriotic displays and such things as memorial programs. Regan is scarcely a heavyweight, no matter which way you measure him. He is the dupe and the tool of such men as Byington Ford, not having the intelligence to see their game and that he is playing into the hands of a system which makes his economic future about as safe and sure as a frantic ant on the sidewalk at Forty-Second and Broadway.

Here you have in Carmel a perfect example of the Fascist combination in California today. Big Business, money, social position, influence, as represented by Byington Ford, and ignorance, gullibility, senseless "patriotism" and sentimentality, as represented by James Regan. Without the former something might be done with the Regans to show them their foolishness and turn them toward their own salvation. Without the latter the Byington Fords would have a much tougher row to hoe in throttling those forces which tend to their humiliation.

At first I was intending to do nothing toward battling this attempt to keep *PACIFIC WEEKLY* off the Carmel newsstands. I looked upon it as not important. The circulation of the magazine of course, is not in this little town, but beyond its borders, far beyond them. I felt that no injury could be done the magazine by preventing a newsstand sale which never went

above twenty-five or thirty a week.

But I realize now what a selfish idea this was. I realize what a much greater principle is involved. I realize that if I permit this Fascist wedge to be driven in, here in Carmel, its effect, if only psychological, will be disastrous for other towns, for other publications. I realize that it would be the starting point of a new drive, a more iniquitous and diabolical thrust than has hitherto been made.

I have decided to fight this thing in Carmel and to fight it with all the power at my command. I shall have to resort to the use of the same weapons that Ford the Fascist is employing. They are dirty weapons, but they are forced upon me.

PACIFIC WEEKLY has a paid circulation of seventy-six in Carmel. The newsstand sales have averaged twenty-five a week. This twenty-five will have to be discounted considerably as in the main it represents enemies, rather than friends, people such as Byington Ford, Regan and their ilk who must have been buying the paper to determine what it prints from week to week. But all in all, allowing a slight discount from the subscription list, there must be seventy-five persons in Carmel who not only read PACIFIC WEEKLY but read it with interest and sympathy.

In looking over this subscription list I discover that it pretty well represents what I know to be a large percentage of the intelligent, thinking people of this small community. I am also gratified, in this case, to note that it represents a good percentage of those who are comfortably situated, and undoubtedly people who spend a reasonably high percentage of their income for reading matter.

I shall call on these people for their assistance; not to aid

PACIFIC WEEKLY primarily, but to aid in the fight against this opening wedge of Fascism. I know that Byington Ford, backed unofficially by the Legion, intends to make every endeavor to stop completely the newsstand sales of PACIFIC WEEKLY. I understand that a meeting is suggested at which the Carmel Business Association will meet with Ford and Regan and that the newsstand owners will be called in. Mr. Ford and Mr. Regan, it is understood, will state their case to the newsstand owners. I have asked the privilege of appearing at such a meeting if it is held. I believe that I should be allowed to state my case, the case of the freedom of the press, to these newsstand owners. I have been told that I will be permitted to appear.

At that meeting I shall argue the principle of the matter, not only in the interests of PACIFIC WEEKLY, but also in the interests of the people of California whose welfare this little Carmel tempest seriously menaces. If I fail in this, I shall speak with the assumption that my seventy-five subscribers are behind me, and I shall present them as a united force, using the weapon I am impelled to put into their hands—the weapon of boycott.

In the conception of PACIFIC WEEKLY I little dreamed that the magazine in so short a time would be swept out of and beyond its role of the printed word to the point of direct action. I little dreamed that here, in this place of its publication, would the ugly head of Fascist menace to the freedom of the press be first uplifted.

But they have decided that the scene of the first skirmish shall be here, and here, then, we shall fight.



CREATIVE EFFORT IN SOVIET UNION

BY ALEXANDER KAIN

ABOUT two years ago I met a Soviet youth who was given a chance to spend a short time in Paris. To him Russia before 1917, and the whole bourgeois world, seemed remote and quaint, a myth. The Paris émigrés, the last Mohicans of the pre-revolutionary intelligentsia, struck him as mastodons, and he marveled at their ways and notions. "Is it true," he asked the philosopher, Nicholas Berdyaev, "that in your time there existed in our country a variety of newspapers, representing different views and outlooks?" "Yes, of course." "But that is so queer! For there is only one truth, isn't there?" The narrow-minded youth was commiserated by his more fortunate compatriots, who though exiles could breathe freely and think broadly. In their compassion they entertained him, took him to gay places, showed him a good time: "Let the poor wretch enjoy life a bit, before he returns to that prison." A fortnight had not passed, when the youth began to fret and complain of ennui. "I am suffocating here," he grumbled, "it's like a prison." Their indignant amazement knew no bounds: "What! Here, where in place of shortage and semi-starvation you enjoy abundance and luxury! Here, where you can do as you please and say what

you think! You, coming from a land muzzled by an iron dictatorship, you call this land of freedom a prison!" "Ah, yes," came the impatient assent, "true enough. But, don't you see, yours is a purely formal freedom. We—we have the freedom to create a new life!"

And there is the situation in a nutshell. A rigid monism in essentials. The one principle, the one truth, is not to be questioned. But within the vastness of that truth—creative freedom.

What distinguishes the creative effort in Soviet Russia from that in old Russia, or for that matter in the rest of our "normal" world, is the conscious unity of purpose. President Karpinsky of the Academy of Sciences aspires for the same ultimate goal as the coal miner in the Donetz Basin. The same purpose animates the activity of the explorer and the collective farmer, the street car and the orchestra conductor, the ballet dancer and the nurse at a factory crèche, the playwright and the Red private. One must not omit to note the consciousness of this unitarian purpose: they are all builders of a New Life.

The one truth—the ideal of a classless society—is strictly

unquestionable. Within that truth all is in a flux. Nothing is regarded as final or perfect, neither in education or the arts, nor in economic, social or political forms of intercourse. In this respect Trotsky's principle of "permanent revolution" reigns supreme. "Education means—revolution"; this widely accepted maxim of Gorky militates against finality and acquiescence. Individually and collectively the nation is displaying a genuinely educative urge: to improve, to advance, to excel.

Individually and collectively. Does this sound like an antinomy? Is there not a clash between individual and collective effort? To be sure, individualism is hostile to collectivism, and is therefore suppressed. But individuality is no longer regarded as inimical to or in conflict with the collective. On the contrary. In every phase of life, whether in factory or kolhoz, in scientific laboratory or transportation line, and naturally in all fields of creative art, individual effort to rise above the level is encouraged—and rewarded. There is decided cooperation between the mass and the individual, a curiously interwoven influence.

The mass response to creative endeavor assumes at times exaggerated proportions. A dramatic flight into the stratosphere makes the masses stratosphere-minded. The Chelyuskin expedition produces an arctic fever through the Union. I have read passionate letters written by children to Otto Schmidt, in which they implore him to take them along on his next trip to the North. Events, which in a normal country pass as ordinary, such as the opening of a new plant, or bridge, or underground railroad, are greeted with national enthusiasm, as fresh victories of man over nature.

Does it seem that the interests of the public are prevailingly materialistic? In a measure this is so. After 1917 a reaction set in against the flabby-mindedness and abstractness of the intelligentsia. Back to reality, became the slogan. The ability to drive a nail without smashing one's finger became more fashionable than the ease of discoursing on Bergson and Proust. Politechnization of education threatened for a while to enthrone another extreme one-sidedness. But, as in other branches of Soviet life, extreme edges wear off before long.

In recent years technical and tangible achievements have long monopolized public interest. A new play or film may arouse as universal a reaction as the opening of the Turkestan railroad. The Writers' Congress, the yearly Olympiads of music and drama, vie in national response with the sport Olympiads and expeditions to Pamir, the Roof of the World. It would be more correct to speak of this response as international, since it involves the one hundred and eighty odd nationalities which have been jolted out of apathy and inferiority into dynamic participation in the activities of the Union.

By the same token, the three hundredth anniversary of the birth of Spinoza, or the one hundredth of Goethe's death, receive almost as much publicity as the murder of Sergey Kirov. The idolization of Maxim Gorky is too well known to need emphasis. How many western countries marked the one thousandth birthday of the Persian poet, Firdusi? It was recently celebrated through the Soviet Union, in addition to an official delegation sent from Moscow to Teheran.

Reputed to be crassly materialistic, the government of the USSR has lavishly supported cultural undertakings in such a variety of fields as anthropology, the theater, linguistics, folk-dancing, and so forth. Its official organ, the *Izvestiya*, may serve as an illustration. Ordinarily four to six pages long, this paper prints only what it regards as vital news, and has no room for the sensational features of "normal" journals. Advertisements occupy about one-third of the last page, and

nearly all of them deal with publications or the stage. Of this limited space an amazing portion is given to purely cultural items. The Writers' Congress took for days the major part of the paper. Gorky's address covered both the inside pages. The sixtieth anniversary of the work of Michurin, Russia's octogenarian Burbank, claimed about one-half of the issue. In the same way was treated the eighty-fifth birthday of the physiologist, Pavlov, an avowed opponent of Soviet policies. The *Izvestiya* was full of articles about Pavlov, greetings to him from institutions and individuals, and a list of state and municipal measures in celebration of the event, from the naming of streets after the scientist to the establishment of Pavlov scholarships for students of physiology, and the assignment of a handsome sum for the Pavlov Institute of Experimental Medicine. Propaganda? Quite so. The unity of purpose makes all creative endeavor serve the one cause.

It is only natural to expect that so intense a mass response should affect the individual "builder", in whatever branch he be engaged. Leaving out of our discussion its obvious effect on builders of tangible values, we may note its effect on the artist. At the Writers' Congress, one of the youngest, and to my mind most promising, authors, Leonid Leonov, spoke with dignified humility of the writer's tasks and responsibilities. Great is the happiness to live at such a heroic period, but great are also the obligations. The burden of his speech was: "We must produce things worthy of our time!" Such is the slogan of all creative minds in the Union.

Youth, of course, predominates in the land of the Soviets, and Leonid typifies and voices it. The mass response has affected, one should note, also the old minds. It has rejuvenated and stirred to fresh quests such octogenarians as Karpinsky, Michurin, Pavlov. The veteran Stanislavsky is youthfully blazing new paths in the field of the opera. Alyona Novikova-Vashintsova, author of numerous autobiographic sketches and of the recently published novel, *Marinka's Life*, is seventy-five. Until the revolution she had been one of the "submerged". She learned to read and write in her sixties. "Thanks to the Soviet régime my youth is renewed," she writes in an outline of her forthcoming volumes. Gorky tells us that "there are millions of such peasant women as Novikova-Vashintsova, and for them her example may give an impetus to start on a new road."

The intensely eager and critical audiences have most directly influenced the stage. Sergey Prokofyev speaks for composers and conductors in his discussion of the difficult task of reflecting the present day by producing music which is understandable to the multitude, yet at the same time of a high quality. Popularization, playing down to the common people, is abhorred and anathematized. The older members of the Moscow Art Theatre, as for example, Kachalov, Moskvina, Leonidov, Olga Knipper, have found a fresh stimulus in the reactions of the outwardly drab audiences that have challengingly faced them across the footlights since the end of 1917.

Nor has the ballet escaped the effect of mass response. Katerina Geltser, one of the oldest active ballerinas, presents another case of rejuvenation. Here are a few excerpts from a recent statement:

"I have visited practically every country in the world. I have performed before the sophisticated and exacting audiences of the Metropolitan Opera House in New York and Covent Garden in London. I have danced in Paris, Rome, and Berlin—but what comparison is there between such tours and my performances in the new construction centres of the

Five Year Plan, where, in the first rows, are those who are building the new life?

"Imagine the wild taiga of Siberia. For centuries this was the unchallenged home of bears and wolves, a land of hoary, monstrous trees and turbulent rivers. Then came the armies of workers and engineers, sent by the Pyatiletka. They cut into those wild spaces, took the land from the grasp of centuries of darkness, built temporary barracks, laid railways, raised up huge constructions of iron and steel, and at an unheard of tempo created great modern factories in the midst of the wilderness. They built whole new cities, new important landmarks on the geographic map of culture. Alongside their factories and dwellings these pioneers built clubs and theatres,

"Together with the workers and engineers, the ballerinas come to display their art in the taiga. On the benches of the temporary wooden theatre sit the soldiers of the Revolution, weather-tanned and tempered in the struggle with nature. They follow each dance with the keenest attention, and at the end make the wooden walls shake with the thunder of their applause. Art has found its response in these builders of the new life. Where else is such a scene possible? Where else would it be possible to see the finest masters of the ballet, drama and music appearing in wooden barracks before the workers and builders of a factory?"

Mlle. Geltser well illustrates the mutuality of influence between the mass and the individual. Speaking of the difficulties that beset the artist's road, she finds that "when one knows that one is serving the great masses, when one knows that the effect of one's art is greater than it could ever be before, this difficult task becomes easy." This is one side of the coin, the effect of art on the masses. As to the obverse side, it is worth quoting from her concluding remarks:

"... It is now clear to me that classical dancers must translate the abstract, conventional style of choreography into the language of comprehensive concrete images, since our epoch is one of great and concrete ideals. We must give to the images we create the tempo of our great epoch. We must reflect the great social aims of the epoch in real dramatic images. We must make our art serve these highest aims of mankind. And it is this path that the Russian ballet, the Soviet ballet of all the free peoples of the USSR, is following."

It has become a common practice for Soviet writers, painters, composers, dancers, let alone representatives of the social sciences, to plunge into actual life for their material. They go to collective farms, to giant plants, coal mines, construction camps, to colonies of law-offenders, to native villages in Siberia and Central Asia, and saturate themselves with the nascent New Life.

One of the strictures raised against the feverish tempo of Soviet activities has been the comparatively poor quality of its products. Of late, and as one of the aims of the second Five Year Plan, greater emphasis has been placed on quality, whether it be in regard to a pair of boots or to medical training. The leading motive at the Writers' Congress was the necessity of making Socialist Realism combine truth to life with superb art.

As far as the arts are concerned, one must, on the whole, concede the superiority of old Russia. The old culture was based on extreme contradictions. Against a background of mass illiteracy and abject penury there shone such names as Tolstoy and Moussorgsky. Today that background is gone. Culture is spreading horizontally, not vertically. As yet no

Tolstoy and Moussorgskys have emerged out of the creative efforts in the USSR, despite (or because of?) its unprecedented purposeful unity and the mass response. It may be too early to expect such results.



NOTES OF A FELLOW-TRAVELER

A FELLOW-TRAVELER is one who, in a revolutionary age, without being prepared to commit himself to a clear-cut line of action, nevertheless realizes that the old order has nothing more to offer, and is ready to embrace the new world that the revolution offers.

He has been too much conditioned by the culture of the past to be able quickly and easily to rid himself of the habits and prejudices of that culture. This is not his strength, but his weakness. He is honest to the extent to which his complex state of mind allows him to be honest; but he is weak; he lacks integration; thought does not lead to action—he has been taught to separate the two. He has not yet learned that thought and action are one. He has, however, sufficient intelligence, equipment and integrity to perceive the important things that are happening, to see beneath the surface, to sense the current of events. He is not sure of himself, and he is liable to make grave errors of judgment in a practical situation. He is not altogether certain what he is *for*, but he does know what he is *against*: he is against war, against fascism, against nationalism, against privilege, exploitation, oppression, against the increasing misery which our economic order entails. He knows that the existing economic order is doomed, that it must be replaced by an economy based upon production for use, that our illusory political democracy must be superseded by a true democracy in which classes shall be abolished and all members of society shall enjoy equality of opportunity.

Being to this degree conscious—socially and politically conscious—he is valuable. He reflects the state of mind of millions and his ideas may help to clarify those of others. His uncertainties, his vacillations and his doubts, deplorable in themselves, yet form a part of the contemporary picture. And it is important that they should be expressed. The timid, flickering light of the fellow-traveler may guide the footsteps of many who would be dazzled by a brighter, surer light.



To be against something is to be for something else, though you may not know what the other thing is. You are against war. You are against war, but you are not against competitive private property. But what if you discover, by study and experience, that war is an essential concomitant of competitive private property? In theory you may be both for and against the same thing. But in practice, when you are confronted by a choice, you must make a decision. If you like a girl's figure and don't like her face, you may be able to find a way to enjoy the one while ignoring the other. But if you are thinking of marrying her, you must make up your mind whether the advantages of the one outweigh the disadvantages of the

other. If you are sincerely against war, if you are convinced that war threatens civilization itself, and if you find that war is an integral part of our competitive, nationalistic economy, then you will be forced to reject not only war, but the institutions that cause war. You will not be a pacifist. You will ally yourself with a political group that attacks the causes of war. You will, as over two million people in this country have done already, join the League Against War and Fascism.

Tragedy spreads over the land. The world grows more mad, more hypocritical, more incredible. What happens is what one expects, and yet one is surprised to find one's pessimistic anticipations realized. One's ultimate optimism is tempered by a rather bitter pessimism as to the immediate future. The brutal repressions of honest, realistic efforts to create a better world will, as they always have, create more converts, and weaken the despairing sadistic grip of the ruling class. But what battles, what tragedies will not take place before there is a sufficiently large fraternity of determined revolutionaries to give a reasonable assurance of victory! Yet one cannot hesitate. Our choice has already been made for us. Because we have learned to value the best that man has achieved in his long struggle, we cannot fail to choose the only side which can preserve those values and assure progress to higher stages of culture. As the lies and subterfuges and sordid practices of the vested interests with their armies multiply, while at the same time their promises are belied and their increasingly desperate expedients fail, as life grows more chaotic and uncertain and poverty grows apace, an imposing army of resolute, hard-thinking, grim, hopeful men and women will be molded. Youth and the workers. There will be martyrs, there will be rivers of blood, but through all the setbacks there will live the will to create a decent social order. —D. B. M.

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APRIL

BY MARIE DE L. WELCH

April summons
A boastful crowd;
The friends of April
Are bold and loud.

Bold, and bold
The bull-frog sings:
"I am the bell
That April rings!"

Bold and bolder
The iris stands:
"I am the flag
In April's hands!"

The blossoming apple,
Bolder and bolder:
"I am the wing
At April's shoulder!"

28 YEARS IN A NEWS ROOM

BY W. K. BASSETT

CHAPTER FOUR

THIS chapter must be devoted to alcohol. I know of no element outside the news room of a newspaper which plays such an important part within it. Certainly no extraneous force had more to do with my newspaper life than drink. As I look back and trace the ups and downs of my career, booze moves the graph pen-point hither and yon in what now appears to me as highly surprising. In this, however, I am far from original. Thousands of newspapermen throughout this country could write this chapter. There would be variations, but in the main the picture would be the same. The majority of these thousands are slaving "on the line" in newspaper work, slaving for men who haven't nearly the brains, the ingenuity, the nose for news, the facility of writing it, the news judgment, the genius or the downright ability they themselves possess. The best newspapermen in America are not the men holding the responsible jobs, getting the big money. The best newspapermen are the drudges, sure in their work, but uncertain in the doing of it; safe and thorough in their details, but undependable in their service—the periodical drunkards.

I am not referring to drinking men; men who "can take it or leave it" as they so boastfully and, to me, so nauseatingly, declare. They might as well be drinking coffee or coca colas. They sit on the desks in the city rooms and wield the authority in the managing editors' offices. They don't count. They are the "take it or leave it" boys. They are the wasters of good liquor, the insulters of strong drink, the desecrators of the grape.

I am talking about the men who can't take a drink on Tuesday because they have an important appointment on Friday; the men who so often take the drink on Tuesday and miss the Friday appointment. They are the brains of the newspaper profession today. An ironic remark, but a true one. They are at once the weakest and the strongest men in the profession, or the trade, as you will. The spark which now and then flashes out from the newspaper page they put there, the spark that so many of their superiors in job and pay could never, never strike. They are the ones who, as the Chinaman expressed it, don't "drinkee for drinkee, but drinkee for drunkee"; to whom the first beer is the rock on which they break, not the whiskey in the middle of that same night, or the gin at 3 o'clock on the next morning or the anything with alcohol in it the next day and the next and the next.

It is a strange situation to me, but as I look back over the years it is a certain situation that will be denied from few news rooms in this country. The genius of the newspapers is practically cornered by the periodical drunkards, the men of brilliance and undependability; the men who are there with both feet when they are there, but are completely absent on the more important business of drinking when they aren't there.

There are exceptions, as in every walk of life. There are some of the drunkards who are not more than ordinarily good newspapermen. In that exception I perhaps belong, but I

have the honor, not the shame, of having rubbed shoulders with the good ones, of having gone often on that same important business with them.

I know that there will be scores of newspapermen whom I have known, who have worked and who have drunk with me, who will laugh out loud with many a memory. Sitting here soberly and quite gravely I can with an effort hold back a chuckle or two that force themselves forward with memories of my own, and can see the thing for what it is, a terribly sad and pathetic picture. I am not growing maudlin about it. I can laugh with memories of many and many an event but I am forced to weep at many and many an event that followed them. The laughs are compelled by the flashes of joy that died so quickly, the tears by the consequences that live on and on and on.

Jobs, money, children, wives, self-respect and confidence have been swept away from a larger percentage of newspapermen than of any other worker in any other line of work. There is something about the atmosphere, the strain, the excitement, the carefree life of the profession that tends to draw within its maw the imaginative, the sensitive, the delicately tuned, the enthusiastic human being, and these are the temperaments of the man who is prone to leap into the metamorphic sea of liquor. I mean that newspaper work does not so much create the periodical drinker, but that the men who flow into the news rooms are the men who are already on the springboard of periodical drinking. Newspaper work only most easily provides the way and, what is so often essential, the unwilling, but at the same time, the eager companions.

There are, too, situations in newspaper work which are considered to require a drink. It was, in my early newspaper life, thought that a man could think faster, surer and with great eloquence if he were "well primed", as they called it. I remember how I early believed the course of liquor through my blood would give me the necessary confidence for a heavy detail. I found, in fact, that it did—at first. It wasn't long before I ran that thing into the ground. It isn't long before they all run it into the ground. Then, instead of more confidence, the answer is less, and the job harder and sometimes impossible. There are periods in which you find yourself back on the job, possibly, but in a constant haze; doing mediocre work, plowing through the day as if you were struggling through a morass in a deep cave, with heart and mind hung low, if not head; fancying contempt where it does not exist, loathing pity and condescension. Then the periods of clear-headedness again, still waters and green meadows of resurrection; good going, fresh mornings, clear eyes, square shoulders and damned good work on the biggest stories in the shop. Then—after sometimes two weeks of this, or a month, occasionally two months—the first beer and back you go, more loss than you have gained in the clear, crisp interim, increased remorse and bitterness and despair. The morning which you pray will never come; tightening lids you pray you will not have to open.

Baring my soul? Not only mine; the souls of hundreds upon hundreds of my fellowmen who beat out their meagre livelihoods on the keys of decrepit typewriters.

Looking back over all this, it reads like a damned essay on something. But it may have value in explaining much in the chapters that are to follow.

(To be continued)

THE THEATER

LAUGHING LEFTWARD

BY WINTHROP RUTLEGE

WHEN the musical comedy and the Broadway revue discover that our society is absurd and its pillars ridiculous, then it finds genuine fulfilment. It satisfies the spectator who wants a dash of brain-food in his entertainment and for the ordinary playgoer who wants to be amused, it has the advantage of being twice as funny as the stereotyped sentimental musicomedy.

This was first demonstrated on the American stage when "Of Thee I Sing" made its bow. It is now being redemonstrated in "As Thousands Cheer", at the Curran. It is odd, but you never hear the charge of "propaganda" hurled against such charades as these. And yet "Of Thee I Sing" was as neat a bit of anti-Hoover propaganda as you could wish for and "As Thousands Cheer" levels its darts at as many as a dozen of our sacred and expensive absurdities.

I'm not so sure the radicals shouldn't use more wit and fewer polemics in their attack on our economic system. It might even be possible to bring about a revolution by making the existing order appear so ludicrous that it would be laughed out of existence on a hurricane of lusty Marxian guffhaws. This would be a swell way to get around the criminal syndicalism law, too. That statute prohibits advocating the forcible overthrow of the present system, but it says nothing about its laughable overthrow.

The next time I see an earnest young zealot in the street carrying a banner inscribed with the slogan "smash war and fascism", I think I'll suggest to him that he change the lettering to read "Laugh war and fascism out of existence". Our warmakers and our fascists, as a matter of fact, are amazingly absurd fellows—at least in the present stage. When they have achieved their objectives they will cease to be funny, I know, but just now they are a perfect scream, as the Powell Street Boys would say.

No American ever votes for or gives his support to anything that looks ridiculous to him. Once you make the fascist an object of ridicule his cause is lost. Rotund Herbert Hoover was defeated in the last election, I suspect, not so much because anyone believed very much in the New Deal (or should I have said the New Ordeal?) but rather because of the things the caricaturists were able to do with his droll periphery and the humorists with his bland pronouncements about prosperity and corners. What this country needs, now that the five-cent cigar has been restored, is a robust and multitudinous crop of revolutionary scoffers with a chortle in every scoff. You can't be arrested for laughing—it's a right so taken for granted that no makers of constitutions and Magna Chartae have ever considered it necessary to put it in writing.

"As Thousands Cheer" probably will unseat no cabinets, win no strikes and defeat no pretenders to the presidency, but it is valuable because it hints the way and because it has so much fun doing it. Moreover it has the advantage of the assistance of such talented travesty artists as Porter Hall, Margaret Irving, Dorothy Stone and Dusky Ethel Waters.

One of the most amusing of its sketches is that of Mr. and

Mrs. Hoover on their last day at the White House, enjoying themselves by calling up such dignitaries as Andrew Mellon and Charles Stimson and saying, for the first time, what is really on their minds. Another is a scene preceding the divorce of Joan Crawford and Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., in which the two screen lovers battle fiercely to see which will get the best publicity from the venture. Then there's the episode of Barbara Hutton and her prince, that of the foreign delegates to the war debt conference, that of John D. Rockefeller's birthday, and the one concerning the opening of the Metropolitan opera—sponsored by the manufacturers of a beef-steak appetizer. They are rich in the ironic juices of impudent travesty and they move along at a gay and swift pace.

The episode wherein Aimee Semple MacPherson shows Mahatma Gandhi how to exploit his "act" successfully to the tune of three grand a night is one of the most hilarious bits the evening offers. Margaret Irving does the lady evangelist to a turn and Jerome Cowan fits nicely into the role of Gandhi as into that of Rockefeller Sr.

Of the spectacles rather for the eye than for the ear, those of the Charles Weidman dancers and that of the entire company in the pastel of the Easter parade of A. D. 1883 are the most absorbing. The Weidman dance group, headed by Grace and Kurt Graff, reaches genuine heights in the "Revolt in Cuba" number, making it a spectacle of genuine fire and terror.

The show is frankly taken from the headlines of the day, and this motif is kept predominant by the use of curtains fashioned from pages out of the daily press. We need more musical shows like "As Thousands Cheer"—more penetrating charades that will delve deeper into our asinities and provoke louder and more relentless laughter at them.

MUSIC

EDITED BY
SIDNEY ROBERTSON

SIDOR BELARSKY, Soviet Russian basso, will make his first local appearance when he sings for the American Russian Institute at Scottish Rite Hall in San Francisco Friday, May 3.

Belarsky is well known in the East, having been leading basso for the Chicago Civic Opera for several years, singing between seasons in recital in all the large eastern cities. Critics are agreed that Belarsky's is one of the finest bass voices in the world. At present he is executive head and leading basso for the American Opera Company in Los Angeles.

WHEN all your powers of showmanship have for several years gone to make yours the most talked-of name among singers anywhere in the world—this by dint of dashing energetically from the Metropolitan to NBC to Hollywood to the concert stage—it probably does your sense of proportion no harm when you are hailed in your native state as "Bakersfield Baritone". This is the modest understatement the *Sunday Chronicle* applied to Lawrence Tibbett when announcing his San Francisco concert in the Veterans' Auditorium this evening, Friday, April 26.

Mr. Tibbett is braving the critics by proposing to sing four

of the best-known German lieder, by Brahms, Wolf, etc., in English translation instead of the original German. As the composers have chosen to set to music not *ideas* but rather *poems*, which as creative expressions are hardly translatable, the increase in intelligibility which Mr. Tibbett claims for the use of English versions would not seem to be the main issue. However, his courage in refusing to be limited in his enterprise by anything he considers a mere fetish of the critics is entirely to be recommended. May his taste and judgment prove equal to his daring!

REVIVAL of the use of the forestage of The Theatre of The Golden Bough in Carmel began on Friday afternoon, April 19, with a concert by Sascha Wolas. This is a charming place for music and Carmel is to be congratulated on Mr. Kuster's enterprise.

Sascha Wolas is a young fiddler of far more than average talent but with all the defects, as with all the virtues, of an Auer pupil. Zimbalist has all the same failings and so has Toscha Seidel. Heifetz only escaped them by a hair's breadth and has had to work hard to put them safely behind him.

Every pupil of Leopold Auer has a beautiful tone and an understanding of dramatic values in a melodic passage. Once let a passage which has required much hard work for technical mastery sneak up on him, however, and the spirit of music flies out the window, leaving a bow-arm, five fingers and a metronome plain to the eye of the imagination. The result is an astonishing mixture of most movingly beautiful tones and passages so absentmindedly played as to be faintly comic.

Plainly the remedy is for the performer to say to himself: "I will play nothing in public I do not thoroughly and feelingly understand." But this is not so simple as it sounds, for hard technical practice blunts the ear as a rule to one's own playing, (whether or not this is necessary is another matter), and it sometimes takes years before an artist can listen with detachment to a piece which has been hard for him to master. Meanwhile it makes a certain degree of progress of which each stage may well, and usually does, seem to him to be the last.

Next week, on Friday afternoon at 4, Ruth Lorraine Close, well-known harpist, and Winifred Quinlan, soprano, will appear in joint recital.

MARIE MONTANA, American lyric soprano, who will be heard at the Denny-Watrous Gallery in Carmel Saturday evening, April 27, has a fine background of experience in opera and with symphony orchestras such as the Chicago and New York Philharmonic Symphonies in this country, and others abroad. Her singing has a most appealing personal quality, and she has moreover made a name for herself on the concert stage as a singer of unusually interesting programs.

She is one of the few singers to be heard today of pure Anglo-Saxon blood. One of her ancestors, Thomas Waite, was one of the signatories of Charles the First's death warrant. Escaping after the Restoration, he came to America, where his son later married Betsy Foote, so loyal a supporter of the Stuarts that she had helped conceal Charles the Second when the latter was a fugitive at the time of his father's execution.

She has taken the name of her native state, Montana, for her professional appearances. Her accompanist will be Margherita van Loeben Sels, whose sojourn in Carmel last summer

left many friends looking forward to hearing her again.

THE following quotation from the critical writings of a young American composer was inadvertently omitted last week. It should have followed the letter disputing the contention of this paper's music critic that emphasis on music heard in concert should be placed on the composition first and the performer second. It provides the serious answer to that letter.

"I sincerely express the hope that all this conglomeration of individuals, names merely for most of us, will disappear; and that a period will approach by way of common belief, selflessness, and technical mastery that will be a period of Music and not of Musicians, just as during the four centuries of Gothic there was Architecture and not Architects."

John Cage, in *Dune Forum*, vol. 1, no. 2.

BOOKS

WHICH ARRIVES

WAITING FOR NOTHING, by Tom Kromer. (Alfred A. Knopf) \$2

(Reviewed by Robin Howe)

THE impact of this book is like nothing that has been written out of individual experience of the depression. It is stark as a winter tree; no pathos, no plea, no art intervene between you and the facts of Kromer's experience, facts which make savage propaganda because you feel they cannot be borne. No conscious drama could improve on the profound violence of this book.

Except for four or five minor incidents, the book is announced as strictly autobiographical, and indeed the author's face is warrant for the claim. His picture on the cover might be a composite photograph of all the Americans who've been for two years, as Kromer has, just waiting, waiting for nothing.

"I am tired of walking the streets all day long asking for work. They laugh at you for asking for work. 'There is no work,' they say. 'We cannot keep the men we have.'"

If you are one of the good folk who reflect comfortably that no man need starve today, for any police officer will direct him to the proper agency; or if you think the spirit of Christ in the missions is giving loving care to the brotherhood of men, don't read this book. "All these guys that went up to the mourners' bench line up and march upstairs. They do not sleep with us sinners. They sleep in the converts' room. They are not lousy. . . . After preaching it is time to testify. 'How many of you men would like to stand up and tell what God has done for you?' yells the mission stiff.

"These stiffs are in this joint because they have no place to get in out of the cold, and this bastard asks them to stand up and tell what God has done for them. I can tell him what God has done for them. He hasn't done a damn thing for them. I don't though. It is warm in here. It is cold outside."

Any man will learn when to keep his mouth shut, if he's chased off park benches and out of empty houses often enough. He has to get some sleep. Even when he's picked up as a vag, they don't let him sleep.

His grim and unornamented descriptions of death among

the "stiffs" make the useless wretchedness of these lives most apparent. One such description is of a boy who fell while trying to board a moving freight:

"He is through, we can see that he is through. His eyes are half-shut. They are dopey-looking. There is a grin on his face. It is a foolish, sheepish grin. No stiff likes to have a drag [freight train] throw him. It hurts a stiff's pride to have a drag throw him. It hurts this kid's pride, too, so he has a sheepish grin on his face, and him with his two stumps oozing blood to the cinders.

"'You got a rough bump,' I say, 'but you will be all right in a minute. She was a hot one, all right.'"

"'She was plenty hot, all right,' he says. 'I thought I was a goner when I slipped.' He does not know he is hurt. He cannot see his two stumps that are oozing blood on the cinders.

"I watch him. I am sick all over. I am watching a kid die."

If you are under the impression that homosexuality is an affair of literary expatriates, conservatory flower-beds and ill-run penitentiaries, don't bother about "Mrs. Carter", just leave her out. You'll feel a lot better if you do. "It is chilly here, and I am sleepy. I will have to go to bed sometime. This queer will stay awake until I do go to bed. What the hell? A guy has got to eat, and what is more, he has got to flop. . . . You can always depend on a stiff having to pay for what he gets, I pull off my clothes and crawl into bed."

And if you have evolved anything resembling that cheering philosophy of the depression which tells you that hard times are good for us all, an asset to character, and that things were too easy and we needed some discipline, then let this book alone, you're much more comfortable as you are.

"I lie up here on my three-decker bunk and shiver. I am not cold. I am afraid. What is a man to do? I know well enough what he can do. All he can do is to try to keep his belly full enough of slop so that he won't rattle when he breathes. All he can do is to try and find himself a lousy flop at night. Day after day, week after week, year after year, always the same—three hots and a flop."

SOME FAMILIAR

THE DOCTOR'S SON AND OTHER STORIES by John O'Hara. (Harcourt, Brace & Co.) \$2.50

MANY of these stories will be familiar to readers of the *New Yorker*, where pungent bits by the author of *Appointment in Samarra* appear almost weekly. The title story is smoothly done, but all too plainly it is the work of a pleasant young man who knows there are people, miners and so on, who get a dirty deal, the way things are. Still, he's not deeply concerned, though he might like to think he is. This is not because he has had an easy life himself but because temperamentally he prefers wit to feeling. This keeps him pleasantly on the surface of things, and so "In the morning sun" and "Pleasure" just miss sticking by you. He has an attractive knack of knowing just when a story's done and a deft way of slapping you lightly in the face with it. So these tales make amusing reading, an anodyne for thought.

—S. W.

THE WISE USE OF TOYS, by Ethel Kawin. (University of Chicago Press) \$1

(Reviewed by Dr. Herman de Fremery)

THE play activities of children, from babyhood to adolescence, are now recognized as highly important factors in the development of all their mental and physical abilities

Toys, then, cannot be regarded merely as things to keep children busy and amused. For this reason psychologists have been studying the kind of toys that are most valuable for children of various interests, of different abilities, and in every stage of their development.

Information on this subject is here given in a way to be helpful to parents: toys for the infant before he can walk; toys for the development of strength and of skill; toys for constructive and creative play, and for artistic development. Other types of toys are considered that stimulate knowledge and aid in school activities; or that lead to an interest in science or in mechanics; or that otherwise serve the personality needs of the growing boy and girl.

The author is a child psychologist of the University of Chicago. Her brief book is an excellent discussion, for the lay reader, of the developmental values of children's toys and childhood play.

SOME DYNAMITE

MOBILIZING FOR CHAOS, by O. W. Riegel. (Yale University Press) \$2.50

(Reviewed by Harry Conover)

AS THE jacket says, "there is dynamite in this quiet, excellently written book. It reveals the appalling extent to which the 'news' given out through the press, over the radio, and through every other channel of public announcement is controlled and colored by vested interests, from foreign offices to commercial advertisers." It is a factual study of the sources, avenues, control and perversion of news, by a man who was intimately connected with the process. Mr. Riegel was formerly on the European staff of the *Chicago Tribune* and *New York Daily News* and is now Director of Journalism at Washington and Lee University. He here describes how the telegraph, cable and radio have been made servile to the demands of nationalism and how news is tampered with and exploited for ulterior purposes.

By 1914 England had obtained a virtual monopoly of the cable systems of the world. The advantages of this control were clearly realized during the War. She censored press dispatches, delayed and interfered with the messages of Germany to emissaries abroad, and favorably twisted remarks about the Allies for the papers of neutral countries. Her success left a deep impression on rival countries; the history of communication since is the history of nationalistic efforts to monopolize the transmission of information. The development of radio has not altered this trend. Riegel effectively contrasts fact with the fatuous claims of R. G. A.'s General Harbord that "the radio industry has played a major role in the development of the cosmopolitan consciousness of the world". In Germany, cheap receiving sets have been popularized by the government because they are too weak to get any but nearby German stations; Poland has built the most powerful station in the world to "jam" Russian broadcasts. American stations on the Canadian border are busily propagandizing against public ownership of utilities in Canada. Increasingly all countries insist on cultural isolation. The major proposals at international parleys are similar to those of Austria and China for the censorship of "anything contrary to the economic interests of the State". England and America oppose such proposals only because they threaten the sources of reports about the small nations under their domain. Reuters of England, Havas of France and the Associated Press of this country are tools of imperialism.

At home, Riegel frankly states that the whole tone of the American press is determined by the need to get advertising. Therefore, more sensationalism is allowed in the treatment of foreign news than in accounts of internal economic affairs—witness the current war scares. The "loyalty" of the publishers to commercial interests makes their vocal defenses of "freedom of the press" especially hollow-sounding. Their misrepresentation of the Tugwell and Wagner bills and their anti-Soviet drives illustrate.

The average intelligent newspaper reader thinks he knows how much propaganda is mixed with his news, and frequently cynically asserts: "Oh well, you can't believe what you read in the papers." But until he has read this book, he is surely unaware to what extent and by what devious and underground means the propaganda-mongers control his thinking.

SECOND BLOOMING

COME, MY COACH! by Marjorie Worthington. (Alfred A. Knopf) \$2

(Reviewed by Dorothea Castelhun)

SO MANY novels of recent years have chosen the shores of the Mediterranean for their setting that it is like stepping into a familiar scene to join Lucy Benton and her two children in their summer home at Lou Finestroun. They led the usual gay, carefree life of sun-basking and sea-bathing, entertaining lavishly and more or less indiscriminately, and doing nothing more arduous mentally than thinking up new ways to enjoy themselves. Yet Nancy, eighteen, and Peter, fourteen, get a little fed up with vacations abroad. "I hate Americans in France, anyway. Why don't we all go home, where we're nice?" was the way Nancy once put it.

Lucy Benton, only forty and still slender and girlish, in spite of having a married daughter who is about to make her a grandmother, is going through the dangers and discomforts, the ecstasy and torture, if you prefer, of a "second blooming". In Nancy's words, "I honestly think . . . that it's no worse having a dipsomaniac for a maternal parent than to have a romantic one!" And Lucy's passionate love for Julien Vernet certainly complicated life not only for herself but for her entire family.

There seems to be something about a handsome priest—well, you know what I mean. Julien was that fascinating, glamorous figure, a worldly priest, rather conveniently unencumbered by a parish, inevitably a magnet for the fair sex. In spite of feeling inclined to lose patience with her for her infatuation and the lengths to which it carries her, you still cannot help liking Lucy, but Julien succeeds too well in having his cake and eating it both to arouse very much sympathy in the reader. "Our beginnings and ends should be in the bosom of the Holy Mother Church . . . what we do in the middle of our lives is purely personal." Julien said things like that so beautifully. That gives you Julien!

Marjorie Worthington writes in a pleasantly simple style yet with subtle humor that saves the book from being purely sentimental mush. Her characters come out of the book vividly alive but most of them, with one or two exceptions, including Lucy, are the familiar stock characters of smart modern fiction. *Come, My Coach!* is the type of entertaining, sophisticated novel so popular now, especially with the people who, to adapt the author's description of Lucy Benton, "frequently forget the things that are unpleasant".

DISCUSSION METHODS FOR ADULT GROUPS, by
Thomas Fansler. (American Association for Adult Edu-
cation, New York City) \$1.50

(Reviewed by Dr. Herman de Fremery)

A WIDESPREAD interest in forums, classes and discussion-
groups is evident on all sides. In one form or another
they have multiplied in recent years. Great social import-
ance, and educational value, have been claimed for the tech-
niques of systematized group-discussion. This is reason
enough for Fansler's study of methods, and of the measure-
ment of their success.

The author discusses three types, the forum, the informal
study-group and the panel-discussion, with some of their vari-
eties. A salient feature of the book is the illustrative materi-
al, which consists of lively stenographic records of discussions
with vivid marginal notes on the attitudes of the speakers.
The last chapter proposes criteria whereby the success of a
method may be judged.

CORRESPONDENCE

Editor, Pacific Weekly,
Sir:

Anent Ella Winter's letter in your issue of March 29—
let's get together on what we mean by "religion". Miss Win-
ter seems to identify it, inclusively and exclusively, with
"worship" in the old, restricted sense.

Few of us professionals use it in that way. Definition is
difficult, ultimately impossible; but something like this is near-
er our meaning—"A man's religion is his devotion to his own
scale of values." And so the more devoted, the more religious.

Ergo, whether or not Lenin is worshipped "as a god"
And, as I said before, the only danger lies in allowing this
valid religious devotion to eventuate in deification. I merely
suggest that the Communists watch out for the "historic role"
of the flesh become the word.

San Francisco

George Hedley

Editor, Pacific Weekly,
Sir:

With reference to the first big meeting to be held on this
coast against War will you please explain to me why people
like Chester Rowell say communists "believe in" class-war?
They hate it so much that they want to abolish it and abolish
all classes so that kind of war can never take place again. Do
all liberals believe capitalists don't make and encourage and
support class-war—though perhaps not under that name?
And what do they think calling out troops against workers
or national guardsmen against sailors is if not class war?
What do they call that?

I hope you will have some liberal answer this puzzling ques-
tion for me.

Berkeley

Frances Hodgson

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