

PACIFIC WEEKLY

A WESTERN JOURNAL OF FACT AND OPINION

DECEMBER 2, 1935



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PACIFIC WEEKLY

A Western Journal of Fact and Opinion

VOLUME III

MONDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1935

NUMBER 22

CONTENTS

Notes and Comment	253
Editorials	
The Rape of the Senator	254
Subsidizing the Vigilantes	254
Lincoln Steffens' Column	255
Democracy and the Constitution	256
by William Thurston Brown	
An Open Letter to Manchester Boddy, by W. K. Bassett	257
Agnes Smedley and Soviet China, by Esther Blaisdell	259
The San Francisco Election, by Ben Legere	260
Orchids to You, by Janice Brooke	262
California, by Marie de L. Welch	262
Books	
The Proletarian Novel—Its Coming of Age,	263
by Edward Radenzel	
Reviews by Dorothy Erskine, Ella Winter, John Woodburn, Lincoln Steffens, Sara Reamer, Harry Conover, Dorothea Castelhun, Alan Campbell and Anne Nash	264
Our Contributors	268

NOTES AND COMMENT

FANTASTIC JUSTICE

JUSTICE painted another hideous picture of itself in San Francisco the past week. Lineaments of fairness and right fail to show up through the garish colors of travesty. Anita Whitney, as fine a woman as walks the earth, was convicted in Superior Judge Robinson's court on the charge of falsifying an election statement. She faces a sentence of not more than two years in jail, or a \$5,000 fine, or both imprisonment and fine.

But it is not Miss Whitney's conviction, nor her possible sentence *per se*, that gives the lie to justice in California; it is the nature of that conviction and the nature of that possible penalty.

Anita Whitney was arrested for the alleged commission of exactly the same assumed violation of the law as was Louise Todd. It was discovered by vigilant and persistent persecutors of members of the Communist party, that both Miss Whitney and Miss Todd had made affidavits to signatures on petitions placing the Communist party on the ballot, and that they had not personally witnessed each and every one of those signatures.

But Louise Todd, several weeks ago, was convicted without any ceremony whatsoever, with no alternative decision on the part of the jury suggested by the court, and sentenced to from one to fourteen years in the penitentiary. She is now serving her sentence.

To the judge of the superior court Louise Todd was just a name, Louise Todd was just a Communist. No influential friends of hers stood in the background in the vigilant mind's eye of the judge. Not the dictates of conscience, nor of impartial justice sent Louise Todd to the penitentiary. The court trial, the conviction, the sentence, were nothing more nor less than variations of the theme: "To hell with her."

Not so with Anita Whitney. Arrested as she was for the same identical commission of "crime", the treatment she

received was different. It was not different because Anita Whitney desired that it should be so. Anita Whitney would to-day change places with Louise Todd if it were possible for her to do so. She is that kind of a woman; that sincere; that devoted to the cause for which she has given the best of her years.

But the court, the prosecutors and the persecutors, looked beyond Anita Whitney. They saw her hosts and hosts of friends, not alone in the Communist party but among those who are very decidedly not in the Communist party.

An alternative verdict is given to the jury by Judge Robinson and an alternative sentence. That's not justice as Louise Todd sees it, and, which is very much more to the point, it is not justice as Anita Whitney sees it.

And, incidentally, it might be remarked that the "crime" for which Louise Todd and Anita Whitney have been convicted is committed continually, at every election, by scores of Republican and Democratic workers on election petitions. Big Business, the sinking capitalist giant, dictated the persecution of these two women because, and solely because, they are members in and workers for the Communist party.

ANTI-NAZI SPEAKER

MADAME SONIA BRANTING, woman lawyer, daughter of the late Hjalmar Branting, Prime Minister of Sweden, has arrived in California and will speak in Los Angeles, San Francisco and other American cities on the treatment of anti-Nazis in Germany. She has just come from Berlin where she was the Swedish delegate to the International Penal Law Congress. On the reception committee for Madame Branting in Los Angeles, besides prominent liberals, journalists and professionals are Eddie Cantor, Rupert Hughes, Dorothy Parker and Hugh Walpole.

LONGSHOREMEN'S CONVENTION

THE eleven-day convention of the Maritime Federation of the Pacific ended with delegates agreeing that something constructive had been achieved. Two reports in the Hearst press were false, one that there was a split in the Sailors' Union, the other that the Federation had declared a coastwise ban against "hot cargo". (*Examiner* Nov. 19) The Hearst press has, of course, a difficult time getting authentic news from the maritime workers who will see none of their representatives until they make an attempt to report their news correctly.

What the Federation did do was unanimously pass a resolution requesting of national president Joseph P. Ryan the taking of a nationwide vote among I. L. A. locals on the question of moving hot cargo, with special reference to the Gulf strike now in progress. So far the National Executive and Mr. Ryan have taken no action on this.

Miss Perkins has meanwhile set up a board of three to gather information on the Gulf strike with a view to early settlement of that dispute.

A recommendation was made to all affiliated organizations of the Maritime Federation to assess their members for a

strike fund, "anticipating that a struggle with the ship-owners may be impossible to avoid."

PROTEST HIRING HALLS

ON NOVEMBER 13 the I. L. A. announced that it had wired authorities protesting plans to establish U. S. shipping hiring halls, as these would merely function to lower existing wage scales.

On November 26 ship operators at Los Angeles protested Secretary of Labor Perkins' statement that the Government is powerless to enforce Federal arbitration decisions governing marine strikes.

"The statement of the Secretary of Labor is a frank admission of the futility of Government arbitration under our present administration as a means of settling industrial disputes. It excuses irresponsibility both among labor union memberships and leaderships, and it condones and it encourages violation of awards and contracts by union labor," said Eugene A. Mills, chairman of the Executive Committee of the Marine Service Bureau, representing shipowners. Did Mr. Mills kick when Mr. Weir and other employees flouted NRA decisions? When the shipowners chiseled on their Arbitration Award?

SYMPATHY FROM POLICE

THE waterfront is not so opposed to the maritime workers' demands as some enemies of unionists would have the public think. Special police have evinced sympathy for the crew which is now holding the Taft up until it gets what it considers reasonable demands. A member of the waterfront police reported that despite an order by T. G. Plant, of the Waterfront Employers' Association, that any clerk working for a certain company who joined a clerks' union would be fired, the lot of them, nearly 50, joined the union in a mass and no action was taken against them.

Other waterfront supernumeraries feel sympathetic when they realize that the seamen and the longshoremen are getting more for their work than they are.

THE RAPE OF THE SENATOR

SENATOR Culbert L. Olson, promised bride of production-for-use, virgin in politics until the last gubernatorial election, has been ravished both by the husband-to-be and the national administration, and another violation is being planned even now by his erstwhile supporters, the Epics.

The Senator tip-toed cautiously into the Epic movement in the late summer of 1934. At that time, before the August primaries, he shied from any official affiliation with Epic, asking that his name not be used in the *Epic News*, and refused to put Epic on his stationery until after the overwhelming vote he received in the primaries.

Then the Senator became rabidly Epic and was folded to the bosom of Upton Sinclair's organization. He advocated the Epic plan in his dry, statistical speeches and drew his sword for the common man.

His election was hailed as a signal victory for Epic, which

showed weakness in the northern counties, and he immediately became the standard bearer for production-for-use when Sinclair savagely bit the dust of his victorious rival, Frank Merriam.

Olson, afire with resolves, drew up an initiative petition favoring production-for-use and started its circulation among the electorate. This brought about the first violation of his chastity. The End Poverty League board of directors turned thumbs down on the Senator's petition (for no other reason than that the Senator "scooped" them on the circulation of such a petition) and prepared to toss Olson to the lions. The Senator and the Epics severed diplomatic relations, and the End Poverty League applied social sanctions.

When it seemed as though Olson might get patronage from the national administration, this difference was patched up, and Olson was once again the fair-haired lad, accepted socially by the Sinclair clique and urged to address the faithful in large halls which consistently became less and less full as the Epic fever abated.

Then the Senator hopped a plane to Washington and sat at the feet of the great white Father. When he returned, he reported that Roosevelt told Hopkins to recognize Olson's faction of the Democracks in California.

Naturally, Olson was as popular as a Clark Gable in a girls' boarding school. The liberal Democrats fawned on him for key positions. When one visited headquarters of the Democratic Central Committee, one waded through surging waves of enthusiastic job-seekers.

Now it is safe to assume that the Senator was telling the truth about promised recognition. There was no reason for him to lie about it, as there was no reason to doubt Sinclair's veracity when he related Roosevelt's promise to speak for production-for-use shortly before the last November election. One can only conclude that both gentlemen were initiated into the order of the Double Cross.

Recently it became painfully apparent that Olson was not getting the patronage, and consequently his popularity has nose-dived like a pin-pricked balloon. Twenty-seven hundred applications for WPA jobs have been handled by Olson's organization; 58 jobs have been secured.

At the time this is written, the Epics are considering repudiation of Olson for a second time. To be sure, they will give a logical reason, but even members of the executive committee have intimated that the Senator really should have gotten some key jobs.

A man of ox-like honesty, the Senator is in the position of having been knifed not only by his followers but by those for whom he has fought—the national party and F. D. R.

SUBSIDIZING THE VIGILANTES

ANOTHER step towards the creation of a peon labor class among relief clients was taken by Frank Y. McLaughlin, State Relief Administrator, with the release November 6 of a special dispatch for agricultural periodicals by McLaughlin's Division of Public Relations.

The ten pages of text and tables give the impression that the State is willing, even eager, to toss the agriculturalists enough relief workers to do the latter's underpaid work, and that, furthermore, the State is laying plans to make this peonage system a permanent subsidy to the agricultural interests.

Hardly less significant than the content of the bulletin is

the foxy way McLaughlin's public relations men have phrased the thing.

The bulletin says that since last May "it has been the fixed policy of the California Relief Administration as well as the Works Progress Administration that anyone refusing to accept work where the wages and working conditions were satisfactory would be immediately dropped from the relief rolls."

McLaughlin's usual militancy in this pronouncement can be explained by the fact that he is talking exclusively to the farm journals. These statements were not sent to the general press.

The next paragraph explains just what are "satisfactory" working conditions: "For seasonal agricultural employment it was held that the average worker must be able to earn sufficient to meet decent standards of living on his per diem basis."

That explains everything. Satisfactory working conditions mean a decent standard of living. A decent standard of living is "satisfactory" working conditions. "Here we go round the mulberry bush!"

Arthur Caylor, in the San Francisco News Tuesday, says McLaughlin "stipulated as a prerequisite that growers must pay prevailing wages", but he didn't include these stipulations in his "special dispatch" for the agricultural periodicals.

On the next page McLaughlin's publicity men say: "To meet seasonal demands of agriculture, the State Works Progress Administration has completed a survey showing the number of agricultural workers, both resident and transient, needed in every county of the State and for every month of the year."

You see, relief-workers, plans are being made to take care of your future. Read on: "To enable the Works Progress Administration to meet these demands both this year and next, the program of regular work projects for those in the relief rolls has been coordinated in such a manner that it will always be possible to stop work on certain projects at certain times whenever the seasonal demands for agricultural labor may require."

In other words, if you're able-bodied and on relief, you had better be able to do some moving around on short notice. Although you have received no formal notice, you have been made a member of the crack McLaughlin Regiment for the

Protection of California Farming.

Two things need to be noticed in this connection. First, the agricultural interests of this State lead the Nation in the exploitation and persecution of labor. At the door of these people may be laid the crimes of Imperial Valley, Salinas Valley, Sonoma County and Sacramento.

Second, do not suppose that Mr. McLaughlin is an ogre who enjoys persecuting California citizens. He's a politician, and as such it is necessary for him to keep his political fences in good shape. They say the race is to the swift—it is also to the greedy, the savage and the cruel.

Around McLaughlin is a circle of wolves, all ready to grab his job. It's inevitable that he should do what he can to help the agriculturalists at the expense of their laborers.

LINCOLN STEFFENS SPEAKING--

THE CIVILIZATION of Ethiopia goes on apace. The League of Nations can hardly keep Rome up to the Ethiopians after all these Christian days.

OF THAT SODA poisoning wholesale in San Francisco there are two remarks to make. One is that no crime is involved. The district attorney *et al* seem to be inclined to seek out a guilty felon to try and punish, but my inclination is to see it all as business, not very good business; a bit careless and inefficient, but business as we know it. And, the second remark, the Government is not going to pass any laws to prevent food poisoning. Remember the food and drug bill in Congress. The business men in the food and drug business chiseled the graft and corruption back into that notorious "business" even after the New Deal had dealt with it. Business will not let the politicians corrupted by business deal with business.

PSYCHOLOGY WILL be the next science of research and discovery, a fat field for the boys and girls to mine and irrigate. We need, we can no longer dispense with the very simple knowledge buried there. Why is it that conceited people, like the vigilantes and the cops, are so privily inferior? That's why, you answer. We know that conceit is the rugged side of inferiority; that when you encounter aggressive individualism as in our patriots, the disease is really shame and a humility that hurts. But the psychologists have still got to trace the relation of cause and effect. We can see that the munition and other war makers are patriots, but not with any mathematical precision. We haven't got the psychology in a shape to nail it. Hitler and Mussolini are nudes in psychology and, like Huey Long, quite ripe for shooting; but vivisection is much better. Better for the reformers, I mean. Fascists are at first more ignorant than cruel. If science could show business men that their affected respectability is their proclamation of guilt, the true sign that they are our corrupters, they might be convinced; might, I say; I'm not sure. Ever since I discovered that our business men were the source of all the evils they deplore; that they make the politicians they despise; and the lawyers and judges they are ashamed of, I have been reporting the facts in vain. My cry for science is the confession of my failure. Who are our vigilantes to-day?

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Who are our Fascists? Let the children study psychology and tell us. In Europe the aristocracy have always looked down on merchants and now, in this country, labor is acquiring the same scorn. Not enough; the knowledge must be made common. Even the businessmen themselves have to learn it. By heart.

BIG BILL LEWIS has resigned from a vice-presidency of the A. F. of L. The United Mine Workers want a united front, an industrial union, and when they get that they will demand a still more united front. Learning from the employers now, they will find they have to take lessons from Labor, from the Communists of Soviet Russia, who are the only workers in the world who have graduated from college. The A. F. of L. sees this and thinks it's the end of their graft; as it will be.

THE STANFORD students who specialize in football beat the University of California team 13 to 0. No harm done there. Why can't all students learn like that to play the game?

THE NAZIS are telling us that we someday shall be putting priests and nuns in gaol. No use blaming the Fascists for that; they have to do it and we'll have to do that or something like it. Negroes, Jews, Communists, Catholics—all people who are not regular, who are different, will have to be thrown to the lions of hate.

BEING HIGHLY civilized, the Chinese can always find a traitor for an enemy like the Japanese. The Japanese were about to take over a big hunk of China when somebody interfered; some dispatches said the Japanese Emperor was blamed. Anyway the civilizers quit and China seemed to be saved. Now comes along one Yin Ju-Keng, collects some 25 counties to form a revolutionary government and calls upon the Japanese to protect them against the Communists. And the Japanese are glad to go to the rescue. And stay there.

IT'S ALL quiet along the waterfront, I guess; the *Chronicle* which is watching, doesn't bring us anything to comment on. And the *Chronicle* is a newspaper again.



DEMOCRACY AND THE CONSTITUTION

THE COMING year seems likely to be marked by a greater discussion of the American Constitution than any former year within the memory of any of us. If an intelligent decision as to the subject of debate is desired, there should be in the meantime, as Heywood Broun has recently said, a better understanding of the nature of democracy and of the function of a constitution in any nation aiming at or seeking democracy. The fact that Ex-President Hoover's "Research Committee on Recent Social Trends", in their findings as to the prospects of democracy, page 68 of the first volume, said: "Many have been led to conclude reluctantly that the emer-

gence of some recognized and avowed form of plutocratic dictatorship is not far away" surely stresses the importance of the above inquiry.

Any unbiased study of history—as I think all reputable historians will agree—would establish certain facts: first, that there never has been and is not now any such thing as a real democracy; second, that a democracy, if at all possible, will not be created by a written document, but will be the result of social evolution, probably including political revolution; third, that a political democracy is unattainable unless it includes or grows out of industrial or economic democracy; fourth, that a constitution in any nation seeking democracy will be regarded, not as a fetish or a finality, but solely as an experimental agency for its attainment and valued by its competence to serve such a purpose.

The American Constitution, as records prove, not only is not an instrument capable of realized democracy—the Supreme Court has given rather convincing evidence to that effect—but never was designed for any such purpose, was designed primarily for the prevention of democracy. In the words of Woodrow Wilson, for years a student and teacher of history and constitutional government at Princeton, "The Federal government was not by intention a democratic government. In plan and structure it had been meant to check the sweep and power of popular majorities. It had in fact been originated and organized upon the initiative, and primarily in the interest, of the mercantile and wealthy classes."

If any one objects that this is merely the opinion of a member of the Democratic Party, perhaps the opinion of an eminent Republican will be welcomed. Andrew Dickson White, one of the founders and the first president of Cornell University at Ithaca, New York, was a lifelong Republican and served under two Republican administrations as minister to Russia and Ambassador to Germany. In an address at the 30th anniversary of his class at Yale in 1883, published under the title, "The Message of the Nineteenth Century to the Twentieth", he said in part: "Mercantilism, necessitated at first by our circumstances and position, has been in the main a blessing. It has been so under a simple law of history. How shall it be prevented from becoming, in obedience to a similar law, a curse? Here, in answer to this question, it seems to me, is the most important message of this century to the next. For the great thing to be done is to develop other great elements of civilization now held in check, which shall take their rightful place in the United States, and shall make the history of our country greater than anything we have reached or ever can reach under the sway of mercantilism alone."

We can bring Dr. White's statement up to date if we substitute in place of "mercantilism" its modern equivalent "capitalism".

But much more direct information is easily available. James Madison, justly called "The Father of the Constitution", as a member of the Constitutional Convention of 1787, kept a daily record of the most significant utterances of its members concerning democracy. It appears from this diary that the almost unanimous opinion of the delegates was substantially that of Elbridge Gerry, who declared democracy to be "the worst of all political evils", and of Roger Sherman of Connecticut, who said that "the people immediately should have as little to do as may be about the government." That this result followed may be seen in the fact that only one man in six had the elective franchise for at least a generation after the constitution was adopted. George Mason of Virginia, chief author of the Virginia Bill of Rights, and one of the two

members of the convention believing in democracy, refused to sign the constitution as finished by the convention, pointing out the fact that in it "there is no declaration of any kind for preserving the liberty of press, or the trial by jury in civil cases." The significant truth of the whole matter is that the framers of our constitution had, as individuals in their occupations no need of a bill of rights, and although, in response to the widespread and imperative demand all over the thirteen states for such a bill, the first ten amendments were added later on, the almost universal violation of the first of those amendments—that of free speech, free press and freedom of assemblage—as seen in the unofficial and official vigilantism of to-day, was foreshadowed by the Alien and Sedition laws enacted and enforced by the Federalist Party in the last four years of power. The most available sources of information on the above facts may be found in Chapter 18 of West's "The American People", published by Allyn and Bacon, San Francisco, and his "Source Book in American History", published by the same company, or Charles A. Beard's "An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States", published by the Macmillan Company.

How our public school system has thus far failed to give future citizens the facts of our constitution may be inferred from the following words of Prof. William Draper Lewis, for many years principal of the William Penn High School in Philadelphia, in his "Democracy's High School", to which President Theodore Roosevelt wrote a foreword. "It is strange," writes Mr. Lewis, "that we have been managing our

high schools as if our pupils were to be citizens of a despotism where the highest virtue is unthinking obedience. This habit of rendering unthinking obedience to a government, no matter how beneficent, is exactly the habit most favorable to the party boss . . . Is it not clear that one of the first duties of the public school is to make its charges intelligent concerning these questions that most vitally concern our community welfare?" He should have said, "it is not strange at all." The prevalent habit of looking upon our constitution as a fetish has been in no small degree responsible for that situation.

May I not go a step further and suggest that it is not so important that we win a presidential election in 1936 on the question whether or not the present administration is exceeding its legal powers under the Constitution, as it is to face squarely the vastly more important question as to whether we want democracy, what democracy would be, and by what agencies it may be at least approached. Surely no intelligent citizen will think that a document written in the 18th century under radically different conditions by a body of men conspicuous for the absence of such men as Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, Samuel Adams, Richard Henry Lee, and George Clinton can any more serve to hasten democracy, than transportation by ox teams to-day could even keep our millions of people alive. Does anyone believe that either of the two outmoded wings of political capitalism will or can give our citizenship a chance to express their minds at the ballot box on these questions?

—WILLIAM THURSTON BROWN



AN OPEN LETTER TO MANCHESTER BODDY

MY DEAR MR. BODDY:

It was my plan to say a personal word, generally, if you know what I mean, in sending forth this special edition of PACIFIC WEEKLY and, upon reading your column in the *Illustrated Daily News* of November 21, it became also my plan to say a personal word to you. So why not combine them, not to kill two birds with one stone, but to scatter seeds before them?

I am extremely pleased with this number of PACIFIC WEEKLY; extremely proud of it. My battle has been, still is, a mighty hard battle. It is a hard battle because I have persistently refused to compromise; persistently refused to back down, or slow down; persistently refused to cater in any way to those within whose power it is to spread butter on my bread quite lavishly. It is perhaps not so strongly to my credit that I am that way. It is, in a manner, the nature of the beast. I have always been so, and, unfortunately, not so definitely as now with the right at my back.

So, I am proud of this issue of PACIFIC WEEKLY as an exceptional link in the chain of PACIFIC WEEKLIES that have

gone before. I am proud of them clear back to the beginning last December, with all their mistakes, with their occasional errors, but with their slate absolutely clean as measured by honesty of effort and sincerity of purpose.

Which brings me to this question. How about you, Mr. Boddy? You have made an exceptional success with your two newspapers there in the south. Your circulation manager claims for them in the Los Angeles metropolitan area a combined circulation greater than that of either the *Times* or the *Examiner*. And they have been influential, I believe. They have been friendly to labor. They have, in the main, stood for social justice, and they have, at trying times, to a large extent endeavored to aid in balancing the budget in economic reform. You have been, I also believe, sincere in your efforts to provide the underdog, the unpossessed, the working man, with newspapers on which they could considerably rely as giving the facts, as uncovering the frauds, as casting the calcium on those who are profiting by human travail.

You have been—but are you to-day? Were you, for

instance, on November 21? Let me say as gently as I can, but with no intention of being doubtful about it, or hesitant about it—**YOU BETRAYED LABOR IN YOUR PERSONAL COLUMN IN THE DAILY NEWS NOVEMBER 21.** You betrayed it just as much as though you had completely turned your back on it and marched with goose-step the other way. You betrayed it even more effectively than a complete turn-about, because you used that threadbare, rather underhanded method of attempting to make your readers believe that labor was in the act of betraying itself.

Under the guise of a friend with friendly counsel, you struck at labor where labor right to-day in California most healthily lives. You struck at the heart of labor, the militant, pulsating heart of labor. You attempted to belittle, with what you hope will be considered by your readers a nasty adjective, the name and the activities of Harry Bridges who is to-day, whether you know it or not, doing more for his fellow man and less for self than perhaps any other labor official in this broad, unsmiling land.

Let me print the first half of your column as you sent it forth under your name. If you re-read it now you may get a better idea of just how serious is the thing you have done, just how menacing to your reputation for sincerity and honor. The paragraph I italicize you caused to be printed in black-face type.

"For more than a decade the Daily News has endeavored, to the extent of its ability, to advance the legitimate cause of organized labor."

"In the conduct of its own business it has always maintained highly satisfactory contractual relations with trade unions."

"Its natural desire and its established policy, therefore, would shape its efforts toward supporting the cause of labor in the trouble now brewing at Los Angeles harbor."

"Facts in the case, however, convince us that to do so would result not only in irreparable damage to the cause of labor itself, but in serious, wanton destruction of the orderly conduct of business and commerce, to say nothing of hardship visited upon thousands of innocent workers."

"Our investigations convince us that a comparatively small minority of labor agitators, dominated by the alien Harry Bridges of San Francisco, is at the bottom of pending labor trouble in San Pedro."

"That there are many honest union men, entirely unsympathetic with the Bridges program, being drawn into the mess, we have no doubt. It would not be the first time that honorable union men in Los Angeles had been jockeyed into strike activities that seriously hurt the cause of organized labor."

The remaining half of your column I have not re-printed, but I'll bet you a box of manila envelopes against a pig of linotype metal that after reading the first half any San Francisco longshoreman, schooled or unschooled, could dictate the rest of it with his eyes shut. In fact, the whole column is what in San Francisco is looked upon as a "stereotype". They use it at parties. For instance, somebody is supposed to represent a publicity agent for a steamship company and to dictate an editorial for an amenable newspaper editor. Out comes your column, almost verbatim.

By this method, Mr. Boddy, you have suddenly chosen to strike at labor when labor, down there in San Pedro, has finally begun to sense its strength and finally begun to wage

its battle with head up, with no compromise, until justice prevails. There are many who might assign to your action motives that are perhaps not exactly the nicest motives, but those which will most effectively satisfy the advertising departments of your two papers. There are those who may decide from this November 21 column that, like Roy Howard, you have found the strain on your efforts for complete independence a bit too strong to withstand. There are many who may say that, like Cassius, you have ambitions, and a complete, definite, uncompromising and, may I say, sincere support of labor will definitely not further them.

I do not say that, Mr. Boddy. I am inclined to believe that perhaps those who have had your ear, those, perhaps, who have the business success of your section of the state more at heart than the ultimate salvation of the men and women who toil with their hands, have been characteristically eloquent: have, apparently, led you to believe that this is the way you should go. It is normal and natural for them to lead you this way, if you so can be led. They are acting, as Lincoln Steffens would say, wisely. They know Harry Bridges, and they know what he has done and is doing in San Francisco for the longshoremen who are his charge and his responsibility. They know the strength he has and they know that he has this strength because he is honest and sincere and devoted wholeheartedly to the service of the members of the union which he heads. They know the wisdom he has and the knowledge; they know that he knows what is behind them, what motivates them, and what schemes they have planned and are planning to destroy the solidarity of labor in San Francisco and other parts of the world. They know, for instance—and you should remember this even if you do not know all Big Business knows about him—the vote he polled for vice-president of the State Federation of Labor at the convention in Los Angeles only a few weeks ago. It didn't win him the place, but it was a tremendous vote in comparison with that he received the year previous. It was in a manner of being a triumphant vote. It was a staggering vote to the interests which are intent on crushing union labor and which have so far somewhat succeeded in contributing to the delinquency of labor leaders who stand to-day in California as traitors to the men and women they are supposed to represent.

So it was, as I say, normal and natural for Big Business to whisper in your ear, for Big Business there in your territory to seek to show you the way to go. But let me express the hope that it is not normal and natural for you to follow where the pointed finger guides. Let me express the hope that Manchester Boddy has not definitely wandered from the straight and narrow path. Let me remind you that we do not live "by bread alone", and let me tell you that one letter of gratitude for PACIFIC WEEKLY coming to my desk compensates over and over again for the letters that do not come, the letters I need so materially, with the "enclosed please find" that my creditors crave.

And, while I have set this tone, let me add that I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of PACIFIC WEEKLY than dwell in your sanctum on the *Illustrated Daily News*—after that column of yours November 21.

Sincerely

W. K. BASSETT

P. S. I am sending you, without any obligation on your part, a copy of PACIFIC WEEKLY of November 18, containing "The Dollar Boys at Sea". I very much would like to have you read it.

AGNES SMEDLEY AND SOVIET CHINA

BY ESTHER BLAISDELL

WITH the eyes of the world on the aggression of Ethiopia by Fascist Italy while the League stood helplessly by, one remembers the most recent historic precedent laid down by Japan in the taking of Manchuria. Some general indignation, perhaps, was felt at the brazenness of the acquisition then, but little or nothing has been said about the successive and subsequent inroads made upon China, i. e. Jehol, Mongolia, and the provinces of Hopei and Chahar. I say little or nothing advisedly, for the puppet Nanking government in China has not made any resistance, and it is well known that its great defender, Chiang Kai-shek, works openly and shamelessly with Japanese militarists.

To be sure, there is strong nationalistic feeling against Japanese aggression. The Chinese masses, like the Ethiopians, are willing to die for the sake of their country, and die they will, with hope or succor from no quarter except one, the Chinese Soviet Republic in the south which is outlawed both by the official government, and particularly the foreign imperialist powers.

The reasoning of the latter is ever the same. To-day, England and France are likely to back down in the present Italo-Ethiopian fracas: they prefer to deal with a Fascist Italy rather than a Communist Italy. So it is with China. The imperialistic powers are not only countenancing the invasion and gradual absorption of China by Japan, but have assisted her materially, exhibiting the same frantic nervousness over the prospect of a Soviet China. It is a matter of record that the British gave a loan of five million pounds in 1933 to Nanking and thereafter completed the Canton-Hankow railway, which has a strategic value against the Reds; that the American \$50,000,000.00 "wheat and cotton" loan was really intended to finance Nanking's wars on the Chinese Soviets; that the \$40,000,000.00 American aviation loan was for the purchase of American military planes, and that the British negotiated and drew up the treaties by which Shanghai, Hopei and Peking were to be occupied by Japan during 1932 and 1933. All the rifles, machine guns and ammunition bear the labels of American, English, German and Czechoslovakian munition makers. Even in the matter of officers, Nanking has imported Nazi officers, who, possibly satiated with mere Jew-baiting in Germany, are given a free rein in China. It has been estimated that one million Red soldiers, sympathetic peasants and students lost their lives between the years 1929-1931 alone. This figure can probably be doubled as of 1935.

The battle, however, is not over. In spite of the skillful, unscrupulous manoeuvring and sell-out of China's corrupt ruling classes, the ruthlessness of Japan's military dictators, and the staggering sums advanced by foreign powers, the immense peasant masses of China have not been crushed. In fact, they have managed to hold their own. Their story has been magnificently told by Agnes Smedley, an American woman, in *Chinese Destinies* and *China's Red Army Marches*.

To begin, China, like Russia, was and still remains a backward, feudal nation. Its peasantry, like that of Russia, is almost entirely illiterate (except in the sovietized regions and among students). Its ruling class, like that of Czarist Russia, is corrupt, effete, decadent. There is no middle class. Keeping in mind these loose parallels, the success of the Chinese Soviet Republic takes on an understandable hue. According to

history, there must be a huge agrarian uprising, which, despite heavy losses, can stagger onward due to inexhaustible human material. Again, the rule fits. It would appear that this revolt in China is bound to be successful, for any movement which subordinates life to the grimmest necessities, such as the very sound belief (of necessity to them) that one soldier is worth the capture of a rifle, and a hundred are worth the capture of a machine gun, is simply unbeatable as long as there is any life left. The Chinese Soviet Republic will not fail until every other peasant is with his ancestors.

The main objectives of the Red Army are, in addition to the socialization of China, and all that it entails, the suppression of the opium traffic (in which Japan deals extensively both as a means of considerable revenue and for its time-honored subjection and demoralization of the Chinese peasant). They also cultivate nationalistic feeling in their wish to prevent the acquisition of China by Japan's militarists, but frankly concede that a Communist Japan would unite the oppressed peoples in that jittery island with the Chinese, in a common aim. It is known that suppressive measures in Japan are even more rigid, for industrialized Japan is figuratively as well as literally seated on top of a volcano.

The very first awakening of the Western world to the crisis in China may be laid at Miss Smedley's door. Her entire approach to and treatment of the material gathered is remarkable, even though her background will explain her interest in the struggle of the Chinese. As a reviewer in *The Nation* (one Ch'ao-Ting) stated—"... this is the reason why to Miss Smedley, China is a source of invaluable and inexhaustible literary treasure, while to numerous other equally talented writers it is nothing more than a storehouse of antique furniture."

A word about her background: both feminist and radical, she forsook the one movement for the other, thereby manifesting an interesting modern development. In the May issue of *Harper's* a militantly bourgeois old-guard feminist wrote, with considerable apprehension on the subject, *Is Feminism Dead?* Of necessity it is dead because it has been supplanted: the fallacies of the feminist movement have long since been challenged, and its essentially valid or important features embodied in the ideology of Communism. The feminist movement, per se, was as chauvinistic as Zionism or the theory that the Negro in America must work for a black autonomy. The feminist movement died at the time when a hundred other bogus reform movements died, their clear-eyed vanguard stepping onward to a more realistic approach to a solution of their problems.

And so, Agnes Smedley's fire and fervor for oppressed women (which is so clearly and exhilaratingly delineated in *Daughter of Earth*) is now full-fledged fire and fervor for oppressed mankind. By recognizing that the only liberation for women is under socialism, the feminist movement could revive itself by the same means.

It is interesting to note, by the way, that another parallel between China and Russia is in their receptivity to emancipation for women. The old barbaric cruelty of the custom of binding feet of the upper class women in China was shocking to this country, but the oppressive and servile status of the lower classes passed unnoticed. The liberation of women

under the Soviet regime has become so marked that Chinese women are its chief supporters! Smedley relates that whenever a red-hunt is on in the large cities, in addition to students and intellectuals, all girls with bobbed hair are also rounded up, to be tried and executed, their bobbed hair being an unmistakable indication of subversive activities.

In a sense, these two books of Smedley's were a scoop, journalistically speaking. Her career, which embraced nearly every occupation known to womankind except prostitution (feminists, even when starving, somehow miss that) has now definitely settled upon that of journalism, a most fortunate solution for her talents. Originally sent to China as correspondent for the late-lamented *Frankfurter Zeitung*, she was fired as a result of the animosity of the British and German consuls and merchants in Shanghai, who were aghast that a foreign woman could take such a sympathetic interest in the Red "bandits" and the subversive elements. The period from 1929 to date has, of course, been more productive than the years preceding it, for Miss Smedley's youth, like the youth of the entire post-war generation, was dissipated in following false messiahs (or none). From her student days on (beginning at Berkeley) she became a fanatic disciple of the Hindu revolutionary movement, one of the most tragic, ineffectual mass-movements of to-day. Later on, she served time in the Tombs during the war, for her alleged pro-German, pro-Trotsky, pro-Hindu and generally treasonable activities. She subsequently lived in Germany, identifying herself with the socialist movement internationally, with the exception of approximately six months in Russia.

All this, in contrast to her childhood environment, is amazing. Born on a lowly, godforsaken farm in Missouri, then living in the notorious mining towns of Colorado (where she was long to remember the bloody siege in Trinidad, when the State Militia was called out, and the brutality and terror-

ism are now a matter of history)—she has known American poverty, ignorance and provincialism intimately. She has studied in Berkeley, worked in Imperial Valley, and her testimony to the overwhelming mass of evidence as to the class struggle in America, is first-hand and competent. Her struggles to educate herself, liberate herself from the ideology of the lower middle class, makes painful reading in *Daughter of Earth*. The desperation bears an authentic label. Remarkably enough, it has had an excellent sale, and a new edition, six years after the first, prefaced by Malcolm Cowley, has recently been put out.

Smedley is typically American. Her genuine distress over the "heathen" may be likened unto that of an Epworth Leaguer, but the fundamental difference of ideological approach has been the means of presenting a series of books about present-day China, which have not only radically dissented from all previous recitals of life in that vast land, but have presented a more hopeful picture of international events.

Yes, hopeful, for if through sheer mass strength, the Chinese Soviet Republic can hold its gains despite the concerted attack upon it by all the powers: (and its gains are tremendous, when one considers that it is now a country larger than Germany, and a third more populous; that it has a tremendous volunteer army, schools, hospitals, makeshift though they may be, its own postal service, coinage, newspapers, theatrical groups, and so on), if Soviet China can maintain even what it has achieved to date, the world will have another example of the unparalleled heroism of the working class, even in the most backward of nations, and of the magnificent strides educationally and culturally that are possible under socialism. Faced with such an example, then perhaps this world, sick with disgust over wars of aggression, unemployment and exploitation, whether of Ethiopians or mesmerized Italians, may begin to wonder.



THE SAN FRANCISCO ELECTION

BY BEN LEGERE

Now that the municipal election is all over, and the headlines have announced that Angelo Rossi has been retained by the citizens of San Francisco, the time for postmortems and other after-election analyses is at hand. Having been in a peculiarly favored position to observe and study this strange election, as campaign manager for the United Labor Campaign Committee, I must add my column of comment to the sum total of such expressions of opinion. My analysis of this election is not to be considered an official statement of any group or committee or movement. It is just my own opinion and I offer it for what it is worth.

Considering the unofficial figures so far published as a basis for discussion, we find that the total vote cast in the City and County of San Francisco in this election was about the same proportionately as in any other municipal election in recent years. In fact, in spite of the strenuous effort made by all the newspapers and all the interests backing Angelo Rossi to get

out a big vote on November 5, there was a smaller percentage of the total registered vote cast than in the last city election.

That is offered as an evidence of increasing apathy on the part of the citizens toward political action as a means of remedying existing social evils. Last year in the state election a record registration and vote was obtained as a consequence of a great upsurge of feeling on the part of the masses that something might be done to end poverty by voting into office a candidate pledged to a platform which proposed to establish a system of Production for Use as a means of combating the conditions brought about by the so-called depression.

Although this municipal election in San Francisco developed a more vigorous local campaign than has been carried on, perhaps in this generation, and although more money was probably spent on advertising and ballyhoo by most of the candidates representing the reactionary forces, they failed to bring out the vote in such proportions as would indicate any

similar hope on the part of those masses that something really might be done to improve their condition. The United Labor Ticket probably suffered the most from this apathy, because Rossi, Uhl, and the other candidates, did succeed in making their following feel that they must rally to the support of the reactionary machine.

There can be no question but that the United Labor Campaign failed decidedly to reach any considerable proportion of the two hundred and sixty thousand San Francisco voters. The greatest handicap we had to overcome was the failure of the newspapers to print any reports whatever of our activities. Last year in the Sinclair campaign, although all the newspapers all over the state severely attacked the Sinclair movement with the most intensive campaign of slander and lies and vilification in our political history, their tactics proved to be a boomerang, because it resulted in everyone in California knowing something about Sinclair and his program. The strategy of the San Francisco newspapers in this election proved to be much more effective for the cause of the reactionaries. As a result of the silence of the press there were unquestionably many many thousands of San Francisco voters who never even heard of the United Labor candidates, and when they found their names on the voting machines they meant nothing at all to them.

All of the newspapers supported Rossi, and consistently referred to his re-election as a foregone conclusion, never conceding that any other candidate had a chance, and never mentioning the United Labor candidate, Redfern Mason. Rossi's campaign probably cost more for advertising and publicity than has ever before been spent by anyone running for the office of Mayor of San Francisco. Probably four times as much as billboard space was used for signs calling upon the people to retain Rossi because he kept his promises, than was used last year to exhort the voters to protect their homes and jobs by voting for Merriam. No candidate ever used as much radio time as was given to Rossi, and the total cost of his entire campaign, if it were ever possible to get the figures, would probably establish a new high for a candidate running in a municipal election.

Adolph Uhl ran him a close second in the matter of spending money for extensive advertising. They both used every known medium of advertising, even to airplane sky-writers in the last few days of the campaign. The other two reactionary candidates, Edward Rainey and Harry Todd, while they did not rival Rossi and Uhl in the extravagance of their campaign spending, nevertheless each waged a vigorous campaign, and each was able to do three or four times as much advertising of their candidacy as was done by the United Labor Ticket.

Against this flood of campaign ballyhoo for the reactionary candidates, the advertising given to the United Labor candidates was very slight indeed. We were unable to have any billboard space, and but a very limited amount of signs. Less than one hundred thousand copies of the United Labor Platform were printed and distributed, and a like number of copies of our campaign paper, the *United People's Press*. A number of fine mass meetings was held, one in the Civic Auditorium drawing ten thousand people, and one in Dreamland Auditorium getting an audience of seven thousand. These were by far the biggest meetings of the campaign.

Although the United Labor Ticket was indorsed by nearly seventy organizations, thirty-five of them being local unions of the American Federation of Labor, nevertheless the real work of the campaign was carried on by a very limited

number of active members of two political organizations—The San Francisco Council of the Democratic Party and the Communist Party. A few individuals from a scattering of other organizations were active in the campaign, but most of the campaign workers came from these two groups.

The labor unions which indorsed the ticket gave their moral support, and some financial support, but their membership remained quite passive, and took no part in the actual work of the campaign. In this respect the San Francisco movement was far from being a real Labor Party movement. In theory we proposed a political movement of labor in which the unions would play the leading role, and other groups and organizations would follow along behind the political labor movement. In practice, we succeeded in getting the reverse of this condition, and it is doubtful to what an extent the rank and file members of the unions actually did follow the lead of the labor party campaign.

The reactionary trade union leadership made a strenuous effort to keep the more conservative unions from any tendency toward the United Labor Ticket, and as a result of their machine politics in the unions, as well as what in some cases appeared to be definite political sell-outs, there is no doubt that many union men in San Francisco voted for Rossi, the arch-enemy of organized labor. Of course, a lot of trade union votes were also thrown to Uhl and the other candidates.

Had the labor ticket really been supported, as it should have been supported, by the unions that indorsed it, there would have been a very different story on November 5. For example, one of the chief problems we had to face was the lack of active campaign workers, and particularly the lack of watchers to guard the vote on election day. There are 1055 voting precincts in San Francisco, and thousands of voters went to the polls without knowing there was such a thing in the field as the United Labor Ticket. We had printed two hundred and fifty thousand cards bearing the names of all ten candidates, with information about them, and intended them to be delivered to the voters who could take them to the polling places with them, and thus know what names to look for on the voting machines. This plan was not carried out simply because it was impossible to get enough active workers to distribute these cards at all the precincts.

But suppose the waterfront unions alone had really gone in for political action in this election and made the United Ticket their own political instrument. There are approximately fourteen thousand of these workers in San Francisco. In an election of this sort, facing the threat of having thousands of votes stolen by the reactionary forces because of ineffectual watching on election day, there would have been one course for the unions to pursue. The night before election I saw twenty-five hundred longshoremen at a special meeting at Scottish Rite Hall. They were a well organized, well disciplined body of labor. They and the other waterfront unions were supposed to be backing the United Labor Ticket one hundred per cent. If they really had been there would have been at least a twelve or sixteen-hour strike called for election day on the San Francisco waterfront. Nothing would have moved, and the men would have been assigned to duty at the polls. Out of that meeting alone there could have been assigned at least two longshoremen to watch every polling place in San Francisco, and there would have been thousands of other union men assigned to assist them and see to it that no one reached any voting machine without having been supplied with a copy of the card announcing the United Labor Ticket. That would have been a logical and inevitable

action of labor unions that were really taking up political action.)

But nothing of that sort was even thought of, and I am told that many waterfront workers, in spite of the tear gas bombs and bullets that Rossi gave them a year ago, and in spite of the cold-blooded murder of maritime workers by Rossi's gunmen on "Bloody Thursday", went to the polls and voted to retain Rossi. More of them voted for Uhl and some of the other candidates, refusing to vote for Mason because they did not want to "throw their votes away".

(Part 2 of Mr. Leger's analysis will appear next week.)



ORCHIDS TO YOU

LISTEN, ladies. Please listen to me—for just a moment, ladies. I'm sorry to trouble you, but there is something I want to tell you. It won't take me long. It's something I feel I should tell you.

It's about the management, ladies. About their goodness and generosity, both to you and to me.

You know they are constantly thinking of us. Our problems and contentment are their problems.

They supply our needs. They give us this lovely store with its subdued lights, where we find shelter and you spend your afternoons. They are like gods, really; so wise and clever—and so inspirational.

The other day they told us that because they loved us so much, and wanted us to work hard for you, ladies, they were planning a lovely surprise for us. For the girl who worked hardest, who sold the most merchandise, there would be a prize. Of course, we all worked hard—and if we didn't we couldn't stay here. We wouldn't deserve to, would we?

I missed a lot of the fun, and my chances to win, because my little boy was sick and I had to stay home for two weeks.

When I returned I had sort of forgotten about the contest—you see, I was a little worried about my boy and the bills—. But I noticed that the girls were very serious about it.

They were working at top speed. One girl who has been with us for ten years had such a cold that she'd lost her voice. Another had a high fever. But they went right on. The spirit of competition is a wonderful thing— isn't it, ladies?

The day the prize was to be given I realized that I hadn't asked what it was to be. Some of the girls were talking together about who would get it. So I asked them. They were so excited that they could hardly find time to answer me. But finally one of them told me. And do you know what it was, ladies?

The girl who worked the hardest was to get an orchid!

Yes, ladies, a real orchid!

Wasn't that lovely?

Wasn't it splendid?

I thought you'd think so.

—JANICE BROOKE

CALIFORNIA

I LOVE this land. Forever in my eyes
These western sunsets burn. Sun sets elsewhere
In equal fire. But not so to me.
I know this land. Forever in my heart
This western sunlight glows. Sun glows elsewhere
And warms as deeply hearts in lands not mine.

But what is done here by the sun and moon,
Sea-mists and rain, and sea and mountain winds,
Is done to me as to the trees and weeds
And all things rooted here. Here are my roots.
So are my roots in the world, and all that's done
To mankind anywhere, and all that's known,
Done, loved and hated everywhere with men
Concerns me. But the quick concern is here.

Here, where the actual seeds of heart and blood
Took root, when I knew two bay trees, and no world
Beyond their shadows and their shining leaves.
Here where I picked blue lupines in the sand
And knew no world except the world between
Blue lupines and blue waves. Here where I climbed,
Panting and being pushed, up granite trails
To look down on the mountain slopes of trees,
Redwoods or pines, joining the earth and sky,
Deep into earth, tall into sky—a world,
A world, all wide, all tall and all alive.

Before I knew the world, or even a self,
From this immediate land I had forever
The knowledge of undying loveliness.

2

As dearly do I love this land of mine
As land was ever loved. And being lover
I do desire that my love be truly loved.
I know not I nor anyone, alone,
Nor a great few, but only all its men
Can love my land as love would have it loved.
I know my land is now not loved enough.

Cruel things are done here. Too much is wasted.
Too many men are tired, too many afraid. The harvests
(My land is all harvests from the mountains to the sea)
Are gathered painfully for tortured markets.
Too few men set good roots in this good land.
The cruel things, the fear, the men, the markets,
These are my land too. I will say
All that I know about them,
As about the mountains, as about the sea.

I am a lover so I cannot lie, nor even
Imagine that my land could need a lie.
And as for dreaming—my land is over beautiful
Ever to have let me rest enough to dream.

It is not dream to know there will be men
Fitted and free to love my land.
If it is dream, the land itself is dream.
Do you believe these mountains, and believe
Men will be low, and never see their height?
Do you believe these orchards, and believe
The men who grow bright fruit will never grow?
Do you believe this sunlight—mountain light,
Valley-light, timber-light, orchard-light—
Do you believe this light, and not believe
The eyes of men will ever open wide?

It is not dream to know there will be men,
There will be all its men, to love my land.

—MARIE DE L. WELCH

BOOKS

THE PROLETARIAN NOVEL

ITS COMING OF AGE

BY EDWARD RADENZEL

ART, it is generally agreed, arises out of experience. One should be able to assume therefrom that all experience is valid soil for the artist to turn. But, for the critics who adhere to the status quo, fertility of the soil may be a special reason for ignoring it. Like the decadent economics of a system which consecrates its last efforts to scarcity rather than to plenty, literary critics of the era have erected fences about an art decaying into ever more false and used up forms.

Their Art they call universal: art, they reiterate, is experience, neglecting to state that, for them, experience is confined to their comfortable cities. With binoculars, colored by class, they view the upturned, unused fields as landscape for a travel narrative, and the politics of the hungry, still bewildered toiler is an alien voice to which they close their frosted windows.

To defend their own prerogatives these upholders of an exhausted moral order cry "propaganda" when the artist writes out of experience more fertile than their own. When art, like politics, goes deeper than discussion, they lay down their critical tools and arm themselves with sharper weapons of self-justification. Pitted against them, however, is the maturing, ever-richening art that is growing right now out of contemporary experience.

Perhaps the most effective of the art forms so repugnant to the cushioned critics is the proletarian novel, the novel born out of working class experience, torn out of the life of the soil and the factory. Out of this experience, new to art, is emerging a group of younger writers who are producing living fiction, a fiction so powerful that it may force us to re-define the word.

In five years the labors of this group have passed from the first halting efforts of Mary Vorse, Myra Page, Fielding Burke to such fine works as *The Land of Plenty* and *The Shadow Before*. Groping towards an effective framework for those experiences they were able to read out of the class struggle, they have moved on to the execution of works both mature and prophetic. To the degree that they have been able to identify themselves with the lives of the working class and the proletarianized lower middle class, to recreate the problems and relations of the disinherited, these writers have produced books of merit. If what has been said by Cantwell, Rollins and Newhouse augured what was to come, then the new work of Grace Lumpkin* marks the coming of age of the proletarian novel.

The theme of Miss Lumpkin's first book, *To Make My Bread*, as of most of the novels of the left, was an unsuccessful strike. That did serve to illustrate the great problems of organization and unity which the working class faces and did emphasize the material to which the proletarian writer must go. But now, Miss Lumpkin has chosen to diversify her talents, moves further abroad, strikes down deeper into the whole pattern of our society. *A Sign for Cain* is an attempt to analyze the decay of Southern culture as epitomized by the Gault family. Colonel Gault is a gallant of the Old South

who has sacrificed profit to honor. On every side of him the great families have not been so scrupulous; the Gardners, into whom his sister married, and the Bells have quickened their fortunes. But the Colonel's house of bitterness is falling about him; one son is a hypocritical preacher, the younger a wastrel, his estate has fallen largely into disuse.

Jefferson is a typical Southern village—Negroes are segregated and some are still bound out for service. A deputy sheriff's chief pride is in the twelve "niggers" notched on his gun. There is apparent no extraordinary incentive for living among the whites other than the animal needs of life. Just below the surface of the smouldering discontent and idleness exists a situation ripe for violence and bloodshed.

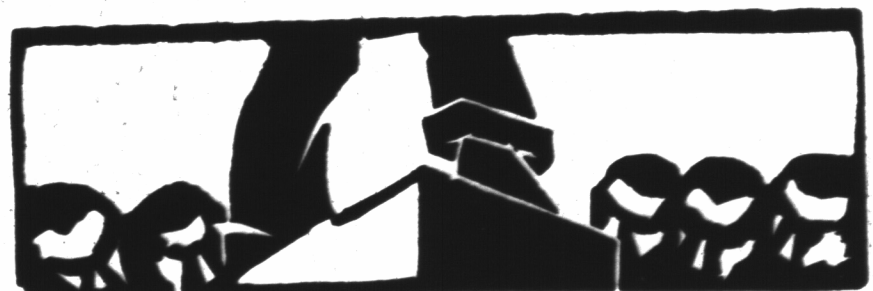
A young Negro, Denis, returns to this village and resumes his work in the house of the Gaults. Denis has come back to organize the sharecroppers and his work goes peacefully until one night, while drunk, Jim Gault murders his aunt who has refused to give him more money. Denis and another Negro are hurled into jail and tortured, held for the murder because they are "communists". At once the hidden antagonisms of the village flare forth, a lynching is averted only by the quick action of a young, white newspaper editor, the oppressed Negroes organize, the individual problems of the characters give way before the inexorable demands of the class strife set loose. In the final tragedy, the murder of the two Negroes in the jail by Jim Gault, driven drunkenly to defend his Southern honor and the memory of his aunt, is concluded the last stage of development in the conflict between the poor and the propertied.

Miss Lumpkin attains a high degree of artistry and displays a mature political consciousness in all of the relations attendant upon the tragedy of race. Her characterization of the girl who abhors the violence of the class viewpoint, but whose sentimental wilfulness is indirectly responsible for the murder, is excellent. The ineffectiveness of unpolitical altruism has nowhere been more aptly, conclusively illustrated than in the portrait of the Colonel who believed in treating his "nigras" well, or in the smug righteousness of Charles and Louise. Every individual, dependent upon class and income allegiance, runs true to color. There are no precipitate mechanized types, but people acting normally in precipitate instances.

As art Miss Lumpkin's construction is a sound, compact, swiftly moving novel whose effects are cumulative, pyramidal, rising suddenly and significantly to a high plane of climactic suspense from which the component elements of the struggle resolve themselves, assume intensified shapes and are arranged for new and impending situations of conflict. There is no other end to the battle than that promised by Denis and his comrades, the fight is universal and historical. When the tempo of the tragedy is cut short by the defeat of the sharecroppers, the pattern changes for the landowners and their deputies, but to those who inherit the legacy left them by Denis the pattern is the same; the same strategy must be plotted, strategy adapted to changes in the form of the struggle only.

Miss Lumpkin has written a novel which the critics will have to praise whether or not they approve of the subject matter. She has written out of experience familiar to her and common to a whole area of contemporary America, written

*A SIGN FOR CAIN, by Grace Lumpkin. (Lee Furman)
\$2.50



with every ounce of genius and insight she commands a work that reaches deep into the maladjustments of the social strata. Out of that fertile soil, ready for plowing, ripe for sowing a new seed, she has brought up men and women, heroes and villains; not figments of parched invention, but vital, often erring, sometimes brave and sometimes ridiculous characters; characters who will persist as archetypal representatives of the current division among men.

FRESHLY BITTEN INTO LIFE

SEEDS OF TOMORROW, by Mikhail Sholokhov.
(Alfred A. Knopf) \$2.50

(Reviewed by Dorothy Brskine)

YOU cannot dismiss or discuss merely as fiction the tumultuous characters Mikhail Sholokhov has created in *Seeds of Tomorrow*. They are much more. Davidov, Andrei, Makar made history in 1930. They are making it now in the Soviet Union somewhere—everywhere! Sholokhov sets the picture, does a magnificent piece of reporting and after that seems to set free his Cossacks to go on living beyond our immediate view.

Perhaps for the first time the Revolution becomes understandable, emotionally understandable. It ceases to be an effort to match facts about an alien culture like that of Russia with ill-digested ideas about a new political theory. Suddenly, quite simply, thanks to the grace of a great artist, the miracle of emotional participation takes place and we are ourselves a part of one of the most dramatic phases of the Revolution, the collectivization of the land among the fierce Don Cossacks. Davidov, Andrei, Makar are simple men. They are concerned with concrete questions touching fallow and seed land, wintering the oxen, retaining the snow moisture in the rolling steppe during the heat of spring.

Why do such questions become in this narrative of the little village of Gremyachy Log, both momentous and moving? What difference does it make whether simple men make the Revolution clear to other simple men by way of chickens, pigs and goats? It is because these stiff-necked peasants are troubled by a conflict spreading far beyond the borders of their country. The challenge to the property instinct makes the deep drama of the book. Each character reacts to it in a distinctive manner. Fiercely it burns in the breasts of the prosperous farmers. Inspired by it they are led to murder, conspire, burn and sabotage. All but absent in Davidov, the Bolshevik factory worker, he is nevertheless alarmed to find he too can lie to a comrade who wants oats for his horses, because he is protecting the precious store of grain for the collective oxen in the spring ploughing. "There's the petty property instinct coming out. It's beginning to affect even me," he thinks ruefully. To Makar who has seen a neighbor's son killed by his brothers because of a pig—possessiveness is the root of all evil. And there is the middling Cossack Kondrat, the first to bring his horses and oxen to the Collective and the staunchest worker afterwards, who confesses: "I'm sick with longing for my property. I am sick at heart for my bullocks. When I pass by the stalls and other men's horses are standing there, they mean nothing to me. But when I reach my own horse and glance at its clipped left ear and its back with the black strap running right to its tail, I begin to choke and then he seems dearer than my own wife . . ." So goes the lament.

But there is also humor. Very early they discover they have made a mistake in the socialization of the fowl. It has been "politically unsound", in fact, a "left deviation", and the chickens and geese must be returned to their owners. The cocks, they find, fight all day. Crowds gather while the ploughing languishes. Makar announces the change only to

hear the jibe: "It's clear the class consciousness of the chickens isn't strong enough for a collective farm. Now I ask you, will cocks go on fighting under socialism or won't they?" Makar, the Red Partisan, measures the questioner with a heavy stare and retorts: "You're being funny, but do you know what you're joking about? The finest flowers of the human race have perished for socialism and who are you to joke about it, dog's muck? Clear out, counter-revolutionary, or I'll give you one that will send you flying out of this world. You see I can be funny, too."

Audacious, self-assured and powerfully primitive are the women. We have met them before in *Quiet Flows the Don*. Gogol has also paid tribute to their wild beauty in *Taras Bulba*. But the Revolution has not yet apparently touched their hearts or tamed them. The chief characters in the book are all men. The wives resist the change and bitterly hang back. Capricious Lukeria will not take over the collective dairy. "I don't want to be a manager. I don't want to take a course. It means too much trouble. I like to do light work so as to have more time to live"—and live she does! Until the dawn the young men dance before her tent in the spring ploughing. She all but wrecks the brigade with her love-making and light-heartedness.

There is nothing dull or commonplace in this amazing struggle of new ideas with old, of group with group, and man against the soil. For out of the travail and development of each character, something greater is developing—society itself. Dimly this is felt. Through this larger evolution, Kulak and peasant, bureaucrat and Bolshevik—all drawn with scrupulous and sympathetic honesty—attain an unexpected dignity and significance. The tendency of Soviet writers to regard the individual as a product of social forces and yet the means whereby new patterns are created, gives freedom and sweep to the novel. Self-absorbed triangles, pallid frustrations, representation of things in terms of the individual only, are no longer of prime interest. Freshly these artists bite into the material of life. There is unity and vigor. Out of it comes, at times, an infinite pity in seeing human life in such a vast perspective. The "tears of things" are very close, but the pathos is not petty or weak. At other times human actions of an every-day nature by this new juxtaposition burst upon the heart as heroism. Not propaganda, not proletarian themes, but this objective attitude towards man and the social multiplicity in which he is immersed is, I venture, the Revolution's gift to literature. Briffault, Dos Passos and others are aware of this. They describe in some such way their own society, but only a Soviet writer like Sholokhov can give news of what it is like to be on the far side of Revolution.

One of the most tremendous episodes in history is preserved in these pages. The warmth and vigor of the book explain its sensational popularity in the Soviet Union. Editions of 100,000 are being exhausted. While production of pig iron and the rise in car loadings may speak one language of success, it is reassuring to know that artistic production of the first order is also going on.

FRIEND OR FOE OF LIBERTY?

THE MILITIA, by Walter Wilson. (Tomorrow, Publishers, 303 Fourth Avenue, N. Y. C.) 15 cents

(Reviewed by Ella Winter)

HERE is an impressive little booklet of the civil war going on at present in America. Mr. Wilson cites instance after instance in which the National Guard—American workmen in uniform—are called out to shoot down American workmen in overalls (many of them veterans and heroes of 1917-18), on the picket line and at demonstrations asking for enough to eat. Several companies of guardsmen were even

called out by Governor Scholtz of Florida to help settle a walkout of 425 World War veterans working on an FERA project at Key West.

Three million workers were on picket lines in 1934. Over 40,000 National Guardsmen in 19 states marched against them, with tear gas, war gases, machine guns and rifles, in 22 big strikes and many smaller ones. With the hypocrisy so essential to cover their real activities, these actions are not called civil war, any more than Legionnaires see their vigilante activities as Naziism and fascism. But they are.

Mr. Wilson traces the history of the attempted use of militia from 1783 when the first Bonus Army march occurred, through Shay's Rebellion, the Whiskey Rebellion and the War of 1812. He shows how the militiamen decided for themselves whether they would march against and shoot "their own"—and they frequently decided not to. To-day, with patriots shouting for liberty and rugged individualism, such liberty is taken away from American workmen in guard uniform.

Because State troopers frequently do refuse to fire on their friends and comrades, however, the government is trying to get the National Guard under ever increasing federal control. A number of laws have already greatly increased federal supervision; for practical purposes the Guard might be regarded as part of the regular army now. "The masses will distrust it either way," says Mr. Wilson. And so laws and sedition acts are passed (no, not in Jugo-Slavia: in the U. S. A.), making it imperative for you, on pain of being called a traitor, to call Tom Smith from Salinas to shoot Seth Jones in Soledad when he asks for 30 cents an hour for crop picking.

It is a disheartening chronicle of the willingness of the government to help employers break strikes. But that's the class struggle under capitalism, and it's only we liberals who get indignant and disheartened at every fresh proof of it. Read the pamphlet to get good and mad—mad enough to go out and join the League Against War and Fascism. The barricades are being erected with frightening rapidity and you might as well get set in your own camp.

THE O'HARA-ING DETAILS

BUTTERFIELD 8, by John O'Hara. (Harcourt, Brace)
\$2.50

(Reviewed by John Woodburn)

THE publication last year of John O'Hara's first novel, *Appointment in Samarra*, was marked by a certain justifiable dancing in the streets. I do not hesitate to say that I myself made one of this merry group of morris dancers, and tripped as jubilant a figure as any. I felt, along with a lot of others, that O'Hara had given to the brief, febrile life and cynical death of a boom-year, bourgeois auto salesman a depth, a subtle pace, a wry, authentic pity that made the book fit snugly into the pattern of its time. We had been conditioned by Hemingway long ago, and later by his influencees, to realistic dialogue, to portmanteau phrases, to the avalanche of emotion strained through a stiff and thrifty sieve of words; so that by the time we encountered A. I. S. our ear had become trained to an appreciation of Mister O'Hara's faithful recording, the precision of his ellipses, his accuracy of idiom. Here, said I, is a writer with dictaphones in his ears and a sense of life. Mister O'Hara, to adopt an orphan word which he himself used, was copacetic. And I still say so. Ah yes, I have been faithful to thee, *Samarra*, after my fashion. But this, this new book, this *Butterfield 8*, is not the madder music and stronger wine I called for. Unh unh. And before, quite a while before I had come to the part where the lady dies I was already weary and sick of this old passion, this story of a young woman with spherical heels who progresses

horizontally, one might say, with all the grace and tragedy of a bitch in heat, through a succession of bedrooms to a watery grave.

Well, this young woman, according to Mister O'Hara, was named Gloria Wandrous, and my agents, who are everywhere and discover all, inform me that some of the more gaudy details of her life were drawn from the history of Starr Faithfull, a young woman whose body was found in New York's East River a few years ago, whose death is still unexplained, and whose name, in its serenity and sentiment, lent an ironic dissonance to a neurotic and futile life. As for me, I hadn't gone very far into the book, no further than the second bedroom, or perhaps it was the third, before I recognized Gloria Wandrous. I had met her years ago, in another book, only that time she was using the name Iris March, and the book was going under the name of *The Green Hat*. Michael Arlen made a much glossier job of her and shut the bedroom doors a little sooner, but they didn't fool me on Gloria. No sir. Not old John (Sees Beneath The Surface) Woodburn. Arlen put a lot of sugar in his cake and fixed it up with icing; O'Hara left out the sugar and simply added nuts, but cut it as thinly as you like, it's still the same old recipe. Iris cloaked her biological urge in romance and was tragic about it; Gloria wears her nymphomania on her sleeve and makes wisecracks about it, but otherwise she's the same old accessible girl she was when she snuggled down between the covers of Mister Arlen's book. Here are a few of the O'Hara-ing details: Gloria's eroticism has been precociously aroused at twelve or thereabouts at the perspiring hands of a man old enough to be her father. She drinks too much. She's never quite sure just what ceiling she will be looking at when she wakens of a Sunday morning. She falls in love, sort of, with a young man who is waiting around to become an artist, but she doesn't do anything about it. They just talk and talk and suffer. She meets a great many young men, and old ones, in speakeasies and beds and does quite a lot about it. She meets a man named Liggett, middle-aged, wealthy and married, and they start braiding their lives and she thinks she's in love with him, or something. At the close of the book he stands on the deck of a river boat, an old side-wheeler, and watches Gloria hurtle overboard to a very messy death between the blades of the big side wheel and the housing. Sic transit Gloria Wandrous.

I am not very happy about *Butterfield 8*. Not because of any emotional impact it made upon me, but because of Mister O'Hara and the careless way he let me and a lot of other people down. His ear is as good as ever, and he has his moments, places you will remember for a while, and, on the whole it's as brittle and bawdy and slick a book as you'll find this year. But it's all dolled up and no place to go. At least, if it has any place to go it doesn't go there. Gloria Wandrous and some other people suffer and couple and scurry about and Gloria dies ingloriously and nobody cares a great deal. At least I don't. *Butterfield 8* is about as deep as a champagne glass and about as important as a drugstore window full of cocktail shakers and whirling sprays. *Butterfield 8*, by the way, is a telephone exchange in New York City. Oh well, Mister O'Hara dialled three hundred and ten pages and got the wrong number. Excuse it, please.

IT CAN HAPPEN HERE

IT CAN'T HAPPEN HERE, by Sinclair Lewis. (Doubleday, Doran) \$2.50

(Reviewed by Lincoln Steffens)

SINCLAIR LEWIS takes this opportunity when all writers and all readers are down on propaganda to produce a work of propaganda, and he gets away with it. *It Can't Happen Here* is a best-seller. He shows that *It Can Happen Here*. And, by

the way, he shows that propaganda can be an art; the art of propaganda. He must have been enraged.

Once upon a time he called on me saying he wanted to write a novel on Labor. He pumped me and he opposed everything I told him until I lost my temper and roasted him. He danced with joy and when I ceased suddenly from insulting him, he pleaded with me to go on with my vituperation.

"Oh, don't stop. Go on and get mad. I can't do a novel unless I can get in a rage and that's what I came here for. I thought you would make me mad."

I failed him; hard to make a man mad, when you know he wants you to and whenever I see a book of his I wonder who "got him mad" and how. So in this anti-fascist book, I am wondering who put him in such a boil. For I have read it all through and I am convinced that somebody, some fascist must have set him on fire. Quite conscious that the book had a purpose and, I thought, a purpose that couldn't be put over on me, I was astonished that he had done it to me. And I saw by the reviews that he had done it to cynics who talk art and do not yield to it. In brief, another triumph for Lewis, a best-seller and nothing but a tour-de-force. He certainly was mad or something.

He takes a typical small-town newspaper editor, who is sure it can't happen to him and, using all we know of Germany and what little we know of the United States, brings on the crisis in New England to each and all types of cocksure patriots and to various types of demagogues and politicians. As they realize the drift of things, they form and reform their groupings till you see and you understand how it's their patriotism and their virtues that carry them forward and back. It is not a pretty spectacle, but Lewis is plausible and (to me) convincing. It not only could, it had to happen here. I could transfer it all (as Lewis intended) to Carmel, Monterey, San Francisco. It's realism all right. You are apt to find yourself putting local names on the people in the book. It's libelous, really; such realism. And all the time it's preposterous. One keeps muttering: "It can't happen here," as some of the characters do. While they are doing it, they call it impossible. And from what I have seen of Fascism in this country and this neighborhood I am sure it can happen unrecognized.

Lewis falls down, I think, on his picture of the Communists. He does not know Communism and he should; and not only for the purposes of this book. If he will come back here someday I will try to make him so mad at Communism that he will get it—if he wishes to; if his fascism isn't hot enough to boil him over.

A STIRRING DOCUMENT

THE CRIMINAL SYNDICALISM CASE AGAINST LABOR. The Story of the Sacramento Criminal Syndicalism Railroadings, by Michael Quin. (International Labor Defense, 1005 Market St., San Francisco) .5¢

(Reviewed by Sara Reamer)

ANYONE who was even an onlooker at the cotton strike and the Criminal Syndicalism trials will find Michael Quin's unemotional report of this page in labor history something to marvel at. I remember the disillusionment a group of university students and I suffered at those trials, our amazement and then indignation at the travesty of justice in Sacramento, at the mealy-mouthed hypocrisies of prosecutors and their witnesses. Michael Quin, reporter at the trial, refrains from any personal injection of feelings and the result is an extremely effective piece of reporting.

He starts with Chambers addressing the cotton pickers in October, 1933, in Pixley and follows the strike chronologically up to and through the trial, to the present, when, as he

puts it, "it's up to you".

He has given an eloquent and thorough picture of "both sides". The Associated Farmers, the big growers, the banks, are shown in their command of the State forces, control of the press, their influence in the courts. The pamphlet gives a broad economic and social analysis of the cotton strike and its gains for the workers. The author tells how some of the capitalist newspaper reporters at the trial in Sacramento walked off the job rather than write the lies demanded of them.

The pamphlet is not without ironic humor. Quin's report of McAllister's closing address to the jury (which was typical of his speeches throughout) is a good example:

"In closing, he walked over to the flag, took a notebook from his pocket, thumbed to a page, lifted his hand to salute and read: 'I now pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America. One nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.' Then turning to the jury: 'Ladies and gentlemen, I ask you to think of that flag in that jury room, and I ask you to think of what it stands for. I ask you to bring in a vote for that flag—for the good old U. S. A.—for My Country 'Tis of Thee—for the Star Spangled Banner—for the United States of America—and God will bless you.'"

The pamphlet stirs the reader to action. It is a relief to know there is something each and every one can do to help the courageous union leaders now in prison. He can protest: to the prison board, to Attorney-General U. S. Webb, to Governor Merriam. In his conclusion Quin makes you feel the immediate urge to take action:

"The iron doors closed behind them—for how long?

"That's up to you."

AN UNCRTICAL BIOGRAPHY

SAMUEL GOMPERS, CHAMPION OF THE TOILING MASSES, by Rowland Hill Harvey. (Stanford University Press) \$3.75

(Reviewed by Harry Conover)

A REMARKABLE piece of work is this book by a professor of history at the University of California (L. A.). It must be one of the most uncritical biographies ever written. Even the jacket writer had to make an apology for it; he writes: "The author has been preoccupied with neither labor economics nor detailed labor problems." Professor Harvey has gone through the correspondence and speeches of Gompers and set them down or summarized even the most trivial. The result is little more than a collection of platitudes. Not until the last chapter is any attempt made to explain the social and economic forces at work in Gompers' lifetime, nor is any evaluation made of the consequences for the labor movement of the actions of the "champion of the toiling masses".

As a record of the workings of a mind "opposed to all theory", this book has a certain usefulness. When one reads the speeches of Gompers one wonders how the A. F. of L. managed to secure even the few proportionate members of the working class which it has. It took a "class-conscious leader", as Professor Harvey terms him, to write of a union convention: "It was an impressive gathering of men of good presence and exceptional ability. Practically every man wore a silk hat and a Prince Albert coat." It took a "champion of the toiling masses" to praise Ralph Easley of the National Civic Federation (Gompers was on its Executive Council); it took a "fighting mad militant" to promise that there would be no strike of the Interborough Subway employees while the President of the Federation was on vacation, and to disclaim publicly the strike when it occurred. It took the A. F. of L. leader to claim that Labor had been in favor of the World War long before the U. S. entered it. It took Samuel Gom-

pers to declare "Not in my whole life have I ever ordered or directed a strike of two men, or of one man", and "We have seen what the I. W. W. Bolsheviks in Russia have done for the working people of Russia where the people have no peace, no security, no land and no bread."

Some few grains of information we may glean. Professor Harvey attempts to justify Gompers' red-baiting on the grounds that "much of his (Gompers') hatred for radicals was born of his love of humanity". We learn that George P. West, now on the editorial staff of the San Francisco *News*, had the courage in 1917 to write in Scharrenberg's *Seamen's Journal* an attack on Gompers' war policy, which included ferreting pacifists out of the unions and pledging that labor would not continue organizing, nor strike during the War; that Daniel Tobin, after the War, reaffirmed his belief in the guilt of Germany.

A few minor points illustrate Professor Harvey's lack of insight into the labor movement. No book published after 1930 is listed in the bibliography. Quoting from a French publication, *Fantaisie*, he calls it a Bolshevik magazine. He is apparently referring to *Fantasio*, a satirical, erotic publication along the lines of *La Vie Parisienne*.

All that remains now is for some one to use this material to write a biography of Samuel Gompers.

SOME MISINFORMATION

CALIFORNIA: An Intimate Guide, by Aubrey Drury (Harper & Bros.) \$3.50

SAN FRANCISCO AND THE GOLDEN EMPIRE, by Basil Woon. (Harrison Smith & Robert Haas) \$3

(Reviewed by Dorothea Castelhun)

HERE are two good-sized books full of information for the traveler and entertainment for the stay-at-home reader. Both are very recently off the presses, the latest guides to the beauties and wonders of California.

Perhaps a few words on how they differ will serve to give a general idea of the character of their contents. Mr. Drury's book covers the entire state and begins in a business-like way at the southwest corner, working north; Mr. Woon plunges gaily into San Francisco and radiates from there, but limits himself to "the Golden Empire", which means north as far as the Oregon caves, west to Tahoe and south to Carmel. Mr. Drury's volume is a more scholarly work, abounding in historic details and a vast deal of valuable and varied information; it includes special chapters on writers, animals, trees, flowers, crops, etc. I do not wish, however, to give the impression that Mr. Drury does not write interestingly. His style is pleasant as well as informative, although he is inclined to get a bit lyrically romantic about such commercial affairs as the annual fiesta at Santa Barbara with its "tinkle of guitars . . . lilt of Spanish song from patio" etc. There are six excellent road maps and 52 beautiful photographic illustrations, the latter bunched in the center of the book in the latest style. Mr. Woon's maps number six also (one is of the Monterey Peninsula), his pictures, equally as good as in the other book, only twelve.

Mr. Drury intentionally omits specific names of hotels and restaurants in his itinerary, hoping thereby to give his book longer life; Mr. Woon, on the other hand, tells you in Baedeker-fashion just where to have lunch as you travel. He devotes pages to the history and present charms of Del Monte Hotel and more space to the biography of S. F. B. Morse than to an account of all Carmel's literary lights put together! But his chapters on San Francisco, though I have no way of knowing how accurate they are, contain much lively, delightful material, famous recipes and entertaining historical anecdotes. One feature which I imagine makes Mr. Woon's

book unique among California guide books is an entire chapter describing "the little gray home in the west", as he ironically nicknames San Quentin penitentiary.

One doesn't like to be too critical—California being such a large state—but after all, how else can one judge of the general soundness of a book's statements than by the part one lives in? And when it comes to Carmel, I fear there isn't much choice between Mr. Drury and Mr. Woon! The former gives us only eight lines, one of which speaks of "picturesque shops (they're mostly *shoppes* here)". But in fairness to Mr. Drury I must add that he does devote a chapter to the rest of the Monterey Peninsula, with more enthusiasm than he shows for Carmel. And in a special chapter, *California Literaria*, he includes our celebrities (but he forgot Mr. Becholdt). Mr. Woon tells the world that we have no delivery of telegrams and only one policeman. The facts of the matter are it wasn't until very recently that such a thing as a *shoppe* sign appeared in Carmel's business section (and don't think we like it—even one is a blot); that for at least ten years Carmel has had telegram delivery and more than one policeman!

But the neatest geographical trick of the week is in the statement on the jacket of *California: An Intimate Guide*, which informs us that Mr. Drury "spends his summers on the Carmel coast among the giant redwoods of Humboldt"!

GIDE'S BIOGRAPHY

IF IT DIE . . . an autobiography by Andre Gide. Translated by Dorothy Bussey (Random House) \$5

(Reviewed by Alan Campbell)

IN HIS early twenties André Gide accompanied his friend, Paul Laurens, to Algeria. That was in the year of 1893 when the salons of Paris were distinguished by such personalities as Mallarmé and Henri de Régnier. Although Gide and his friend were well acquainted with this group their provincial innocence was amazing on the eve of their departure for Tunis. The first two hundred pages of Gide's autobiography are concerned with his typically middle-class, frustrated childhood and adolescence. He was almost fifty years old when he wrote these memoirs in 1919, and his ability as an accomplished stylist, his admirable tolerance and humanity (which are given even wider scope in his *Travels to the Congo*), his nicely balanced humor and constant desire to tell the truth, yield to this large portion of the book a charming atmosphere of modest sincerity.

But it is in the second part of the journal that we reach those pages which caused "Si le grain ne meurt" to be published first in an edition of twelve copies and to be practically unobtainable in either England or America: The determination to dissociate pleasure and love was undoubtedly innate in Gide's idealistic nature though the character of his bourgeois upbringing fostered it. He had long cherished an etherealized sort of love for his unhappy cousin, Emmanuèle, but had retained his virginity though he was beginning to wonder "whether God really exacted such constraints". Just how conscious he was of the true nature of his desire is not quite made clear until the crucial moment. His delicate health broke down en route to Tunis, and the intense contrast which Algeria offered to his former surroundings only heightened his critical condition. One day he was accompanied at dusk to a hilltop beyond his hotel, by a timid and brown-skinned Arab boy . . . when Ali impatiently and impulsively slashed open the girdle of his single garment with his knife, he seems also to have liberated Gide from his Promethean rock and to have vanquished his eagle . . .

Gide took care not to inform his friend, Paul, of his discovery, and when that ardent young man brought to their

hotel Meriem, a member of the Oulad Nail, he enjoyed sharing her with his friend. From that time on Gide was no longer bothered by headaches, fevers, or devastating hemorrhages! The importance of this brief confession is strengthened by the fact that the author is to-day, forty years after the events described, a man who is still achieving honors in several fields. He had the courage to yield to his desire and the wisdom not to plunge into a period of over-indulgence. The message in his book will likely be of greater value to sexually confused people (whose number is legion) than most medical advice. Unfortunately the average victim of suppression and fear is not able to make a journey to Africa and one wonders where else Gide could have achieved so satisfactory a liberation? The sanity and honesty of Gide's plea is so refreshing in a world of immeasurable humbug where every Tom, Dick and Harry consider themselves case-

histories and talk endlessly about complexes and fixations.

Incidentally the book contains a most interesting portrait of Oscar Wilde and Alfred Douglas. It is also interesting to learn that Pierre Louys whose *Chansons de Bilitis* is a most exquisite collection of poems dealing with antique love, severed his connection with Wilde when the latter made no denial as to the rumors which were already circulating about him. Wilde's last words to Louys were:

"I wanted a friend; now I shall have nothing but lovers."

GENUINE FEELING

THE SUN SETS IN THE WEST, by Myron Brinig.
(Farrar & Rinehart) \$2.50

(Reviewed by Anne Nash)

COPPER CITY, a mining town of Montana, is the scene of this novel; the time is just before and during the first part of the Depression. Many characters are presented—the Jewish storekeeper and junkman, the indefatigable president of the Woman's Club, her prosperous husband and drifting son, the idealistic librarian, Communist and labor leaders, miners—all of whom the author treats with sympathy and understanding, touched with a slight haze of sentimentality. In following the threads of these various lives one has the feeling that too many of them run parallel; this weakens the structural quality of the book; not only from an artistic standpoint but also from that of firmness of texture these threads of lives should more definitely touch and cross and join. In this way a more definite pattern and design would emerge; as it is, one is left at the end with a certain sense of vagueness.

But one respects the genuineness of feeling which animates the book, and is warmed by the real humanitarianism, even though one is a little dubious of the preponderance of happy endings at the close. Perhaps the most realistic touch occurs at more or less regular intervals when Mrs. Ford and Mrs. McGafferty gossip about their neighbors; there is much humor in their racy and ribald summing-up, and they remain true to type to the last page. We see them untouched by any of the glamour that encircles many of the other characters, which makes us wish that Mr. Brinig would bend more of his energies to this kind of characterization.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

MARIE DE L. WELCH is a California poet of Spanish descent, whose third volume of poetry was published by Macmillan last year. She has contributed to English and American magazines. LINCOLN STEFFENS, who has traveled widely in Europe, had one of the earliest interviews with Il Duce, head of the first Fascist state.

ESTHER BLAISDELL is a legal stenographer in Southern California. Her article was written before the rapidly changing events in China and Japan of the past two weeks.

DOROTHY ERSKINE, daughter of the late Dr. Florence Ward, pioneer woman surgeon, has been doing research work on planning and the Soviet Union.

EDWARD RADENZEL is a University of California student, who has done literary criticism for a number of papers.

ELLA WINTER is a lecturer and journalist on labor topics. She is author of "Red Virtue" and translator of a number of books.

SARA REAMER was one of the writers who observed the cotton strike and resulting Criminal Syndicalism trials at Sacramento.

BEN LEGERE was United Labor candidate for Sheriff at the recent San Francisco municipal election.

DOROTHEA CASTELHUN was with the N. W. Ayer advertising agency in Philadelphia for five years. She has written a series of girls' books, short stories, and articles in "The New Yorker".

WILLIAM THURSTON BROWN, Yale graduate, has had an interesting and varied life as preacher, lecturer, and educationalist. He was instructor of history and sociology at Menlo Junior College, Menlo Park, California, for twelve years.

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"THEY TELL ME--"

LITERARY DISCUSSIONS are becoming pretty acrimonious these days around New York. Isabel Paterson got it in the neck from the "New Masses", and from Margaret Marshall and Mary McCarthy in the "Nation" for going woozy about Thornton Wilder when everyone else did. Mrs. Paterson retaliates neatly in her column in Herald Tribune Books: "If Miss McCarthy can find a field for her peculiar—very peculiar—talents . . . as far removed as possible from literature . . . It always seems to us when much spleen is expressed in these personal attacks, the spleen vendors have an un-Freudian complex somewhere they are acting policeman to. Anyway, Mary Colum, in as unscholarly and venom-spilling a review as we have read in many a long day in "Saturday Review of Literature" gives herself away rather neatly; she should have a session with her class complexes before going much further. She said Lenin was "filled with malignant rage" against writers, whereas any schoolboy knows he loved and honored them. One has only to read Alexander Kaun's "Life of Maxim Gorky" to appreciate the warm friendship between Lenin and this Russian writer. Even Max Eastman, with whom one might imagine Miss Colum would be in agreement on present-day Russian literary trends, quotes in his "Artists in Uniform" from critics' and writers' descriptions of the Russian leader's love of music, art and letters.

The insults are all rather fun, and it's good to see people getting emotional about literature and society rather than the things they got emotional about in Mabel Dodge's Italian villa in the 90's. It shows literature is catching up.

LESLIE T. WHITE, author of "Me, Detective", is sailing for New York on a freighter round the Panama this week. He will see publishers in the East and also his pulp editors. He expressed a desire to meet one writer only, Sinclair Lewis, "Because he wrote for the pulps, too."

WE HEAR from a Canadian friend that Morley Callaghan is getting to be a nuisance to the best people there. She writes: "Morley Callaghan, who writes for 'The New Yorker' sometimes as you know, has a book out recently, 'They Shall Inherit the Earth', which the Toronto Public Library does not display on its shelves! It is ashamed of its most brilliant literary man. Does not think he says nice things in his writings. Thinks his books might smudge dirt on its young folks if displayed in its public libraries. He will probably migrate to the U. S. and become an American citizen (my guess only) and then Canada will continue to bewail its hard luck that so many of its children go south and thereby take away their glory from its great name."

JOHN EVANS, son of Mabel Luhan, and his wife Claire Spencer have moved to La Jolla to await their baby, expected in January. Claire Spencer has already two children by her first husband, Harrison Smith, the publisher; John Evans has three. His first wife was Alice Henderson, daughter of the poetess Alice Lee Corbin.

Knopf is publishing John Evans' new novel, his second, next spring. The first was "Andrews' Harvest" and was sold to the movies for \$15,000 but never produced. This one is to be called "Shadows Flying", is dedicated to Robinson and Una Jeffers, and much of the locale is the Carmel Valley where the author lived when it was being written. The title was suggested by a poem of Thomas Campion's (c. 1616) which Una

Jeffers sent Evans. It runs:

What if a day or a month or a year,
Crown thy delights with a thousand
sweet contentings
Fortune, honor, beauty, youth
Are but blossoms dying.
Wanton pleasures, doting love
Are but shadows flying . . .
All our joys are but toys
Idle thoughts deceiving
None hath power of an hour
Of his life's bereaving.

JAMES STEPHENS, beloved Irish poet, in California on a flying lecture trip, nevertheless had time to spend three days in a Carmel hotel—and not a soul knew it! There wasn't a tea, a dinner, a cocktail party or a picnic in his honor. Only the Snack knew him (that's our one bar, New York), and the proprietor of our little pub was so delighted with his guest that he drove him up to the City for his lectures at Oakland and Berkeley after.

But in San Francisco some Carmelites caught up with him. Gorge Gordon Moore and Mr. and Mrs. John O'Shea (he's the Irish painter) enjoyed a witty luncheon with

Stephens. He talked all the time and kept everyone on tiptoe. Afterwards the party drove down the coast to the Saint-Cyr home where Stephens wanted to inspect an Irish wolf hound. He hadn't believed there were any in America. He had such a good time that he missed his dinner appointment and only just made his lecture; which was such a treat, our scouts report, that George Moore sat through the whole of it.

—ELLA WINTER

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