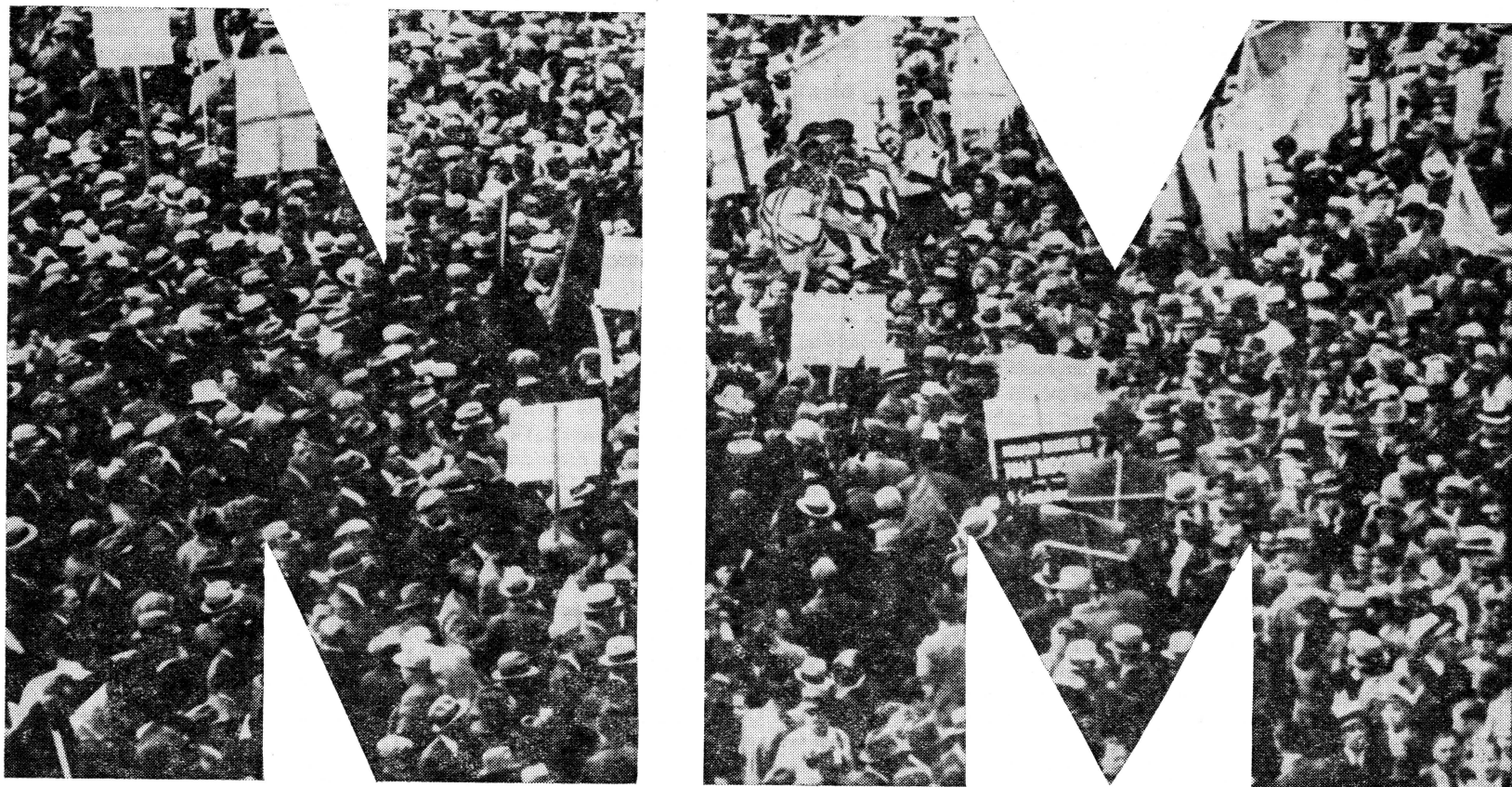


NEW MASSES



MAY 2, 1939

FIFTEEN CENTS A COPY

An Answer to Anti-Semitism

Jacques Maritain

Elizabeth Gurley Flynn

Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory

Art Young

Haymarket Square, May 4, 1886

Ruth McKenney

Rehearsal for May Day

Granville Hicks Reviews John Steinbeck's New Novel
S. J. Perelman Takes the Bat for Robert Forsythe

SEE BACK COVER FOR HAROLD ROME'S "ROUND FOR MAY DAY"

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BETWEEN OURSELVES

AFTER a month's fruitful work on the West Coast, NM editor Joseph North and business manager George Willner are back in the office. They succeeded in establishing contacts which will lead to far better coverage of the Coast—a lack we have felt acutely for a long time. They report a fine enthusiasm for the paper in Los Angeles and San Francisco and points in between. North spoke on the radio in Los Angeles and addressed a number of meetings there and in Long Beach. He is preparing some articles on the new trends in the movie industry. Promised, too, in our series "What I Am Doing to Fight Fascism," to which Prof. J. B. S. Haldane, Dorothy Parker, Vincent Sheean, and others have contributed, are articles from such outstanding West Coasters as John Wexley, who did the script on *Confessions of a Nazi Spy*, Will Rogers, Jr., and Phil Dunne, son of the late Finley Peter Dunne, creator of Mr. Dooley. Watch announcements for further articles on the West Coast.

Beginning with next week's issue NM will publish regular comment on the goings on—much of it behind-the-scenes stuff—in the world of radio. Our commentator will be John Vernon, who has pipelines into all sorts of interesting places.

A series of three articles on the federal cultural projects by Joseph Starobin will start publication in an early issue.

The next article in Robert Terrall's series on the big-time press will deal with the New York *World-Telegram*, key newspaper in the Scripps-Howard chain. Terrall's first piece, on the *Herald Tribune*, which appeared in last week's issue, has been widely and favorably commented on.

The full text of NM editor Granville Hicks' debate with Father Edward Lodge Curran of the International Catholic Truth Society can be secured by writing to the Communist Party of Massachusetts, 15 Essex St., Boston.

Mrs. I. Elson of Brooklyn, N. Y., will be glad to send her weekly copy of NM, when she has finished with it, to someone who cannot afford to buy the magazine. She also has many back copies of NM which are available to persons or groups who can use them. Anna A. Baronofsky, also of Brooklyn, has issues of 1935, 1936, and 1938 which she is willing to give away. Readers can get in touch with Mrs. Elson or Mrs. Baronofsky through NM.

Doctors, internes, and wives of internes have written us their hearty

response to the first of Cora MacAlbert's articles on internes, published in the April 11 issue of NM. Following is one of the letters, from E. G. B.:

"Enclosed is a dollar, what might be called my widow's mite to your call for funds. For I am an 'interwidow,' a character not exactly touched upon, but perhaps implied, in Cora MacAlbert's story on internes.

"My husband was unable to obtain an internship in New York City because of the prejudicial methods involved in making internship appointments here, and was forced to take one in a small city in the Middle West. He earns \$5 a month, which helps to pay postage on our letters. There was very little chance that I could obtain a position in his city; consequently I remained here in New York. Since I do not earn a great deal, and he earns, as I said before, \$5 a month, we have not been able to see each other for over a year. His internship will last two years—and there is not much chance that we can meet again before that time.

"The whole stupidity of the internship situation is such that I can hardly write about it calmly."

NM contributors Rockwell Kent, Wallingford Riegger, and Harold J. Rome are among the sponsors of the Spring Frolic of the Workers Alliance Federal Arts Council. The affair will be held at Mecca Temple Casino in New York on Friday, May 12.

A verse-play by Robert Whittington, *Death of Garcia Lorca*, will be presented in New York on Friday, May 5, at 326 W. 43th St., at 8 p. m.

International Publishers announces that the deadline for contributions to its next Literary Pamphlet—which will be a collection of stories, sketches, and verses dealing with the lives of trade-union people today—is May 20. The work of new writers is eagerly welcomed.

Who's Who

ELIZABETH GURLEY FLYNN, a member of the National Committee of the Communist Party, USA, has been active in the labor movement for more than three decades. She was once prominent as an IWW organizer. . . . Jacques Maritain, the famous French Catholic philosopher, recently completed a tour of American and Canadian Catholic colleges in which he lectured on philosophy. His article in this issue is taken from a recent radio broadcast.

Art Young's article is a section from his forthcoming autobiography. . . . S. J. Perelman, as NM's constant readers will recall, has filled in for Robert Forsythe before when the latter was unable, because of ill-

ness or the pressure of other activities, to contribute his weekly piece. . . . Louis Lozowick is an outstanding Marxian art critic. . . . Boris Gamzue teaches English at New York University. . . . Barbara Stavis is well known as a commentator on the stage and screen of France. . . . Burton Jerome Barnett, who with this issue makes his first appearance in NM, is a Chicagoan employed on the Writers Project and is at work on a history and guide to Evanston, Ill. He was one of the organizers of the Midwest Writers Conference held in Chicago in 1936.

Flashbacks

ACCORDING to provisions of the new United States Constitution, now the oldest in the world, George Washington became President April 30, 1789. . . . Toussaint L'Ouverture, Negro revolutionist of Haiti, died in prison April 27, 1803, after betrayal by the French. . . . Philadelphians, in the month of May 1828, saw the birth of the world's first working-class political party. . . . The next year, in the last week of April, New York workers set up an organization to

fight for the ten-hour day. . . . One year later, on May 3, 1830, the English woman agitator, Frances Wright, looked at the evidence in America and said, "What distinguishes the present from every other struggle in which the human race has been engaged is that the present evidently is, openly and acknowledgedly, a war of class." This reference to the class war is believed to be the first on record. . . . May Day, originating in the Eight-Hour Day movement in Chicago in 1886, became the property of all workers in 1890 when the first international celebration took place. . . . By 1894, May 1 was a symbol of such significance that the army of the unemployed led by "General" Coxey chose to arrive in the nation's capital on that day. . . . Memo to Socialists who chose not to march in New York's May Day Parade: Debs in 1907 said of May 1, "This is the first and only International Labor Day. It belongs to the working class and is dedicated to the revolution." . . . German workers will recall that Karl Liebknecht made May 1, 1917, memorable by demonstrating against the imperialist war and against the kaiser's government.

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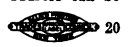
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Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification direct to us rather than to the post office will give the best results.

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Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory

Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, renowned labor organizer, surveys her memories of thirty-three May Days in America. The glorious pageant of American working-class solidarity.

THIRTY-THREE May Days have come and gone since my activities in the American labor movement began. In memory I view them—an endless procession of red banners, flying high and wide, in the eager hands of marching, cheering, singing workers. Banners of local unions and AFL central labor councils; three-starred IWW banners; banners of Amalgamated, of International Ladies Garment Workers, furriers, pioneers of unionism for the “immigrants and revolutionists”; banners of craft unions, independent unions, industrial unions, and at long last the CIO. Many were tasseled banners, gold and black, silver and blue, with the names, numbers, and places beautifully embroidered; clean, unwrinkled banners, preciously guarded in locked glass cases in dingy halls, throughout the year—liberated to fly proudly on May Day. Then the “people’s flag of deepest red”—the banners of the Socialist Labor Party, Socialist Party, Communist Labor Party, Workers Party, and finally the Communist Party of the United States—inheritor of all the best militant traditions; banners bearing the arm and hammer; clasped hands; arm and torch; hammer and sickle—insignia of revolutionary labor. Pictures of great leaders carried aloft—Marx, Engels, Lenin, Debs, Haywood, Ruthenberg! Dead martyrs of labor, crape-draped—pictures of Liebknecht, Luxemburg, Sacco and Vanzetti, Frank Little, Matteotti! Placards for prisoners of labor, Mooney, Billings, McNamara! Veterans marching, slowly but gallantly, in the first decade of the new century—how they inspired us, how we revered them. French Communards, Russian revolutionists escaped from Siberia, Germans driven out by Bismarck, Garibaldians in their red shirts, Irish, Polish exiles. Oldtime Americans marching, telling us of Haymarket, Homestead, Pullman. Men who knew Marx, Engels, Silvis, Parsons—patriarchs and prophets to us.

MAY DAY, 1905

The hope of the 1905 Russian Revolution, overthrowing the cruel autocracy of the czar, was in the first May Day I knew. Later we mourned, somberly marching from Rutgers Square through an East Side of poverty and pain, to Union Square. We commemorated “Bloody Sunday,” named for murdered workers whose blood dyed the snow before the Winter Palace—tragic prelude of hard-

learned, bitter lessons for a successful revolution and the birth of socialism, twelve years later.

Every year May Day was signalized by rulers’ fears: fear of general strikes, of political revolt, of workers’ uprisings, of unforeseen swift action by the aroused workers, assembled by the thousands. “Workers of the world, unite!” rang out on May Day. Monarchs, premiers, capitalists, and police chiefs slept easier when it was over for another year. Their fears were not unfounded. With the spontaneous outpouring of workers from factories, shops, and mills, there flowed a sense of power in the workers, a will to “shake your chains to earth like dew”—of confidence that “We are many, they are few!” Streets and public squares were possessed by the people. Red Squares, baptized in the sacred blood of workers—“Haymarket in Chicago, Union Square in New York, City Hall Square in Philadelphia and Cleveland, sandlots in Paterson and San Francisco, Commons in Boston and Lawrence, Plazas in Tampa and Los Angeles, street corners, conquered by workers in Missoula, Spokane, Denver, Fresno, Bismarck, Portland, San Diego, Pittsburgh, and Scranton. “The right to assemble; the right to speak” written in dead words in the Bill of Rights was written in live deeds by the people all over the United States.

Where have I been on May Day? Once it was Newark, N. J. James Connolly, leader of the Irish Easter rebellion in 1916, and I spoke from an old wagon in Washington Park. He was a poor and struggling worker, sad and serious. His daughter told me how, years later in Ireland, he smiled and sang a little song Easter morning, 1916, when he went out to die for his country’s right to be free.

Political issues were raised, labor demands put forward every May Day. “Free Moyer, Haywood, and Pettibone!” (then in jail in Boise, Idaho), the clarion call of marching millions rang through the country. Connolly also spoke in Italian, to the amazement of many. Foreign languages were far more necessary than for this more homogeneous generation. Many languages I have heard on May Day—but, unlike the Tower of Babel, bringing common understanding out of chaos, brotherhood out of old-world conflicts—Russian, German, Polish, Italian, French, Finnish, Greek, Armenian, Syrian, Jewish, Span-

ish, Belgian, Turkish, Swedish, Danish, Hungarian, Austrian, Czech, Serbian, Lithuanian, Ukrainian—English, the warp plying through the woof of many different strains—singing, singing languages; guttural languages, hard languages, soft languages, slow languages, swift languages—mother tongues of centuries flowing into the loom of America.

DULUTH, BUTTE, LAWRENCE

Another year I was in Duluth, Minn. The cold, clear sunshine of May 1 dawned over the blue-green waters of the great inland sea—Lake Superior. The narrow city, squeezed between the shore and the hills, echoed to the calked, spiked boots of the lumberjacks; the iron miners gathered on the Mesabe Range. Americans, Swedes, Finns, Norwegians, Italians, hewers of wood, ore diggers, manning the boats on the treacherous lakes, building fortunes for the steel trust—beginning to fight for themselves.

Later I was in Butte, Mont.—city of copper, where pennies were outlawed. Miners Union No. 1—Western Federation of Miners—was Irish and young. The cemetery on “the flats” held the older men, cut down by miners’ TB. In 1909 it was a bleak black city. The fumes from the smelters killed every tree and blade of grass for miles around. Not a speck of green to gladden Irish eyes was anywhere. Terrible accidents killed dozens of men at a time. This wild and lawless city, built on copper and blood, was the birthplace of that great union of the hard-ore miners, the WFM. The Mine, Mill, and Smeltermen’s Union of the CIO is the logical successor to the fighting federation of yesterday. The seeds sown on those May Days of yesterday were not scattered or lost. They have grown and bear sturdy fruit.

In 1912, I was in Lawrence and Lowell, Mass., on May Day. Textile workers, twenty-five different nationalities speaking forty-five different dialects, celebrated their victory after the fierce strikes of the preceding winter. Banners demanded the freedom of their imprisoned leaders, Ettore and Giovannitti. After the parades came the dancing, the different sorts of music—yellow-haired Northern girls dancing with raven-haired Italians—the laughter and gayety of one race trying to learn the songs, the dances of another. I can see Big Bill Haywood in the Syrian Hall in Lawrence, surrounded by workers, smoking

their strange pipe, which stood on the floor, the smoke cooled through a fancy water bowl, decorated in spring flowers in honor of Bill.

May Day, 1913, was in the midst of the Paterson silk strike. Jack Reed taught the strikers many grand songs, old French revolutionary airs and English labor songs, *Solidarity Forever*—the *Red Flag*—the *Carmagnole*. The bosses were trying the now hackneyed "Back to work under the American flag" gag. The strikers carried high on May Day their stinging retort, "We wove the flag! We dyed the flag! We refuse to scab under the flag!"

In 1914 I spent May Day in the far South, speaking in a Tampa, Fla., public park. Spanish, Cuban, Mexican cigarmakers were there; many natives too. They were familiar with the textile strikes and expressed great sympathy for the victims of "Yankee greed." Little did we realize how soon the textile barons would run away South and precipitate similar bloody conflicts not so far away.

The next day they took me through a cigar factory in Ybor City, where a reader was perched up on a pulpit-like stand, entertaining the workers as they handrolled the fine cigars. He was reading Margaret Sanger's pamphlet on birth control. This was the only time in

my life I was allowed to address workers inside of a factory!

In 1916 I spent May Day among the coal miners in the Anthracite region around Scranton. But by 1917 I was clear across the continent in Seattle, Wash. The Everett massacre of the IWW men had occurred nearby in December. The survivors were in jail. The trial of Tom Tracey in Seattle was still in progress on May Day. There were six women members of the jury. We considered it a good augury when they decorated the courtroom in green boughs on May Day. A few days later Tracey was acquitted.

Defense of our civil liberties; for political prisoners; fighting against raids, wholesale arrests, and deportations of thousands of foreign-born workers—these were the big issues of 1918 and 1919. The boss class was terrified by the great Russian Revolution. By 1920 the World War veterans were in their places in May Day parades, in service uniforms, with gold-star flags.

In 1924 I spoke seven times on May Day, for Sacco and Vanzetti. I returned to a textile town on May Day, 1926, to celebrate with the Passaic strikers.

After that a long period of illness, when I read longingly of May Day parades and heard

in memory the songs, the cheers, the music of bands and marching feet. I thought I had seen May Days, but nothing excelled in fact or memory the May Day of 1937, when I returned to New York City. Now we marched on the West Side; and the Irish bagpipes joined the music makers. Now the James Connolly Club and the unions of Irish workers paraded. I waited long to see the happy day the Irish were not all in the ranks of the police. Irish on the marching side, shamrocks, harps, Irish songs, *Kevin Barry*, *Soldiers of Erin*—Jim Connolly, I wish you were alive to see that grand sight!

Last year I spoke to the Amalgamated and at a big park gathering in Pittsburgh; in the Steel Workers Organizing Committee Hall at McKeesport, to the miners in California, Pa. This year I'm off to southern Illinois, among the miners there. I ask you, could a person want happier, more colorful, more adventuresome, and inspiring May Days than I have had? East and West, North and South, "mine eyes have seen the glory" of labor's coming of age in America. "I expect to live to see socialism in my country," in the memorable words of Lenin. That will be the best May Day of all!

ELIZABETH GURLEY FLYNN.



SOLIDARITY

SOLIDARITY. The word that girdles the earth and makes men brothers. The word that has warmed the blood on picket-lines and built fires in the dark places of the world.

This May Day we of NEW MASSES have reason to know what this word means. Early in February we launched our drive to raise \$30,000. This was the minimum necessary for us to survive and plan for the rest of the year. More than once during the intervening weeks the magazine has been at the point of death, and the editorial and business staffs believed it likely that they were getting out the last issue. But thanks to the magnificent solidarity of our readers and friends we have pulled through thus far and are beginning to see daylight.

In the last two weeks the drive has really come to life. The appeal issued by the NEW MASSES Emergency Committee, consisting of Ralph Bates, Paul de Kruif, Robert Forsythe, Ruth McKenney, Dorothy Parker, and Donald Ogden Stewart, has met with a particularly warm response. In the past week \$2,097 has been received, bringing the total to \$18,686. However, about \$5,500 of this is in canceled notes which, while reducing our debt, does not increase our income.

That leaves us still \$11,314 short of our goal. A goal that *must* be reached if NEW MASSES is to go on—go on fighting for the things that millions believe in and cherish. That \$30,000 is no arbitrary figure. It is our actual operating deficit—and there is no angel except you and thousands like you to make it up. Our average weekly income is \$2,000, our expenditure \$2,600. The \$30,000 we ask is thus a minimum figure.

This May Day, millions are marching throughout the world. Heads high, they march proudly, with banners flying. NEW MASSES is a symbol of this international solidarity, of the courage of those in every land who are determined, despite fascist tyranny, that mankind shall be free. We face the future confident that our readers and friends will not let our own banner be lowered. Send a May Day greeting to America's outstanding progressive magazine by mailing your contribution today to NEW MASSES, 461 Fourth Ave., New York City.

George Hillner

BUSINESS MANAGER

An Answer to Anti-Semitism

Jacques Maritain, internationally famous Catholic philosopher, broadcasts to the American people his challenge to anti-Semitic barbarity.

NEVER before in the history of the world were the Jews persecuted so universally; and never has persecution attacked, as today, both Jews and Christians.

It is in Germany that the spectacle is most tragic. Everyone recalls the events echoed in the press of the world; but what the public knows less well is the depths of wickedness and contempt for the human person reached on the one side, and the sorrow and agony reached on the other.

As to the anti-Semitic excesses of the fall of 1938 in Germany, the barbarity rose there to such a degree of cynicism that even in an age accustomed to the worst there came an explosion of general indignation. Nowhere was this explosion stronger than in the United States; that is an honor to this country.

The energetic American protest seems to have curbed the most savage plans formed by the racist persecution. It is fitting to hail the moves made by the United States and the efforts of civilized countries to come to the aid of the German Jews, to procure as rapidly as possible the emigration of the greatest possible number, and to put on an international basis the question of the Jewish minority in totalitarian countries.

FORMS OF PERSECUTION

The historic age in which we live is a period of accumulated difficulties for the Jewish people. In the economic field the renunciation of free competition, the rise of autarchical and state capitalist regimes, deals a body blow to Jewish economic pursuits. Recently published studies of the economic situation of world Jewry indicate the growing pauperization of the Jewish masses.

In the political and moral fields, the development of various types of totalitarianism, all of which regard the non-conformist as a biological enemy of the secular community, menaces the natural attachment of the Jews to independence and liberty.

In the spiritual field, the upsurge of unprecedentedly ferocious forms of paganism signifies an inevitable conflict, already begun, with that people who, surrounded by the pagans of another age, knew how to pay heroic tribute to the sanctity of the personal and transcendent God.

In Germany the Hitler propaganda machine makes systematic use of the Protocols of Zion; you know that this is the most impudent of forgeries, as has been proved by all those who have seriously studied the question, and recently by the prominent Jesuit Father Pierre Charles. If there remain orators and publicists who still dare to call upon this forgery to spread anti-Semitic legends, one must believe that they have lost respect for their

own intelligence and that of those who listen to them.

To charge the Jews with the sins of Bolshevism, to identify Judaism and Communism, is a classic theme of Hitlerite propaganda, which sometimes throws in Catholicism for good measure. The theme is echoed with admirable discipline by the anti-Semites of all lands.

ESCAPE FROM TRUTH

We, as much or more than the anti-Semites (whose fury generally vents itself only on poor Jews), detest the hegemony of banks and finance, whether Jewish or non-Jewish, and no less the rule of money in any form. And here it is the materialistic structure and spirit of the modern world which horrifies us, no matter who the individuals, Jews or non-Jews, who find themselves, generally without personal fault, involved in this inhuman structure. We know, moreover, that the great mass of Jews is made up neither of bankers nor of financiers, but of a population struggling against every form of urban poverty.

We do not underestimate the gravity of the great economic difficulties of our epoch and of the general economic crisis of civilization. We say that it is not by hounding the Jews but by transforming the economic and social structures, which are the real cause of those difficulties and of that crisis, that we can effectively remedy them. Anti-Semitism diverts men from the real tasks confronting them. It diverts them from the true causes of their woes—which lie simultaneously in our egoistic and hypocritical hearts and in the social structures causally interrelated to our moral wretchedness; anti-Semitism diverts men from the true causes of their sufferings to throw them against an innocent multitude, like a worthless crew which, instead of combating the tempest, would throw overboard some of their companions, until finally they all are attempting to choke each other and set fire to the vessel on which humanity, lost in dreams, has taken passage.

If we now turn more particularly toward the Christians, who are themselves grafted onto the olive tree of Israel, they must look on the men involved in the Jewish tragedy with a brotherly eye and, as the apostle Paul teaches them, not without trembling for themselves. It is certainly possible for Christians to be anti-Semites, since one observes the phenomenon frequently enough. But it is possible for them only when they obey the spirit of the world rather than the spirit of Christianity. He is our fellow creature, this wounded Jew lying half-dead on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho.

Strangely enough, certain Christians are

heard to say, "Has the world been moved by the massacre of so many Christians in Russia, in Spain, and Mexico? We will be stirred by the Jewish persecutions when the world will be stirred by the sufferings of our own."

When I hear this manner of reasoning, I wonder how it is that from one day to the next, and without even telling me anything about it, my religion has been changed. Does the Gospel teach that if a brother has sinned against me, by omission or otherwise, it is justifiable to sin against him in the same fashion? Jesus said: "These things you ought to have done, and not to leave those undone." Now it is said: "Because these things have been left undone, you ought not to do those." Because here certain people have been lacking in justice and in love, others must be similarly deficient.

It is well enough known that the Popes repeatedly defended the Jews, notably against the absurd charge of ritual murder, and that, all in all, the Jews were generally less unhappy and less badly treated in the papal states than elsewhere.

Today anti-Semitism is no longer one of those accidental blemishes of a secular Christendom in which the evil was mixed with the good. It contaminates Christians like an error of the spirit. I recall to your minds that, in a document of the Holy Office dated Sept. 25, 1928, the Catholic Church has explicitly condemned this error. Racist errors were again condemned, April 13, 1938, in a pontifical document (the letter of the Sacred Congregation of Seminaries and Universities).

It is well known that in a recent address the Pope spoke out vigorously against the racist campaign and racist measures inaugurated by the Italian government in imitation of the German government. To the concept and word *race*, figuring in the theories imported from Germany, he opposed magnificently the ancient Latin idea of *gens* and *populus*, the connotations of which belong much more to the moral than to the biological order.

"SPIRITUALLY WE ARE SEMITES"

The following passages of a discourse pronounced in September 1938 before Belgian pilgrims are also to be noted. Commenting upon the words of the Canon of the Mass, *sacrificium Patriarchae nostri Abrahae*, the sacrifice of our father Abraham, the Pope said: "Notice that Abraham is called our patriarch, our ancestor. Anti-Semitism is incompatible with the thought and sublime reality expressed in this text. It is a movement in which we Christians can have no part whatsoever. Anti-Semitism is unacceptable. Spiritually we are Semites." Thus spoke the Pope.

Spiritually we are Semites. No stronger

word has been spoken by a Christian against anti-Semitism, and this Christian is the successor of the apostle Peter.

It is no little matter, however, for a Christian to hate or to despise or to wish to treat degradingly the race from which sprang his God and the Immaculate Mother of his God. That is why the bitter zeal of anti-Semitism always turns in the end into a bitter zeal against Christianity.

Scientifically, racism seems chiefly a sort of political misappropriation of anthropology, mobilized to furnish a practical criterion of the German national community.

Philosophically and religiously speaking, it is difficult not to see in this one of the worst materialistic mockeries of men. To claim, as was done at Nuremberg in 1933, that there is "a greater gap between the lowest forms which are still called human and our superior races, than between the lowest of men and the highest of monkeys," is not simply a philosophical absurdity. It is also an insult to the Christian faith, which, in affirming the spirituality and the immortality of the human soul, in preaching brotherly love for men of all races and all conditions, in teaching that Christ died for the salvation of all, affirms at the same time the natural unity of the human species, its essential distinction from other species of animals, and the equal claim of all men to the title of children of God.

INHUMAN AND DESPERATE

It is sometimes said, and I have used the word myself, that racism is neo-paganism; this is an insult to the pagans, who never lapsed into such brutish materialism. From a social and cultural viewpoint racism degrades and humiliates to an unimaginable degree reason, thought, science, and art, which are thenceforth subordinated to flesh and blood and divested of their natural "catholicity." It brings to man, among all the modes of barbarism which threaten them today, a mode in itself, the most inhuman and the most desperate of all. For, as I have just observed, it rivets them to biological categories and fatalities from which no exercise of their freedom will enable them to escape.

When Jews and Christians think of the state of affairs in Germany before 1933, are they not led to ask whether here as in other lands, but with more immediately tragic consequences, there was not lacking in too many of them a certain humbly human compassion regarding those elementary realities whose terrible importance for our times has recently been indicated? Privileged in their respective ways, by divine adoption, did not both too tranquilly carry on *their business*, their business of earth and their business of heaven? Did they not fail to observe with sufficient sorrow the countenance of man and of the world degenerating before their very eyes, did they not fail to live close enough to the misery of men and of the world?

It is, after all, a new face, the somberly ardent face of pagan might, which is revealing itself in men. I do not wish to speak

of these matters without paying tribute of admiration and brotherly love to the Christians of Germany, Catholics and Protestants alike, who suffer persecution as the Jews do and who are defying all dangers to defend against blasphemous rage both the Gospel and the Old Testament. Perhaps it is not commonly known, but the fact is that a great many priests are now suffering—and frightfully—in concentration camps. The bond of suffering in persecution has led both Christians and Jews to a consciousness of the fundamental bond uniting men, if not in their doctrine and rule of life, at least in that single origin which fashions them all in the image of God. The future will show what human history has gained from such an experience.

JACQUES MARITAIN.

What Benes Said

Erika Mann's report confirms Soviet role.

THE role of the USSR in the Czechoslovakian crisis following Munich has been variously interpreted. Some have said that the Soviet Union did not act because the French and English did not fulfill their treaty obligations. Others, more fascist-minded, hinted that no Soviet aid was offered.

Now Eduard Benes, former president of Czechoslovakia, tells just what the position of the Soviet Union was in those fateful days. Erika Mann's interview with Dr. Benes is printed below, in full, as it appeared in the *Chicago Daily News* of April 18:

Virtually everyone in my American audiences has been asking me whether or not Russia would be a possible ally for the democracies, both from a military standpoint and from the standpoint of her internal solidity.

People are asking whether Russian reluctance to join the British stop-Hitler bloc means Russia is not interested in European developments or is unwilling or unable to participate. They recognize that the situation of France and England will be affected by what Russia does.

Reports that Colonel Lindbergh had belittled the Russian air power have made a forcible impression. No other witness has been heard who was, like Lindbergh, in a position to know.

Therefore I asked Dr. Eduard Benes, who among all European statesmen was in closest contact with Russia during the European crisis of last September. I learned that Dr. Benes had ascertained, through a Czechoslovakian military commission, that Russia was excellently prepared. I learned also that Russia was willing to come to Czechoslovakia's aid whether France did so or not.

I asked Dr. Benes what Russia's position was last September.

Dr. Benes said: "Russia was faithful to the very last moment; I knew that. Shortly before the Munich conference I sent a military commission to Russia; it came back with the best reports as to all aspects of Russia's morale and military preparedness. The reports as to air, sea, and land forces were completely satisfactory."

Dr. Benes said he was assured by Russia that it would have sent military assistance even though France and England failed to do so.

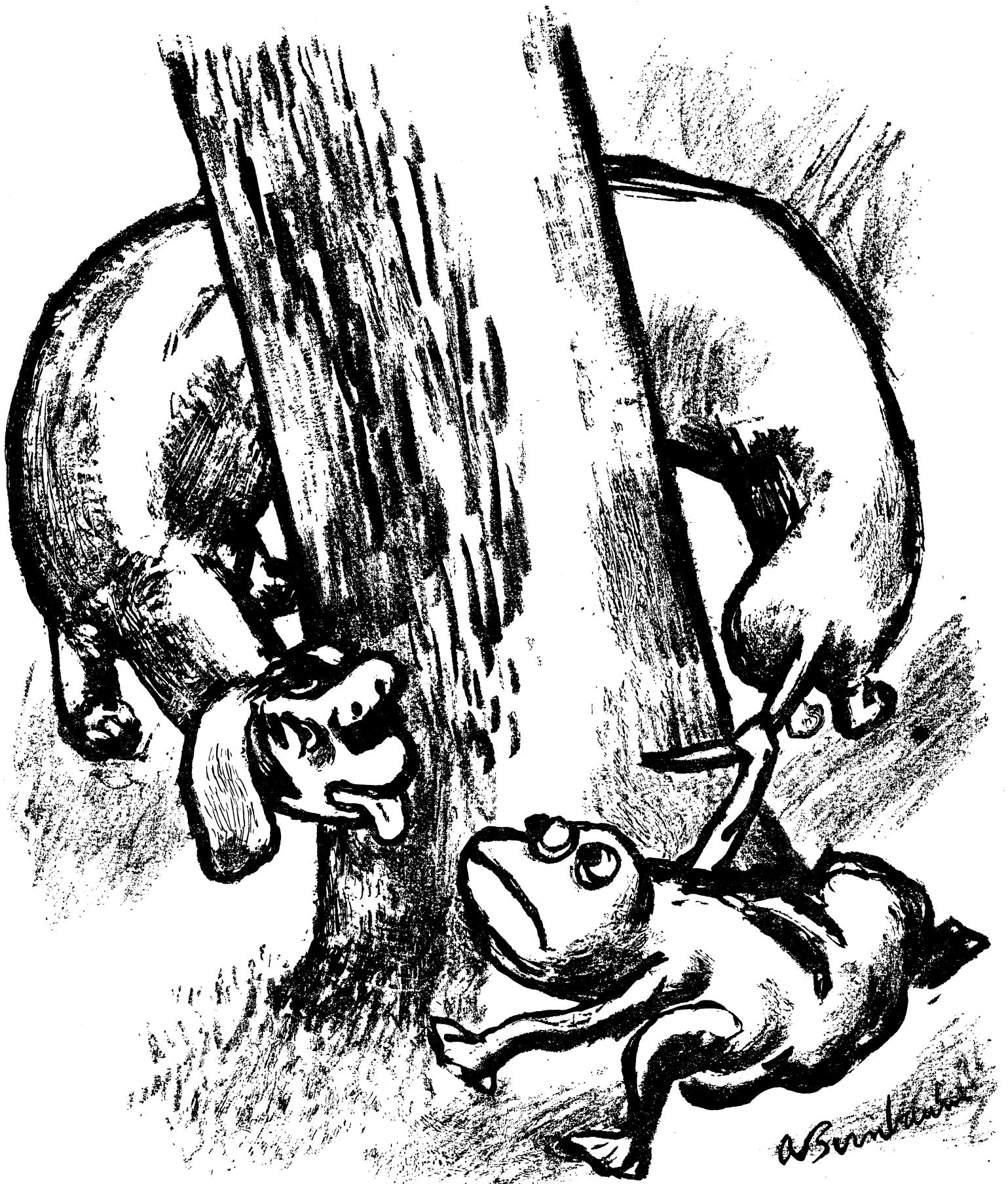
This statement at this moment, coming from this source, seems to me of the highest importance, since it contains news which is not only significant for the past, but at least equally significant for the present and future.

As for the past, it is more than understandable that Dr. Benes doesn't want to discuss today the reasons for his attitude during the crisis. It is generally known, however, that the ambassadors of England and France not only declined to promise help in case of hostilities, but even indicated, in the name of their governments, that these governments, as in the case of Spain, might actually help the aggressor in the guise of "non-intervention." In fact, I was told in Praha a few days after Munich, by persons belonging to the government, that they feared that Czechoslovakia, had she offered resistance with Russia's aid alone, might have become a second Spain.



John Heliker

"Russia don't exist, gentlemen, it don't exist."



"It's not so easy, Adolf."

A. Birnbaum

Rehearsal for May Day

Ruth McKenney takes NM readers for a preliminary canter along the line of march of New York's May Day parade. The biggest city's biggest celebration of the year.

THE morning will be cool and fresh. The sun will be yellow and warming, good on bare heads. Even at seven o'clock, the city will be on the stir. Up in the Bronx, papa, who is marching with the cafeteria workers, will be waiting impatiently while mama irons his starched white cap. The smaller kids will stand around and chant, "Will we see papa march? How can we see papa and be in the parade, too?"

Susy, who is full of her seventeen years and her first authentic beau, will be in front of the family's best mirror, adjusting and re-adjusting the red tie on her fresh white blouse. And mama, who plans to trot along with the East Bronx Communist Party section, provided she ever gets her jittery, excited family under way, will be making the counterpoint for the rest of the chatter with her steady cry, "Children! Papa! Susy! Eat your breakfast! Eat a good breakfast! You got a long day!"

And all over the city at seven o'clock the feel of fiesta, the proud joy of May Day is making the kids squeal with excitement, and the young men snort through their shaving cream, and the young girls take care with their lipstick. On the waterfront the seamen are putting on their freshest, cleanest blue jeans. In Brooklyn excited ladies are sewing their darlings into Italian and Swedish and Irish and Polish national costumes, so that they may be the proudest in the IWO contingent.

IN UNION SQUARE

At eight o'clock Union Square is still nearly empty, but the place wears an air of tense anticipation. The speakers' stand is up, and a harassed gentleman, obviously weighed down by the cares of the world, is directing ten young ladies in the delicate task of draping the bunting just so. The ice-cream men are jockeying for the best corners and the frankfurter and ice-cold lemonade gentry are making early morning sales and testing out the resonance of their voices. A few scattered armband, button, magazine, fancy hat, and flag hawkers are sitting on the square benches, waiting for action.

Now, gradually, the square begins to fill up. The speakers' stand gets crowded. A man says, "Testing. Testing. Testing," into the loudspeaker and his voice comes back at him from the buildings around the square, enormously magnified.

People pour out of the subway stations, and run for good spots along the sidewalk. Girls appear at windows in the buildings looking out over the speakers' stand, and presently lean on pillows, obviously comfortable for the day.

HERE COMES THE PARADE

The sun grows warmer. The ice-cream men begin to work fast in the thickening crowds. Suddenly, above the hum and noise of Union Square, the people hear the first faint sound of band music. Dum-dum-dum. *The Stars and Stripes Forever*. The reporters, the blase old reporters, at the speakers' stand, feel a slight chill along the spine.

The music grows louder. The crowd on Union Square falls silent, and five thousand, ten thousand people shiver a little. May Day is starting. Look sharp! Listen! The parade will be here. Here she comes! Look! Look!

The band comes first. The sun glints on the trombones. The sun makes the snappy uniforms glitter, makes the gold braid yellow and fine.

"SOL-i-dar-i-ty for-EV-er."

The music makes the crowd yell, and then as the marchers lift their feet and their heads, stepping proudly, a thousand fists clenched high and firm, the people begin to sing *The International*. May Day has started.

The *New York Times* will say: "The first contingent passed the reviewing stand at 12:45."

And now the air is never still of the soaring song. Over and over, sweet and high, rushing and compelling. The brasses thump it out, the drums accent its climaxes, the people sing, and sing so proudly, "A-RISE ye PRIS-ners of star-VA-tion."

And against the background of song, the steadily rising sound of cheers as the square begins to fill to its utmost limits. Cheers and cheers. The proud sound of people welcoming their own.

The *New York Herald Tribune* will say, "The marchers were welcomed with enthusiasm at the reviewing stand."

THE SEAMEN

The seamen will come, thousands of them, from deck and engine room, from waterfronts all over the world, snappy in their blue jeans, Joe Curran in front with the union flag. The girls will yell from the sidewalks, "Atta boy! Atta boy!" and the seamen will grin and look mighty proud of themselves.

The *New York Journal-American* will carry a picture of a handsome seaman, caught as he squinted at the sun. The photograph will show a sort of distorted snarl. "Reds Hurl Defiance," the caption will say, but the photographer who carried out his city editor's orders will be ashamed and hope nobody will know the picture was his.

The garment workers will march into Union Square, behind their fine banners, carrying slogans and signs, singing loudly. The

New York Sun, skipping the slogans about the Wagner act, and Stop Aggression, and Down with Hitler, will say, "The marchers carried slogans approving the Stalin Blood Bath and Dictatorship." (The slogans will hail the USSR's peace policy.)

Then the square will begin to be positively insupportable with people—but the crowds will be pleasant and happy and nobody will snarl if you inadvertently step on his feet. And the music, insistent and pounding, and the banners, and the signs, and the forests of fists, clenched, will make your heart swell with pride. Pride. That is the word for May Day. See our strength, New York! Observe our easy discipline! See our enormous numbers! Watch our joy in this day of our fiesta!

And the reporters, so blase at 9 a.m., will begin to be infected by the mood of the crowd. "City Desk," the *New York Times* man will say into a telephone across the street. "That you, Pete? Say listen, they sure have a crowd today. I make it 39,000 past the stand at 1:50."

But the next day the *New York Times* will say, "At two o'clock approximately fifteen thousand marchers had passed the speakers' platform."

WRITERS ON THE MARCH

Then, following a borrowed band, will come the writers, behind their banner, "League of American Writers." The crowd will cheer madly, because they feel happy to see the intellectuals marching on May Day. United we stand, by God, the people will say, look, the writers are marching too.

And then as the music starts again the writers will march proudly past the stand, their faces shining.

The young people will come near the end. Thousands and thousands. The girls with the soft look and the shining eyes, and the boys with faces set almost grimly, for fear they should weep with excitement. The crowd will fall silent and some will have to mop away tears. Our young people. Now surely the world is safe in their hands—who can defeat us with these thousands of kids tramping rapidly past, heads high, fists clenched, hair blowing in the wind? Forgive us if we seem sentimental. Who could be cynical or smug or hopeless as the girls go by singing?

And then, finally, the Spanish section. First the Abraham Lincoln Battalion veterans, those who can march, the others riding behind them. And after the war veterans, the Spanish people of New York. And the crowd will grow silent, thinking of the heartbreaking struggle and the tragic defeat. But the Spanish comrades will march proudly. Their

signs will read, "Spain Can Never Stay Fascist." And "We Have Just Begun to Fight." And the Spanish section will be the very heart and meaning of May Day. For we have suffered so many defeats—but bitter and hard as they have been, we cannot stop to mourn them. For we shall win back Spain, and Spanish children will live to see freedom and democracy in their country. Salud!

Now long shadows will fall across the square. The air will grow chilly. Hungry kids will howl for just one more frankfurter. And still the bands will play and the people sing and the marchers give the salute as they pass.

At nearly eight o'clock the New York *Times* reporter will wearily drop his nickel in the pay phone and say, "I make it at least 150,000, probably nearer 200,000. And what a crowd watching!"

And next morning the *Times* will say: "About forty thousand persons marched in the May Day parade."

And the marchers of the day before will be irritated at the lie, and perhaps a little amused.

"The papers are so afraid of us and our May Day, they got to lie about it," papa will say with solid satisfaction, up in the Bronx, and mama, whose feet will take a week to recover, will grin and reply, "Papa, don't you think the East Bronx section was the best?"

Papa, who is no dope, will say, "Sure, sure, mama," while he and Susy exchange secret smiles. For obviously the Bronx YCL and the cafeteria workers were so far ahead of the rest of the parade there just isn't any argument.

And Pete, who is only eight, and was forced to spend the day on the sidelines with Aunt Bella who is just getting over an operation, will say: "Mama! Next year, kin I march? Kin I?"

And how can mama say no?

RUTH MCKENNEY.

What's On Your Mind?

An important question, asked by many readers, is answered at length. The problem of "the withering away of the state."

Q. Since there are no longer any exploiting and exploited classes in the Soviet Union, why shouldn't the state disappear?

A. This question was dealt with at considerable length by Joseph Stalin in his recent report to the 18th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Such questions, Stalin pointed out, indicate failure to take into account the historical circumstances under which Marx and Engels worked out their teachings on the state. Above all, they show a failure to understand the present international situation and to see the capitalist encirclement of the Soviet Union and the dangers resulting from this for the land of socialism.

Marx's and Engels' position was correct, Stalin said, "but under one of two conditions: (1) if the socialist state is studied only from the standpoint of the inner development of the country, in which case one starts by leaving the international factor out of account, viewing the country as well as the state—in order to simplify the investigation—as isolated from the international situation; or (2) if one assumes that socialism has already been victorious in all countries or in most countries, that instead of capitalist encirclement there is a socialist surrounding world, that there is no longer any danger of an attack from without and the strengthening of the army and the state is no longer necessary.

"But what if socialism has been victorious in only one country," Stalin continued, "and in view of this it is in no way possible to leave international conditions out of account—what then?" Pointing out that Engels never posed this question and consequently could not reply to it, Stalin indicated that the reply could only be found in the study of the special and concrete case of the victory of socialism in a single country surrounded by a capitalist world. To expect Marx and Engels to have supplied a readymade formula to answer all possible questions that might arise in every single country fifty to one hundred years later is ridiculous and contrary to the scientific character of Marxism. The task of Marxists is to apply and develop the teachings

of Marx and Engels concretely on the basis of the living experience of the socialist state in the Soviet Union.

Stalin answered the question in the following classic summary:

"Since the October Revolution our socialist state has gone through two main phases of development.

"The first phase is the period of the October Revolution to the liquidation of the exploiting classes. The main task of this period consisted in suppressing the resistance of the overthrown classes, in organizing the defense of the country against attack by invaders, in restoring industry and agriculture, in preparing the conditions for liquidating the capitalist elements. In accord with this, our state fulfilled two main functions in this period. The first function was the suppression of the overthrown classes within the country. In this, our state externally resembled former states whose function consisted in the suppression of those who resisted, but with this fundamental difference, that our state suppressed the exploiting minority in the interests of the toiling majority, whereas the previous states suppressed the exploited majority in the interests of the exploiting minority.

"The second function was the defense of the country against attacks from without. In this it resembled, likewise externally, previous states which also concerned themselves with the armed protection of their countries, but with this fundamental difference, that our state defended the achievements of the toiling majority from external attacks, whereas the previous states, in such cases, defended the wealth and privileges of the exploiting minority. There was also a third function here, and that is the economic-organizational and cultural-educational work of the organs of our state which aimed at developing the germs of the new socialist economy and reeducating the people in the spirit of socialism. Nevertheless, this new function did not experience any considerable development during this period.

"The second phase is the period of the liquidation of the capitalist elements in city and country up

to the complete victory of the socialist economic system and the adoption of the new constitution. The main task of this period was to organize the socialist economy in the entire country and to liquidate the last remnants of the capitalist elements, to organize the cultural revolution, to organize a completely modern army for defense of the country. In accordance with this the functions of our socialist state also changed. The function of military suppression within the country fell away—died out—since exploitation was destroyed. There were no more exploiters and hence there was no one to be suppressed. In place of the function of suppression, the state acquired the function of defending socialist property from thieves and wasters of the people's wealth.

"However, the function of military defense of the country against attacks from without fully remained and consequently there remained the Red Army, the navy, as well as the organs of punishment and the Intelligence Service which are necessary to uncover and punish spies, murderers, and wreckers who are sent into our country by foreign espionage services. The function of the economic-organizational and cultural-educational work of the state organs remained and was fully developed. Now the main task of our state within the country consists in peaceful economic-organizational and cultural-educational work. As far as our army, the organs of punishment, and the Intelligence Service are concerned, their point is now directed not within the country, but outward against the external enemies.

"As you see, we now have a completely new socialist state, never before known to history, which in its form and in its functions differs considerably from the socialist state of the first phase.

"Nevertheless, evolution cannot stop here. We are moving forward to Communism. Will the state remain with us also in the period of Communism?"

"Yes, it will remain if the capitalist encirclement is not liquidated, if the danger of military attacks from without is not eliminated. With this it is clear that the forms of our state are changed, corresponding to the changes in the inner and outer situation.

"The state will not remain, it will die out when the capitalist encirclement is liquidated, when it is replaced by a socialist world around us.

"That is how the question of the socialist state stands."

Simply Not Afraid

JUST how news is made fit to print in the office of the New York *Times* is illustrated by two versions of part of a Moscow dispatch in the March 23 issue of the *Times*. In the early edition it read:

One thing is certain—the Russians are no longer afraid of the Germans, and least of all of the Japanese.

One has to live long in Russia to know what these words mean—just simply not afraid, of terror that walks in darkness and people who take citizens at night.

And in the late city edition:

One thing is certain—the Russians are no longer afraid of the Germans, and least of all of the Japanese.

One has to live long in Russia, where terror walks in darkness and people take citizens at night, to know what these words mean—just simply not afraid.

Haymarket Square, Chicago, May 4, 1886

Art Young, the American Daumier, gives us an eye-witness account of the great Haymarket affair, the aftermath of our first May Day. His rare drawings of the victims of the infamous "frameup" trial.

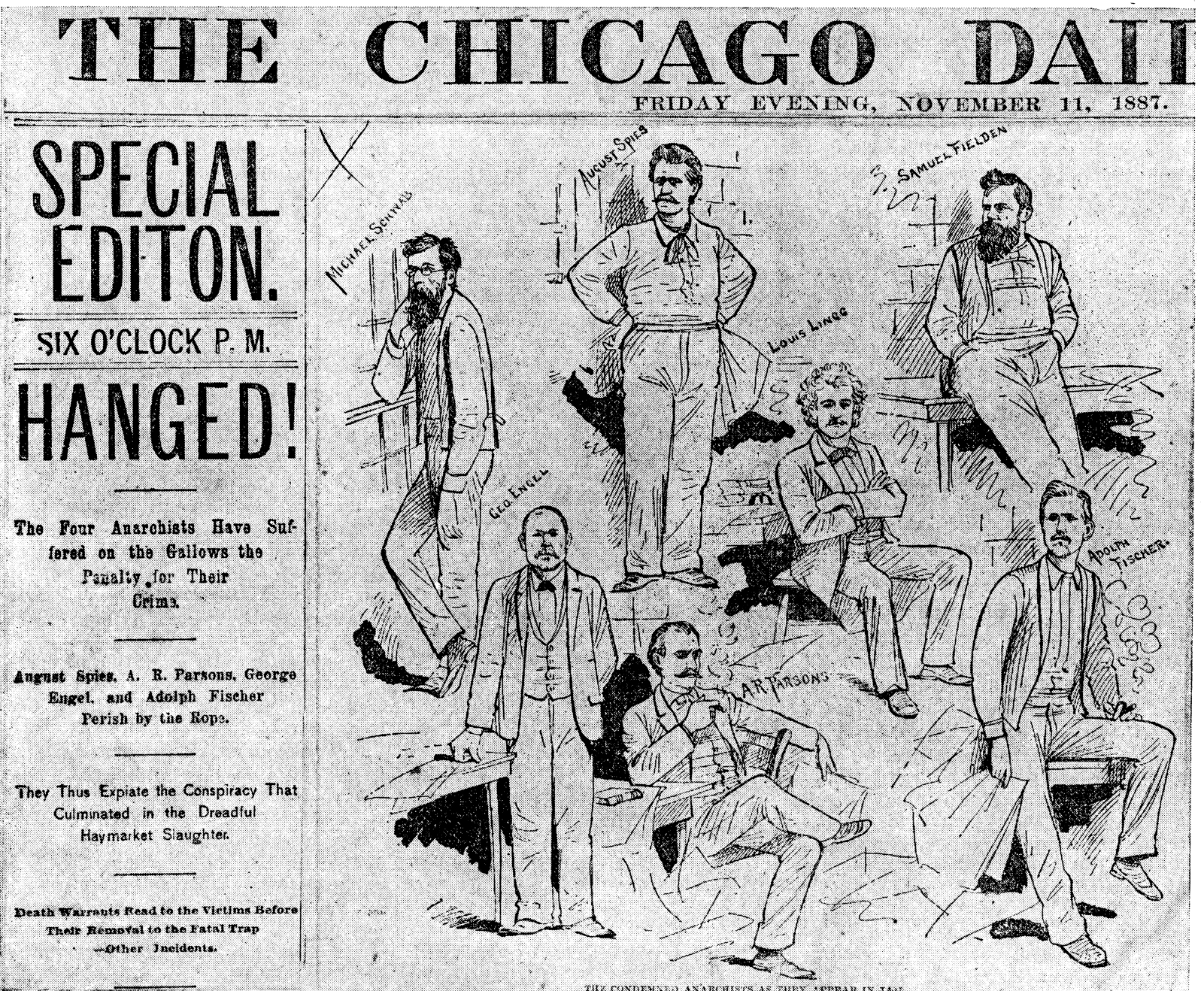
I NEED not dwell at length upon what happened in Haymarket Square on the night of May 4, 1886, three days after the nationwide strikes for the eight-hour day. The story has been told many times—the mass meeting of some fifteen hundred persons in protest against the wanton killing of workers by the police; Mayor Carter Harrison in attendance; Albert Parsons speaking, then leaving with his wife for a beer garden a couple of blocks away; Samuel Fielden mounting the wagon used as a rostrum; rain beginning to fall, and the crowd dwindling;

the mayor departing, and visiting the nearby Desplains Street police station to report to Capt. John Bonfield that there had been no disorder at the meeting; Bonfield disregarding the mayor's words, and in a few minutes leading 125 reserve policemen to the scene and ordering the remaining audience of some two hundred persons to disperse; then from above or behind the wagon a whizzing spark; a tremendous explosion; many policemen falling; their comrades firing into the panic-stricken crowd, killing and wounding. Seven of the police died; how many civilians were

killed by police bullets that night was never definitely known, and nothing was ever done about it.

HYSTERIA

Then a hue and cry—widespread police raids; arrests of hundreds of men and women known as or suspected to be Anarchists, Socialists, or Communists; announcements of the discovery of various dynamite "plots"; announcements of the finding of bombs and infernal machines; indictment of Albert Parsons and nine others as conspirators responsible



THE HAYMARKET MARTYRS. The Chicago "Daily News" carried these front-page drawings of Art Young's, made when he was a young artist in his twenties. Art tells how the great Haymarket trial affected his life and art.

for the Haymarket explosion and the deaths.

Newspaper editors and public men generally cried for a quick trial of the defendants and prompt execution of the guilty, and there was every reason to believe from the published reports that the accused deserved to be hanged. Public opinion was formed almost solely by the daily press, and in its columns evidence was steadily piled up against these labor agitators. Parsons had disappeared on the night of the bombing—police all over the country were watching for him; was not his flight confession of guilt? Rudolph Schnaubelt also was gone; he had been arrested twice and questioned briefly, but had been released—and Captain Schaack was incensed at the “stupidity” of the detectives who had let him go.

Like the great mass of the Chicagoans, I was swayed by these detailed reports of the black-heartedness of the defendants. Outstanding business and professional men and prominent members of the clergy denounced the accused, who were now all lumped together as “Anarchists,” and condemned the seven Haymarket killings as “the most wanton outrage in American history.” In the bloody and gruesome descriptions of the tragedy of May 4, the city’s people forgot the needless killing of the six workers by the police on May 3. I too saw “evidence” against Parsons in his running away. He had spoken at the mass meeting, and the explosion had come only a few minutes after he left—and then he had vanished. Innocent men do not run away when a crime has been committed (so my youthful mind naively reasoned then); they stay and face the music.

But when on the opening day of the trial, June 21, Albert Parsons walked into court and announced that he wanted to be tried with his comrades, my sympathies swung a little in the other direction. He had been in seclusion in Waukesha, Wis., working as a carpenter and living in the home of one Hoan, father of Daniel Hoan, the present and for many years past mayor of Milwaukee. If Parsons were guilty, I reasoned now, he would not have come back; he needn’t have come; the police had been unable to find any trace of him.

JUDGE GARY SNARLS

Shortly after the jury had been selected, I was assigned to make some pictures of scenes in the courtroom. The place was crowded, but I managed to get a seat with the reporters at a table near the defense attorneys. The prosecution was putting in its case, and there were continual objections by the defense to the line of questioning and the frequent side remarks to the jury by Julius S. Grinnell, the state’s attorney. Usually these objections were overruled, in a rasping voice, by Judge Joseph E. Gary; it occurred to me then that I’d hate to be tried before such a snarling old judge.

It was common knowledge that it had been difficult to find reputable and competent criminal attorneys in Chicago willing to defend the accused; their cause was too un-

Haymarket: May Day, 1939

August Spies: You may strangle this voice, but there will a time when our silence will be more powerful than the voices you strangle today.

Albert Parsons: O men of America, let the voice of the people be heard!

Still bright, and searing ignorance and fear,
This stronger beacon that you tended burns
And on this day of each advancing year
The memory of that first May First
returns.

But now the widespread fingers strengthen,
grow
More lithe, and flexing at the wrist—
O fingers forming to the fist!

Now is the imminence of commonweal—
The turgid lambency of molten iron
Hardening in even lines of steel.

BURTON JEROME BARNETT.

popular; editorial notice had been plainly served that only a pariah and an enemy of society would try to save those men from the gallows. In the face of this warning, three courageous members of the bar, who hitherto had handled only civil cases, had agreed to undertake the Anarchists’ defense. William P. Black was chief of these; a captain in the Union Army during the Civil War, he was known as a fighter; tall, dark, and handsome, with a pronounced jaw that shook a short beard, he was often the center of all eyes in court. Assisting Black were William A. Foster, said to be capable as a finder of evidence, and Sigismund Zeisler, an earnest and studious young man with a blond Van Dyke beard, red lips, and wavy hair.

On the other side of this desperate contest was Grinnell, the state’s attorney, who was understood to aspire to the governor’s chair, and several assistants, whose names got into print much less often than Grinnell’s. He had a fresh, healthy face and a big, well curled mustache.

Frank S. Osborne, jury foreman, was chief salesman for Marshall Field & Co.; and the other eleven “good men and true” answered to these descriptions: former railroad-construction contractor, clothing salesman; ex-broker from Boston; school principal; shipping clerk; traveling paint salesman; bookkeeper; stenographer for the Chicago & Northwestern Railway; voucher clerk for the same railroad; hardware merchant; seed salesman.

All the defendants were neatly dressed. They sat in their chairs with dignity, and with the apparent self-assurance of men who expected to be exonerated if they got justice.

There was a breathless tension to the court proceedings, the air electric. Grinnell talked much about “protecting society and government against enemies bent on their destruction.” Captain Black was often on his feet with objections.

Back at the *Evening Mail* office, I redrew

my sketches on chalk plates. By this time I had acquired a ready knack for working with this process, though I never liked it. These pictures of the trial attracted considerable attention, both among the *Mail* staff and outside. Word came to me a little later that Melville E. Stone, editor of the *Daily News*, had commented favorably upon that day’s work of mine.

Having attended a few sessions of the trial, and in a sense having been for several days a part of that dramatic spectacle, I followed the newspaper reports of the case with much interest. “Evidence” steadily mounted against them. (Of the real quality of that “evidence” I knew nothing then, nor did I for years afterward.)

APPEAL TO HIGHER COURTS

Immediately after the verdict the defense gave notice that it would appeal to the higher courts, and with the convicted men locked in their cells in the county jail, the press began devoting its front pages to other affairs. I was to see more of the “class struggle” in the near future without knowing what it meant. Indeed, at that time, when I was twenty years old, I knew hardly anything except that I had a knack for drawing pictures and was pretty good at reciting verses from books of poetry.

The attorneys for the convicted Anarchists were busy preparing to carry their case to the state Supreme Court, and news of the various steps appeared now and then in the press. The city had cooled down; one no longer heard of plots to blow up police stations, or of plans for revolution. A defense committee sought money to cover the expense of the appeal; in the *Daily News* office we heard that it was having tough going; most people in Chicago accepted the jury’s verdict as just, and thought the convicted men ought to be hanged; only a few intrepid persons argued otherwise.

The state Supreme Court unanimously upheld the trial verdict. Discussing the case at great length, it gave many technical reasons for approving the jury’s findings. This decision, on Sept. 14, 1887, was of course featured in all the Chicago dailies, with fulsome commendatory editorials.

But the defense would not yet admit defeat. Preparations were immediately begun to carry the fight to the United States Supreme Court, on constitutional grounds. Gen. Benjamin F. Butler was one of the attorneys who presented the argument in Washington late in October. After five days’ consideration by the full bench, Chief Justice Waite read its decision. No cause for reversal, it said.

Earlier Judge Gary had sentenced the seven men in the county jail to die by hanging there on November 11. This left them only nine days to live. Counsel and members of the defense committee began circulating petitions addressed to Gov. “Dick” Oglesby, urging commutation to life terms in the penitentiary. Many prominent individuals wrote the state chief executive to that end, and various dele-

gations visited him in behalf of the doomed men. It was apparent now that sentiment concerning the Anarchists had changed a good deal. Appeals in their behalf were signed by notables including Lyman J. Gage, later secretary of the treasury; William Dean Howells, Robert G. Ingersoll, Henry Demarest Lloyd, Gen. Roger A. Pryor, and George Francis Train. And from England protests against the impending execution were cabled by William Morris, Walter Crane, Annie Besant, Sir Walter Besant, and Oscar Wilde. Prior to the highest court's decision sixteen thousand members of working-class organizations in London, on a single day, signed a plea to Oglesby to save the doomed men.

SKETCHES OF THE PRISONERS

On Wednesday, November 9, two days before the execution date, Butch White, the city editor, assigned me to go to the county jail and make pictures of the prisoners. The jail is in the rear of and adjacent to the criminal courts building in which the trial had been held. Despite the newspaper stories of plans for an attempted rescue of the seven men, no special precautions seemed to be taken by the guards inside. After my newspaper credentials had established my identity at the entrance, I climbed the iron stairs up to the tier where the Anarchists were confined, and was allowed to roam freely there while I drew my sketches. Other visitors were there, and they looked into the cells of the Anarchists curiously, as one might gaze at animals in a zoo.

Parsons sat writing at a table piled with books and papers. He reminded me of a country editor—and he had edited a paper in Waco, Tex., before he came to Chicago. Adolph Fischer, who had been a printer on the *Arbeiter Zeitung*, looked like an eagle—light-haired, eager, and appearing as hopeful as he had been in court. George Engel, also a German printer, had less the appearance of an intellectual than the others. His eyes seemed dull, as if feeling had gone from him. Michael Schwab, spectacled associate editor and editorial writer, had a sad face. Samuel Fielden, a bearded ex-Methodist preacher born in England, was a familiar speaker in halls and working-class street meetings, with the voice and intensity of a born orator. August Spies, editor of the *Arbeiter Zeitung*, was strikingly handsome, straightforward in his talk. But it is Louis Lingg that I remember best in thinking back to that visit to the jail; my memory picture of him is clearest because the sun was shining in his cell as I sketched him. Only twenty-two, and blond, he had a look of disdain for all. He sat proudly in his chair, facing me with unblinking eyes. Silent, as though he might have been saying: "Go ahead. Do what your masters want you to do. As for me, nothing matters."

They were all young men, except Fielden, who appeared to be in his forties. Even the beard worn by Schwab and Lingg's mustache could not disguise their youthfulness.

And now word came of an explosion in the

jail—that Lingg had put a bomb into his mouth and lighted the fuse, and was dying. I was chilled with the horror of the story as details kept coming in. Suffering untold agony with his face terribly mutilated, Lingg remained conscious while three physicians worked over him, and lived six hours.

In response to appeals the governor issued a formal statement, commuting the sentences of Fielden and Schwab to life imprisonment, but refusing to interfere with the sentences against the other four.

I was much relieved when I learned that another artist, and not I, had been assigned to witness the execution and sketch the scene. I would have gone, of course, had I been ordered to, however grueling the task. But Butch White gave the assignment to William Schmedtgen, an older man, who had joined the staff after me. I never knew why he was chosen, but figured that White probably thought I was too young.

Next morning I saw Schmedtgen put a revolver in his hip pocket, and noted that he was white and trembling. Outside in the streets an ominous quiet prevailed. Business seemed to have come to a halt. Pedestrians were comparatively few, and every face was tense. We who stayed in the office didn't talk much, and when we spoke our voices were subdued. It was like sitting near the bedside of someone who is dying. When a copy boy was heard yelling something to another boy out in the corridor, some of the staff hurried out to shut him up. Reporters worked in relays covering the news in the vicinity of the jail. One by one they came into the office and wrote their individual angles of the story, then returned to the scene of action. Thus we got frequent bulletins on what was happening there. The execution was set for noon, the day being Friday.

Three hundred policemen had formed a cordon around the jail, a block away from it on all sides, keeping the curious crowds on the outside of a line of heavy rope. Only those persons who could satisfy the police that they had bona fide passports could get through. Once a newspaperman got into the jail, the police would not let him out—though he could send copy to his office by messengers who waited at the entrance.

The hanging proceeded efficiently from the viewpoint of the authorities. When the four men had dropped from the scaffold and the doctors had pronounced all of them dead, the tension of months had suddenly gone. All over town that afternoon there were drunken policemen, in and out of the saloons.

My pictures of the executed men and their fellow defendants were used in the *Daily News* that day. Schmedtgen's sketch of the hanging had been rushed into print. I saw him early that afternoon. He was ghastly pale and said nothing; evidently he didn't want to talk about what he had seen. We were good friends for years afterward, but I never heard him comment on that day's experience.

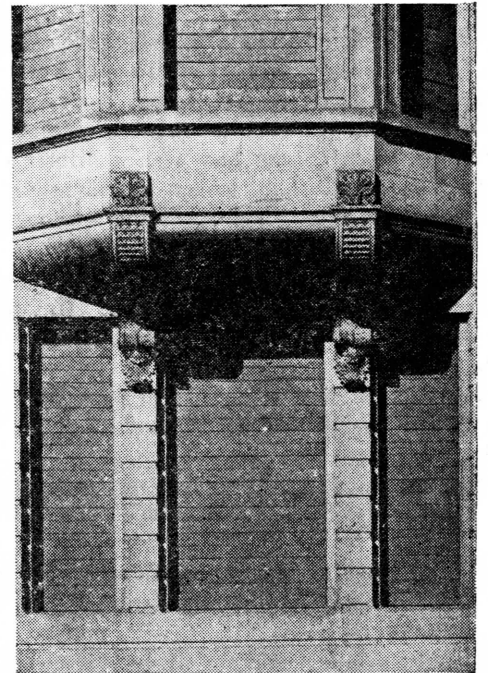
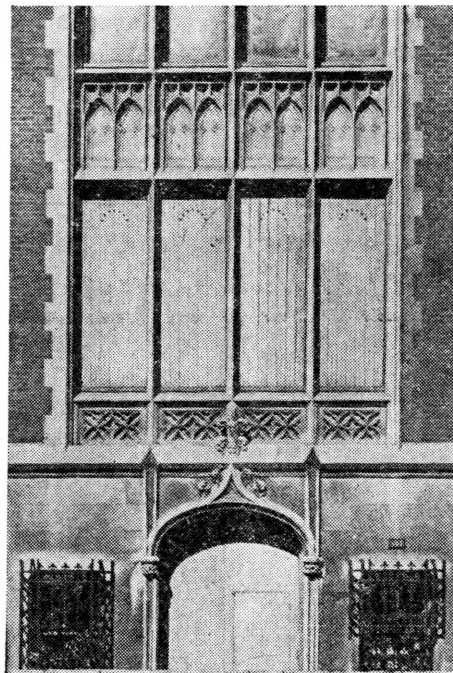
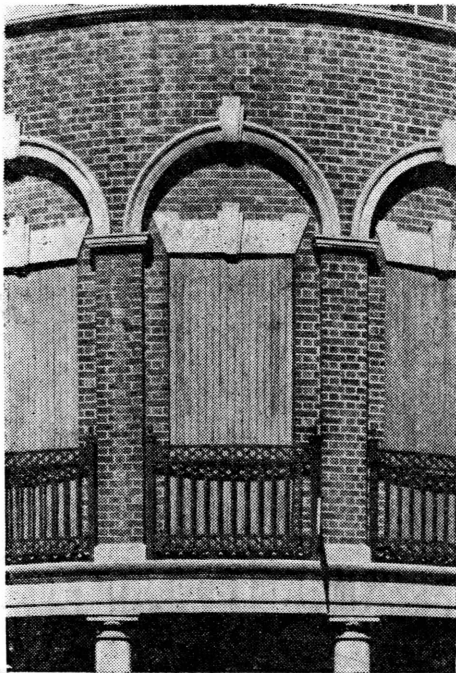
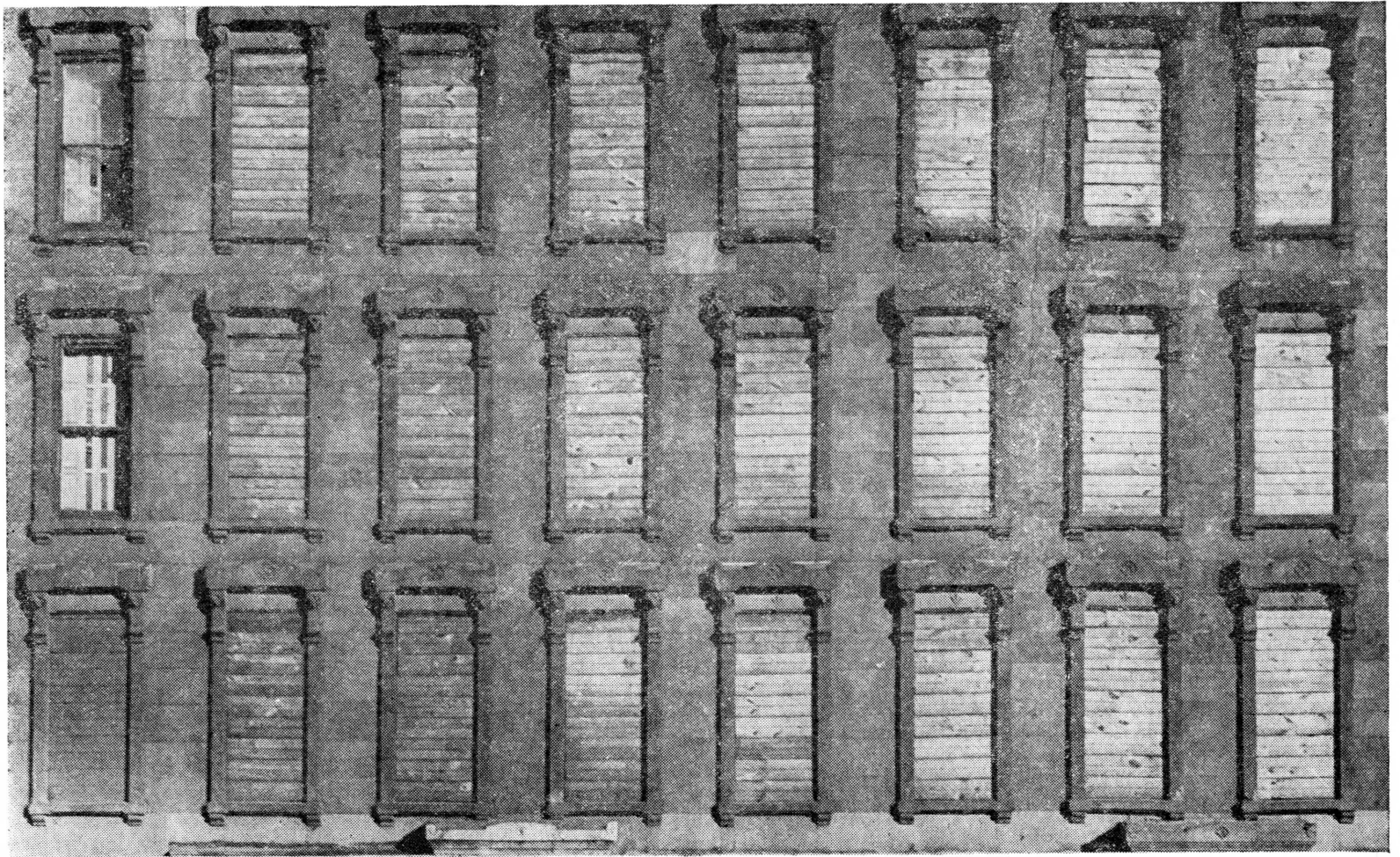
All of the news stories I read then and nearly all the talk I heard about the case then indicated that the executed men were guilty. Stone called them "enemies of government, destroyers." Not for years did I have an opportunity to see and study the other side of the picture. So when, a short time later, I was asked to draw a cover for an anti-Anarchist pamphlet, I readily assented. Its title was *Justice Triumphant Over Anarchy*, and it upheld the hangings.

If the dead can hear, I ask their pardon now for drawing that cartoon. I was young and was misled by the clamor of many voices raised to justify a dark deed.

ART YOUNG.



WRITING LETTERS HOME FROM JOLIET.



Photos by Photo League

BOARDED UP

THE conspicuous waste of human lives, health, and happiness we can see in the slums of any great city is usually balanced by a conspicuous waste of living quarters in other parts of the town.

Here we see a group of pictures taken by the Photo League that show some of New York City's waste living spaces. While several families share a small, stuffy apartment in Harlem, the East Side, or the slums of Hell's Kitchen, whole buildings are boarded up on Park Avenue.

The upper picture shows a condemned row of brownstone houses

on upper Park Avenue. Standing right near a congested living area, it indicts the landlords who are content to speculate with their fellow citizens' need to live.

The lower pictures are typical of the sights one can see on fashionable Park or Fifth Avenue. Mansions of well-to-do New Yorkers remain boarded up, year after year, the land and buildings upon them mocking the crowded poor who are moved from one slum to another, while legislators frustrate voters' plans for adequate low-cost housing for the city's millions.

Forsythe

Look Out for the Locomotive!

S. J. PERELMAN BATTING FOR ROBERT FORSYTHE

I DON'T know why I should feel hurt, but I do. If the board of directors of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad had come to me like a man and said, "Look—we don't think you're big enough for the job. You haven't got the hips to swing it. We're hiring Flash Gordon to streamline our road," I'd have been the first to wish him well. Hell's bells, they don't come any better than Flash. I worship the ground his stainless steel feet walk on, I really do. And the kid's got ability, don't think he hasn't; after all, you can't hang around on Mongo for years and not pick up *something*. By that I mean he's young and probably has loads of new ideas and with Doctor Zarkov to steady him, he's bound to turn out something brilliant one of these light years. Only this time isn't it, Flash, old man. Forgive me for saying so, but you muffed it.

I had occasion to glide over their right of way a few days ago, and frankly, those Santa Fe boys are living in a fool's paradise. They can stick a blunt tin nose on old No. 19 and smear her tender with aluminum paint if that's their idea of a good time, but it's Baldwin to the core. They can even put wings on the conductor's heels and make him carry a caduceus—it still takes two days and nights from Chicago to Los Angeles. Around the age when I went in heavily for black ribbed stockings and sponsored the phrase "Why don't you make a noise like a hoop and roll away?" I conceived the idea of doing over my sled. I gave it two coats of vermilion with a blue stripe, lettered "The Snow Queen" in Gothic on the back, and let it be known in a press release to my block that I had a new flexible flyer. As a result, I got the name of being a half-wit. The Santa Fe goes pixy on its rolling-stock, but nobody ever calls them a half-wit. Why should I have to take the rap?

I'm probably doing an injustice to Flash and Zarkov and their bustly little friend Dale Arden, but with Aladdin well out of the rubbing, somebody will have to laugh off that dining-room on the *Chief*. It may not even hurt to throw out a dragnet for Jules Verne. Had it not been for the hay-and-feed store outside which could only mean Chillicothe, I might as well have been in a rocket on my way to the moon. A quick look at my fellow passengers did nothing to dispel the illusion; two Martians with eyes on the ends of feelers were sucking up bouillon, and a brandy hang-over plus air-conditioning gave me the proper sensation of altitude.

I spent the first five minutes clinging to the seat of my chair lest I be whirled off into interstellar space, at the end of which time I re-

gained enough composure to examine the cutlery and table hardware in general. Why this frenzy for streamlining had to overtake objects which stand still is beyond me. Just because a knife or fork is raised eighteen inches from a plate to your mouth is no reason it has to look like a torpedo. What sympathy I had left for anybody but myself was attracted by a bluff rancher type at the next table. He was moaning brokenly to himself, on the brink of hysteria from trying to scoop up some green peas with a small variation of Brancusi's bird. The one consolation in this mad scientist's paradise of molybdenum and angular set-backs was the colored waiter. For all the Alexis de Sakhanoffsky-cum-Norman Bel Geddes functionalism, he was still laboring on the levee down in Natchez.

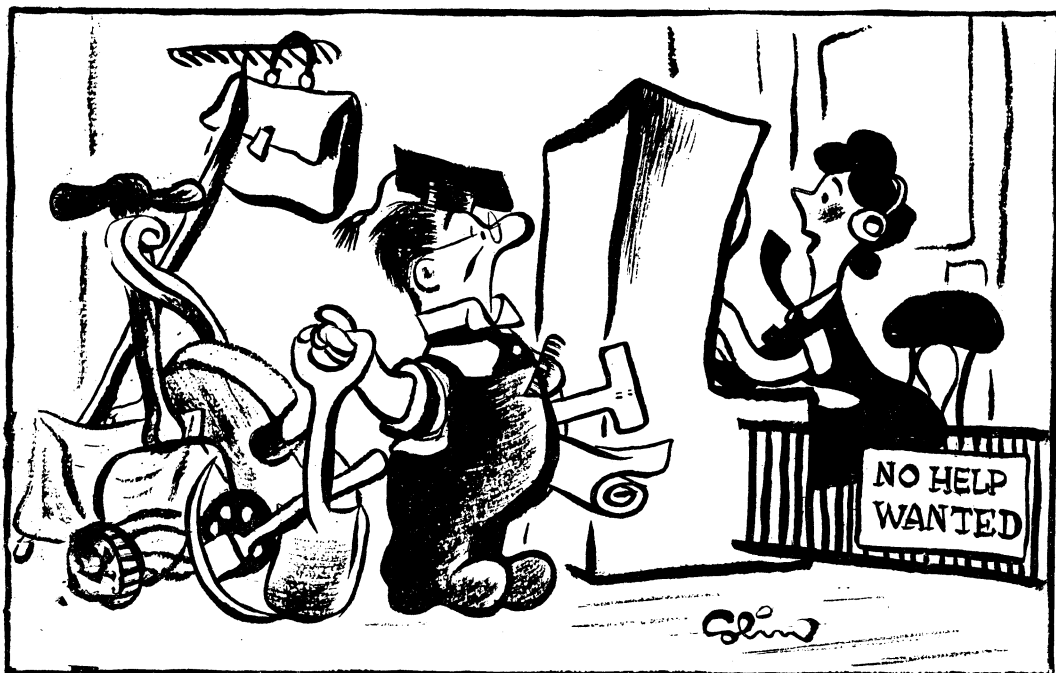
Consistency, far from being a jewel, wasn't even a semi-precious stone to the gentlemen who remodeled the *Chief*. Opening a pet-cock in one end of the diner, I found myself in a lounge car of the Taft era, inhaling the mingled odor of hot green plush and back numbers of *Asia* magazine. Its two occupants were a sallow Pullman conductor with air holes punched in his black straw cap, blubbering over a Hamilton watch, and a brakeman. The latter, with nothing left to switch, was moodily transferring the *National Geographic* to the binder marked *Review of Reviews*. A suspicious moisture, largely brandy, gathered in my eye as I began to recall old railroading days—the firemen with knotted bandannas

and oil cans, the plucky candy butchers, supporting widowed mothers, and the cheery tramps named "Dusty" Rhodes.

Knuckling away the stinging tears, I sought out my compartment, which was located in a car called Kaibito. Kaibito's walls were tinted a blue so radiant and dewy that after fifteen minutes I stopped fighting the thought of motherhood and rang for the maid. We held a whispered consultation and decided to wire ahead to the Lane Bryant branch in Kansas City for a layette. "You poor child, it won't be long now," the maid comforted me, pillowing my head on her ample bosom, which seemed to have escaped the notice of the streamliners. All at once I felt the most irresistible craving for a Scotch-and-soda, but since there was no Scotch-and-soda on her ample bosom, I was compelled to ring for the porter. One ring led to another, and it was scarcely a day and a half before we were pulling into Albuquerque, N. M. Remembering that I was fresh out of ivory back-scratchers, I welcomed the chance to lay in a new supply.

A quick glance around the station convinced me that here at least there was no sign of progress. I drew a breath of relief and was about to buy a nice bag of fruit to present to my porter in lieu of a tip when a train butcher emerged from the station restaurant. He wore a three-quarter-length surgeon's smock buttoned up the neck and octagonal-rimmed glasses. I hope I'm wrong, but I thought I saw an optometrist's mirror glittering on his forehead. He was laboring under a silver tray and as pretty a case of coryza as I have ever seen. "Sadwiches!" he shouted. "Get your chickid, hab, ad cheese sadwiches! Ice-cold bilk! Eskibo pies!" With a choked cry I flung myself out of his path, slid down an arroyo, crawled up a mesa, and covered behind a mesquite bush until the train had left. And there, gentle reader, let us leave me. In the future, when I go anywhere it'll be by burro.

S. J. PERELMAN.



"There's a young gentleman here who can do anything."

Colin Allen



New Masses

ESTABLISHED 1911

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Tomorrow's World

DIRECTLY to the east of our NM office—across the river and out a few miles—a wonder city has grown up in the past two years. They call it the World of Tomorrow, and like the world of tomorrow it has been raised on land that once served less noble purposes. Flushing Meadows—part swamp, part dump, and only a very small part meadow—was inhabited by mosquitoes and other animal life thriving on such ground. It was ringed by the small houses of the lower middle class of Queens.

But the World of Tomorrow is supposed to show us what man can do with his creative forces. The architecture, the industrial exhibits, the display of international good fellowship—all are said to be prophecy of another day. To us much of the architecture seems to be sham—functionless and improbable. The industrial exhibits are nice, but much has been left unsaid. The spirit of international cooperation, however, we like, and we hope that out of this advance edition of the World of Tomorrow will come more than the humbug Grover Whalen is spreading. We think the real tomorrow will differ in many ways from what will be shown this summer, but we welcome the World's Fair. It will bring together plain folk from all over this country and the entire world. And when common people get together to meet and know each other, only good can result.

Isolationism Wavers

IT IS not often that a congressional committee so far forgets ancient and decorous tradition as to applaud a witness. The House Foreign Affairs Committee did the forgetting the other day when Mrs. George Fitch, wife of an American YMCA secretary in China, urged repeal of the Neutrality Act and an embargo on Japan. That spon-

taneous applause accurately reflected the overwhelming sentiment of the American people. Even so staunch an isolationist as Senator Borah has been compelled to admit that the policy of so-called neutrality was no longer possible because the American people have "already made up their minds who is right and who is wrong."

Symptomatic of this crystallization of popular feeling was the appearance before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee of James Carey, secretary of the CIO, who advocated legislation that would provide material and moral aid to the victims of aggression while denying it to the aggressors. A year and a half ago two of the largest unions in the CIO, the Steel Workers Organizing Committee and the United Automobile Workers, adopted resolutions that were strongly isolationist. In January 1938 the convention of the United Mine Workers still was moving very gingerly between isolationism and President Roosevelt's "quarantine-the-aggressors" policy. Today the CIO, the bastion of the progressive movement in this country, throws the entire weight of its four million members unequivocally behind an anti-fascist foreign policy.

Another indication of the way the wind is blowing is the speech made on April 18 before the Economic Club of New York by former Gov. Phil La Follette of Wisconsin, heretofore an uncompromising isolationist. La Follette attacked Chamberlain's appeasement policy, pointed out that Nazism represents a danger "not just to Europe but to the Western hemisphere as well," and declared that "Russia is one of the essentials in Europe today to any honest and intelligent opposition to Nazism."

All of which means that if Congress is to express the desires of the American people, the very least it can do is to pass the Thomas amendment which would exempt from the embargo of the Neutrality Act any nation attacked in violation of a treaty with the United States.

Coal Lockout

IF STEAM engines stop running in the next few weeks America knows who will be responsible: the coal operators. Not even the *Herald Tribune* has dared to point the finger at John L. Lewis' men in the United Mine Workers. For the press knows that Mr. Lewis proposed to keep the mines running under the old contract while negotiations would go on for a new one. Midwest and Western operators agreed but the Mellon-controlled Appalachian industrialists had their own ideas. They locked the men out.

Class-conscious Mellon telegraphed his shot: his plan is to attack the miners, who constitute the backbone of the CIO, thus

initiating a new wage-cutting drive against all workingmen. This, the operators feel, would preclude industrial warfare and sabotage economic recovery as part of the campaign against the New Deal in 1940.

The deadlock continues over the operators' refusal either to concede 100 percent union employment or to surrender the penalty clause which gives the boss the right to impose a fine on miners for every day they strike during the life of the contract. In the meanwhile the miners hold solid.

The United Press has reported that Chairman Percy Tetlow, of the National Bituminous Coal Commission, has announced his group is studying the power to invoke a ceiling on coal prices to prevent skyrocketing of prices while the lockout continues.

Public support of the UMW would help scuttle the coal operators' plan to protract negotiations until a serious coal shortage gets under way. The Mellon interests are filibustering—with the lives of the coal diggers specifically—and the interests of the nation as a whole.

Between Crises

HAVING spent two weeks elaborately wiring ahead his punches, the world is hardly likely to be staggered by anything Hitler may say before his dummy Reichstag. In these two weeks people have learned to breathe more easily, to recover their courage, and to look for continued American leadership in curbing the madmen who have driven mankind to the brink of catastrophe. Already Hitler's resounding "No" to President Roosevelt's proposal for a ten-year all-around non-aggression pact has been anticipated by his junior partner, Mussolini, and by one of his American stooges, Gen. Hugh Johnson. Old Ironpants' column in the April 21 issue of the *New York World-Telegram*, in which he told Hitler what to say in order to justify aggression, is a preview of treason, American style.

It would be a mistake to believe that Hitler's speech, whatever its character, will mean any changes in policy. Fascism can no more be expected to abandon voluntarily the path of easy conquest which, thanks to the collaboration of Messrs. Chamberlain and Daladier, it has been able to pursue, than a jungle tiger can be persuaded with fair words to cease being a beast of prey. Only the knowledge that further acts of banditry against small nations will meet the determined resistance of the great powers can give pause to the totalitarian governments. The great impact of Roosevelt's message lay in the fact that it clearly intimated that the United States does not intend to remain on the sidelines and permit the eventual destruction of its own peace and security.

Unfortunately the ruling cliques in London and Paris, despite their fulsome praise of Roosevelt's message, have utilized these two weeks not to strengthen the anti-aggression front, but to initiate what appear to be new moves toward pro-fascist appeasement. The return to Berlin of the British and French ambassadors, both of whom had been recalled after the seizure of Czechoslovakia, is a straw in the wind. A London dispatch in the *New York Times* states that the return of the British envoy, Sir Nevile Henderson, who, incidentally, is strongly pro-Nazi, "took London by surprise, and the question asked everywhere . . . was whether, after all, Mr. Chamberlain might not intend to make one more effort to satisfy Chancellor Hitler, as he did last September at Munich."

Coming at this time, this latest evidence that appeasement is still a very live ghost in Downing Street and the Quai d'Orsay is hardly likely to allay the apprehensions of the small countries in the direct path of the Nazi-Italian juggernaut. Already Yugoslavia, hemmed in by Germany and Hungary on the north and Italy's new Albanian colony on the south, has leaped from the frying pan into the fire and has concluded what is virtually an alliance with Germany and Italy. Nor is there any assurance that the British-French pledges of military aid to Poland, Rumania, and Greece preclude the Runciman squeeze-play tactics which were used with such deadly effectiveness on Czechoslovakia. Meanwhile the Soviet proposal for an all-embracing anti-aggression front languishes.

Spring: 1939

SPRING comes to 1939 a little lamely, like a timid girl afraid to walk on dark streets at night. It is already a month since the calendar set her debut, but spring has waited as though it were not worth venturing new leaves and flowers for the withering cannon. It is a season of love and war, in which all's fair, and warmakers like such rules. Now troops can be moved with summer equipment; soon the winds will be soft for the parabola of shells, and bombers may take off at cock's crow and be back for breakfast. Mud dries after the April rains and generals may confidently expect fine morale in the conscripts for the duration of the high season. In China spring is bewilderingly beautiful in the gray-green plains and the Eighth Route Army is driving back through the smoking towns. In Spain a king comes back through the courtesy of many dead; he should come in Saracen armor with a proud swastika crest.

Spring comes to America and the snows have melted in Moscow and Leningrad. The Bolsheviks sit on top of the world and wor-

ried little bourgeois in the unbombed cities of the West begin to see the giant in the East. This week a dog will bark in Germany over an earthwide network; crocuses will bloom; the parks will bed the city's millions. How can man meet another such spring?

Hollywood Landmark

WARNER BROS.' *Confessions of a Nazi Spy* will open this week in hundreds of first-run theaters. The opening will be a landmark in film history. For this picture will mark a tremendous advance, both politically and artistically, over such films of social importance as Hollywood has made heretofore. The film will not hesitate to name and picture the rulers of the Third Reich as the arch-plotters against American national security and against the peace and freedom of the world. It will expose the subtle use of specious patrioteering and demagoguery by which reaction attempts to trap the unsuspecting. The film will indicate that Hollywood has begun to recognize the interdependence of form and content in its art.

Our Hollywood correspondent informs us that the people involved in the production of the film participated enthusiastically in the venture. Producer Robert Lord, director Anatole Litvak, and scriptwriters John Wexley and Milton Krims approached the work from a new angle. Edward G. Robinson, Francis Lederer, and Dorothy Tree, who are among the principals, have engaged in active anti-fascist work in Hollywood.

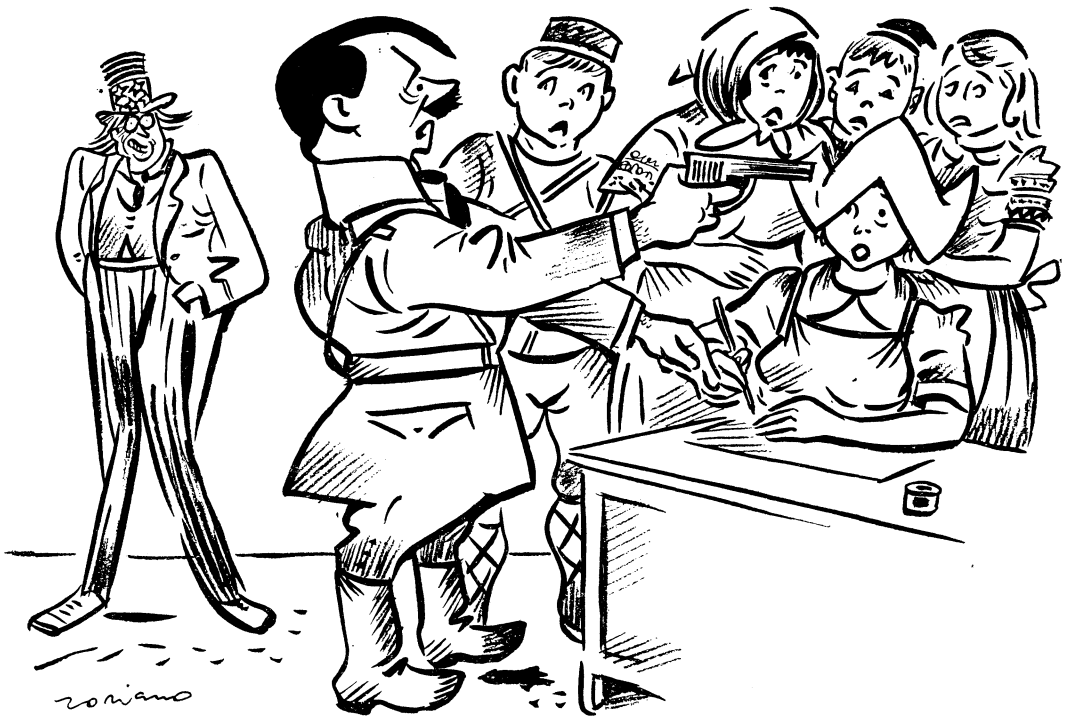
Warner Bros. has just announced plans for another anti-Nazi film, *Boycott*, in addition

to scheduled production of a picture about Pastor Niemoeller, and the already completed *Juarez*, which portrays in effective modern terms the struggle of dawning Mexican democracy against the foreign puppet emperor, Maximilian. MGM has scheduled *It Can't Happen Here*, and has bought the rights to Phyllis Bottome's anti-Nazi *Mortal Storm*.

Associated Film Audiences has already undertaken a broad campaign in behalf of *Confessions of a Nazi Spy*, correctly estimating that film's success as having a decisive bearing on whether Hollywood will advance or retreat. The Nazis and their pals will do everything to make the film industry feel that it has burned its fingers. NM readers can encourage the progressive movement in Hollywood by: writing congratulations to Warner Bros., Burbank, Calif.; congratulating theater owners for booking *Confessions of a Nazi Spy* and coming instantly to their defense against expected threats; seeing to it that as many people as possible see the film in the first days of the first run, since box-office figures at that time are regarded as the index to any film's success. We ought not to miss this opportunity to demonstrate the popularity of genuinely progressive films.

Educators' Manifesto

OVER two thousand leading educators and publicists have just issued a "Manifesto of Educators." The manifesto declares that molders of public opinion must recognize the threat to democracy inherent in demands for retrenchment in education,



"Who's Afraid?"

Soriano

in attacks on the Bill of Rights, in gag laws, in censorship of teachers and journalists, in racial and religious intolerance in those newspapers which make profit or power their chief goal. The five-point program for strengthening democracy against the attacks of fascism and reaction is a realistic program for human progress. The signatories of the manifesto include 156 college and university presidents, six state commissioners of education, 139 deans, representing a total of 410 institutions from forty-six states.

Union Busting

EVERY time the Tories have tried to cut relief appropriations, they have found their most militant opposition in the Workers Alliance. The unemployed and relief workers who make up its membership have known the worst that capitalist depression has to offer, and in the WA they have schooled themselves as unionists. The leadership has been good.

As reward, the Workers Alliance is the subject of an investigation as obvious as the Dies probe in its smear strategy. Last week in Washington David Lasser and Herbert Benjamin, WA president and secretary, testified. Benjamin, when asked, said that he was a member of the Communist Party and knew of no reason why he should not be. He was elected to his post in the union by democratic methods and presumably the union's membership had chosen him because they felt he could fill the job. Relief workers, like any others, have that right.

This week local officials are on the stand in New York. The familiar Red-baiting is being staged for the delight of the press; exhaustive searches are made for stray copies of the *Daily Worker*, which can be photographed to prove that the projects harbor Communists; questions are asked in such a way as to enable clever editorial writers to make confessions of the answers and still stay clear of libel.

The Woodrum committee has one purpose—to break the Workers Alliance and thus rid reaction of its most stubborn opposition. It is an anti-labor tactic that differs hardly at all from the way General Motors and Republic Steel go about the same job. WPA administrator Harrington has signified his willingness to work with the WA and progressives should recognize attempts on its life for what they are—good old-fashioned union-busting.

Program Against Recovery

THE Republicans in Congress have, after much labor and cogitation, produced a program for recovery. It is a twelve-point program this time, but it is so astonishingly

like the five-point, seven-point, ten-point, and twelve-point programs of national salvation issued periodically by the National Association of Manufacturers and the United States Chamber of Commerce as to be mistaken for very close kin indeed.

The program, like its brothers-under-the-skin, is a combination of unexceptionable pious generalities and concrete proposals for making the rich richer and the poor poorer. An example of the former is the foreign policy plank (Point 1): "Keep the United States out of war"—a model of lucidity! Or Point 8: "Restore American markets to the American farmer and wage earner and develop new markets for agricultural products." Needless to say, most of the other points are dedicated to contracting American markets still further by reducing purchasing power.

A curb on "unnecessary, wasteful, and reckless spending" (that is, relief) is demanded, as well as emasculation of the National Labor Relations Act. The reciprocal trade agreement policy is cautiously side-swiped by a demand for a committee to investigate its effects. And of course the "repressive" tax (it is all of 2½ percent) on undistributed corporation profits must be repealed and the entire tax structure revised in accord with the blueprints of Wall Street.

The Republicans are seeking support for this anti-recovery program among the right-wing Democrats whose guiding genius is Vice-President Garner. In his message to the Young Democratic Clubs the other day President Roosevelt invited these right-wingers to fish or cut bait—to back the program on which the Democratic Party was elected to office or "to join a party that more accurately mirrors their ideas." And he pointed out that efforts to change that program are "a different thing from allying themselves with their party's enemies and getting in a stab wherever and whenever they can do so safely." One need not seek far in the President's official family to find whom that particular shoe fits.

Here Come the Orchids

IT is rare that the editorial board of a magazine takes time out to pay tribute to a business manager. He is the unsung hero of the story. The editors of NM are happy—and sad—to throw a few orchids at this moment. Our business manager, George Willner, who has seen the paper through stormy days these past three years, is leaving our central office. He is going out to the West Coast. In bidding Willner goodby we wish to express our gratitude for the fine job he has done. It's tough enough to be an editor of such a journal as ours—tribulations pile up in a way people on a commercial maga-

zine cannot imagine. But to be the business manager! Sometimes the job appears too monumental for any one man. But as Carl Sandburg put it: "The strong men keep coming on . . ." And we wish, as we bid goodby to Willner, to welcome his successor, Carl Bristel.

We don't want to get personal, but we consider NM a miracle in American journalism. No big money is behind us; nothing but an idea—progress, democracy. All we had, and have, is your good will. In that sense NM is unique. It can count on its friends; and no fair-weather friends are they, for in every tough spot they have come through.

The paper is, in this sense, a cooperative. The editors serve the will of the readers—answer the questions they pose. But this support is scattered throughout America. We have readers in every American city, and in countless hamlets. They are the most self-sacrificing of their communities. They aid progress in numberless ways. But we are off in New York. Our problems are not always so real to our readers as some local issues—or as some major international ones such as Spain, China. When we get into a fix—and that is inevitable annually (since we have no Foundation to foot our annual deficit, as some of our colleagues in the weekly field have)—we must get our problems before our readers. They are our Foundation.

Here is where Willner comes in. He has been able to organize that good will, galvanize it into action, and every time we faced a crisis—every time the American Hitlers thought we would go under—well, we didn't. And we don't expect to if you keep helping as you have. Well, much of the credit for all this goes to our business manager—that organizer of good will. Though we could not prevail upon Willner to remain in New York, we're doing the next best thing. Since we are opening a West Coast Bureau in California, we have been able to persuade Willner to take it over. We know he will continue the fine work he did in New York. The West Coast is our second biggest circulation center. First New York, second California. We have many friends out there and we are certain they will help us get thousands of new readers.

We are heartily sorry to see George Willner leave New York; but we feel good about the West Coast bureau. NM will be able—through having a representative on the spot—to better its coverage of the remarkable progress of democracy there. And we are sure Bristel will ably carry on in New York.

If we had a medal we'd pin it on Willner's lapel; since we don't, he can leave New York feeling the love of the rest of the staff and our admiration for his consistently first-class work.

Reader's Forum

What Is an Isolationist?

SHAEMAS O'SHEEL takes issue with NM's review of Robert Briffault's *Decline and Fall of the British Empire* (March 14 issue):

"I find in Richard Milton's review of Robert Briffault's *Decline and Fall of the British Empire* that Mr. Briffault and I advise workers to 'work for socialism on their home grounds' only. But in *NEW MASSES* last October I said, 'Joint action by the peoples is the need'; and Briffault writes, 'Isolationism can never be an unconditional policy any more than isolation is a fact.'

"I think collective action is the sanest idea in the history of international affairs, the most worthy of civilized men. I also think it fated never to be tried because the necessary conditions do not exist and are not likely to. I assert confidently that not a single word can be cited from Mr. Briffault's text in opposition to collective action.

"Mr. Milton and the editors of *NEW MASSES* think things just happen, in a casual, day-to-day fashion. You think Hitler and Mussolini are dictators, that Chamberlain is head of the British government. Hitler has a vision and grabs the handiest adjacent country. Mussolini sticks out his jaw and makes faces at Britain and France. Chamberlain is surprised by these events and hastens to grovel. You think the Marxian principle of inevitable conflict between capitalist nations for territory and markets is operative today; that the fascist 'have nots' are actually threatening the imperialist 'haves,' and may indeed attack in the West. If these things were so, you would have the conditions needed for collective action.

"Your pages also have repeatedly recognized the cooperation I detect between the fascist powers and what *Pravda* and Molotov always call the 'so-called democracies'; but you have done so piecemeal. In June 1937 I wrote that the tension over Italian bombing and sinking of British ships would not result in war because it was a prearranged sham battle designed to frighten the British people and particularly British labor into support of their government's monstrous armament program. In September 1938 I said in print that there would be no war because the whole Berchtesgaden-Godesberg-Munich business was prearranged. You saw the point that time. A couple of weeks ago Joseph Stalin confirmed your opinion and mine about that incident. But as long ago as January 1937 I said in print that the British government was Franco's chief backer and principal assassin of Spanish liberties. How do you feel now, in view of the results of 'non-intervention,' the hasty recognition of Franco, the disclosure of the role of the duke of Alba and Berwick, and that heart-breaking letter of Richard Goodman in your pages of March 21, pointing the finger of guilt at the British government in every paragraph, revealing it as the boss of the Fifth Column all along?

"All these things are set forth with a force and fervor in Briffault's book, wherefore I think that the adroitness with which Mr. Milton evaded all reference to the real point of that book is a very poor service to the cause in which we are all enlisted. Let me hasten to say, however, that Mr.

Milton's pragmatic definition of democracy—'a form of government wherein a people can work for political and economic change'—is most admirable and useful. I subscribe to it; and I recognize its applicability to Britain and France. I am no Anglophobe. There is little in the recent political history of the Irish, for instance, to move me to turn my nose up at the British. I would be willing to fight in the trenches to defend the democratic values of Britain from fascist subjection, if that could be done without also helping to maintain the grip of the British empire on its half-billion exploited subjects. But I view more seriously than you do that glaring evidence of the woeful imperfection of British democracy. I know you abominate British imperialism as much as I do, but I dissent from the 'hush-hush' habit you have fallen into regarding it. By that you help pave the way for a United States-British alliance which at no distant date would land us in a lineup against the Soviets."

To which our reviewer replies:

"Perhaps 'isolation' is a bad word for what it is intended to convey. Certainly Shaemas O'Sheel, Robert Briffault, and even Stuart Chase are not perfectly described by the word, if only because they sit down to write about the international situation.

"Actually, of course, Mr. O'Sheel only infers that because I contrasted Briffault with believers in collective security I intended to brand him an isolationist. That was not my intention, but it suits the purpose. My only point is that Briffault adds little to the discussion by saying he believes in collective security but feels that it is a hope not to be fulfilled in our time. England's collaboration with the fascists—indeed, England's virtual fascism—has sabotaged what once was a source of encouragement for peace, he says. Thus, Mr. Briffault is not against collective security; he just doesn't believe it can work now. Perhaps Stuart Chase, who knows a great deal about words, can think of one to fit those who disavow isolationism but think we ought to practice it.

"In spite of all Mr. O'Sheel's words, I see nothing more than a difference in definition standing between us and the group he represents. Our definition is simply that any government susceptible to popular change is worth working with."

Overseas Note

FROM A. P. of London, England, comes a contribution and plaint:

"Herewith check for ten bucks to cover one year's subscription and balance as donation to the best publication on either side of the Atlantic.

"You may be interested to know that *NEW MASSES* has an increasing tendency to reach me with the cover mutilated or loosened. Am not sure whether this is a censor or merely a Socialist postman."

Your surmises may be right, Mr. P., but we feel that it is just the wear and tear of bouncing on and off trains and docks. You should see how some English magazines arrive here!

More Moscow Gold

W. J. S. of San Francisco, whose famous "Golden Gate" was built, as every Red-baiter knows, with Moscow gold, appreciates our plight:

"I have been reading *NEW MASSES* for several years and consider it a most important part of my reading. I wish I could send more, as your supply of 'Moscow gold' doesn't seem to have been coming through regularly. *NEW MASSES* must continue."

Vermont Gold

A COUPLE away up in the Vermont hills comes to the aid of NM with an original contribution: "The best that we can do for the 'Keep *NEW MASSES* from Sinking' fund is to send you some of the product of our farm in the hope that you will be able to turn it into cash and thus stave off your creditors, or, if worst comes to worst, turn it into your several gullets and grin at your creditors. Wish we could do the same. In the meantime, keep an eye out for a gallon of pure Vermont maple syrup worth \$2.50."

Well, Mr. and Mrs. H., we have sold the Vermont gold and have contributed the proceeds to the NM fund. And the four people who jointly bought it report that it's fine enough to impress even a Vermont Republican with the resources of our country.

From France

J. R. of Paris writes: "I am one of the 24,000 slackers who haven't yet come across. I'd be very ashamed of it if it were not for the fact that I have been damn busy (and then not busy enough) trying to raise funds for the children, parcels for the men in the camps, this and that for the intellectuals, God spare them. But *NEW MASSES* is every bit as important as any of these activities. You and I both know that. Ten bucks enclosed."

From Kansas

G. H. makes a sacrifice for us: "Here is \$2 toward saving *NEW MASSES*. Was going to get a permanent, but decided it would be decidedly irrelevant with NM foundering on financial rocks."

From Oxford, England

THE Yanks at Oxford write: "Enclosed is a check for £2, 10s, which we hope will help *NEW MASSES* to keep going. It does a damn fine job of keeping us in touch with America, which is a hard thing to do for us who are in temporary exile."

From British Columbia

J. V. J. of Kelowna says: "I feel that we in far British Columbia owe so much to *NEW MASSES* for its masterly and forthright analysis of world trends—the news behind the news and before the news actually happens—that I too must forward my small contribution to *NEW MASSES*' continuance."

From New Brunswick

F. W. P. of Fredericton signs in with: "Enclosing \$5 toward the \$30,000. I hope Canadian money is good and perhaps we can have some Canadian articles in forthcoming issues." We'll see to that, F. W. P.

From a Blood Donor

"I AM very happy to send you the enclosed check as part of my contribution to the fund. Having had occasion to act as a blood donor, I felt that *NEW MASSES* would benefit by the \$7 earned by this transaction."

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Steinbeck's Powerful New Novel

Granville Hicks reviews "The Grapes of Wrath" and finds it the best work of a great writer to date. A thundering tale of people and economic forces.

WHAT John Steinbeck has previously done—whether he knew it or not, and I don't suppose he did—has been in preparation for this book (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Viking Press, \$2.75). *Tortilla Flat* was a rich, loving study of the color and romance and fundamental decency in people the world calls bums. The world read into it a condescension of which Steinbeck is incapable, laughed heartily, and went on talking about bums. *The Grapes of Wrath* has the same warm feeling for both the vices and the virtues of the common people, but the most insensitive reader will not find it quaint. In *Dubious Battle* was an exciting strike novel, so vigorous, so dramatic that you could forget the strikers were fighting for the right to live. You will not make that mistake with *The Grapes of Wrath*. *Of Mice and Men* rested on Steinbeck's understanding of the migratory worker and his dreams, but Steinbeck got to playing a game with himself. *The Grapes of Wrath* shows a far more impressive mastery of technique than *Of Mice and Men*, but you never think about the form, just because it is so perfectly right.

Hitherto, whenever anybody asked us what we meant by proletarian literature, we had to say, "Well, it ought to have this quality that you find in so-and-so's work, and that quality as exemplified by the other fellow, and such-and-such as found in somebody else." (You can fill in the blanks yourself, and then I won't have the bricks thrown at me.) We shan't have to offer that kind of composite illustration any more. We can now say, "Proletarian literature? Oh, that means a book like John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*. Of course, that isn't the only kind of novel that deserves to be called proletarian literature, but it has all the qualities proletarian literature has to have. That is the real thing."

What are these qualities? First of all, there's power, beauty, imagination—whatever you want to call it. It's hard to define but easy to recognize, and I think you can see it in Steinbeck's opening paragraph:

To the red country and part of the gray country of Oklahoma, the last rains came gently, and they did not cut the scarred earth. The plows crossed and recrossed the rivulet marks. The last rains lifted the corn quickly and scattered weed colonies and grass along the sides of the roads so that the gray country and the dark red country began to disappear under a green cover. In the last part of May the sky grew pale and the clouds that had hung in high puffs for so long were dissipated. The sun flared down on the growing corn day after day until a line of brown spread along the edge of each green bayonet. The clouds appeared, and then went

away, and in a while they did not try any more. The weeds grew darker green to protect themselves, and they did not spread any more. The surface of the earth crusted, a thin hard crust, and as the sky became pale, so the earth became pale, pink in the red country and white in the gray country.

I have read hundreds of novels in manuscript, and I begin to believe that one can tell on the first page or two whether an author has this kind of imaginative power or not. (Some very considerable novelists, by the way, haven't it, and get along after a fashion without it.) Steinbeck shows it on page one, and it doesn't seem to me that there is any serious diminution of it on any of the following six hundred pages.

The second quality is knowledge. In certain literary circles one of the most heretical things you can say is that a novelist has to know what he is talking about. This is somehow taken as a reflection on the literary imagination. But no serious novelist believes he can show people unless he knows how they live. Steinbeck, who obviously can pick up a good deal of information effortlessly, has not spared effort in preparing for this novel. He knows about dust storms and tenant farmers and tractors and automobiles and Hoovervilles and cotton picking and fruit picking. When the car breaks down, he is with Al and Tom every

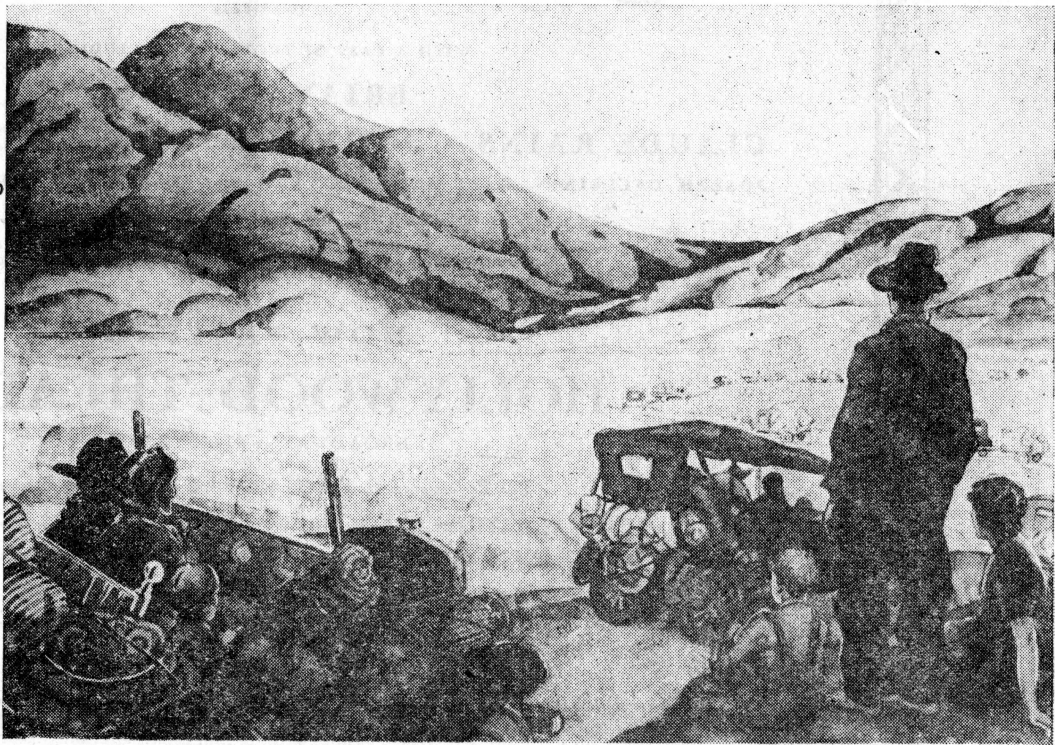
step of the way as they repair it. He knows the big things, and he knows the little things.

Then of course there are people, and people make or break a novel. The introduction of Tom Joad is one of the most adroit pieces of craftsmanship I can think of. Steinbeck knows Tom, and he finds the best way to make us know him. Tom and Casy and poor Muley, and then the whole Joad tribe—Oklahoma tenant farmers, kicked off their land and starting for California. Steinbeck doesn't idealize them; he shows them as they are, and he likes them as they are. There are moments of crazy comedy as hilarious as anything in *Tobacco Road* or *God's Little Acre*. But the Joads are never brainless clowns, nor are they ever loathsome monsters. They are human beings, and pretty good representatives of the species, rising at moments to an inspiring heroism. Cheated, starved, and beaten in California, they merge with the mass of victims, but Steinbeck never loses his hold on them as individuals. The Joads live if ever people in a book did.

But are the Joads representative? That is always a relevant question today. There have been times when an author could present a character and know that his readers would see exactly where that character belonged in the existing organization of society. Today



EMIGRANTS FROM THE DUST BOWL. An illustration from the jacket of John Steinbeck's new novel, "The Grapes of Wrath." The artist is Elmer Hader.



EMIGRANTS FROM THE DUST BOWL. *An illustration from the jacket of John Steinbeck's new novel, "The Grapes of Wrath." The artist is Elmer Hader.*

there is such confusion that little can be taken for granted. Characters and situations have to be defined and explained in relation to their times. Authors have found various ways of doing this, and some—notably John Dos Passos—have invented elaborate and ingenious techniques. Steinbeck employs a simple but immensely effective device. Every other chapter is the story of the half-million emigrants from the Dust Bowl. This antiphonal device—first the Joads, then the half-million, then the Joads, then the half-million—enriches the novel. But it also—and this is the real test—helps the story. At the end of each of the short antiphonal chapters, the story of the Joads has advanced. They are representative, you see, and Steinbeck has found the right way of making this clear.

The development of so effective a form as this indicates careful consideration of formal problems and is proof of the value of Steinbeck's technical apprenticeship. But valid form must rest on genuine understanding. Last spring the Simon J. Lubin Society of California brought out in pamphlet form, under the title *Their Blood Is Strong*, some newspaper articles Steinbeck had written on the homeless migrants. To compare this pamphlet with *The Grapes of Wrath* is to gain considerable insight into the problems of the two types of writing. But the point I want to make here is that the pamphlet proves beyond any question that the novel is based on first-hand knowledge and on a carefully acquired knowledge of economic forces.

Any sensitive reader would, to be sure, learn this from the novel itself. There is, for example, a remarkable passage about the driving of the tenant farmers from their Oklahoma land:

Some of the owner men were kind because they hated what they had to do, and some of them were angry because they hated to be cruel, and some of them were cold because they had long ago found out that one could not be an owner unless one were cold. And all of them were caught in something larger than themselves. Some of them hated the mathematics that drove them, and some were afraid, and some worshiped the mathematics because it provided a refuge from thought and from feeling. If a bank or a finance company owned the land, the owner man said, The Bank—or the Company—needs—wants—insists—must have—as though the Bank or the Company were a monster, with thought and feeling, which had ensnared them. . . . The bank—the monster has to have profits all the time. It can't wait. It'll die. No, taxes go on. When the monster stops growing, it dies. It can't stay one size.

Steinbeck's understanding of economic forces is best indicated, for purposes of a review, in a brief passage such as this. But actually he is never abstract. If one had space, one could show how his insight into capitalism illuminates every chapter of the book. There is, for instance, a magnificent passage about the selling of secondhand cars, and there is another fine passage that describes an incident at a filling station. Steinbeck knows both how things happen and why they happen, and he shows the why working itself out in the how.

No writer of our time has a more acute sense of economic forces, and of the way they operate against the interests of the masses of the people, and yet Steinbeck is never for a moment close to despair. The Joads at the end of the book face certain disaster, and, having got to know and love them, one bitterly resents it. But, though the book ends on the note of pathos, it is an optimistic book. Steinbeck can afford to show without mitigation the tragedy of the Joads because he knows so well the only basis for hope in our times. He writes:

The Western land, nervous under the beginning change. The Western states, nervous as horses before a thunderstorm. The great owners, nervous, sensing a change, knowing nothing of the nature of the change. The great owners, striking at the immediate thing, the widening government, the growing labor unity; striking at new taxes, at plans; not knowing these things are results, not causes. Results, not causes; results, not causes. The causes lie deep and simple—the causes are hunger in a stomach, multiplied a million times; hunger in a single soul, hunger for joy and some security, multiplied a million times; muscles and mind aching to grow, to work, to create, multiplied a million times. The last clear definite function of men—muscles aching to work, minds aching to create beyond the single need—this is man. To build a wall, to build a house, a dam, and in the wall and house and dam to put something of Manself, and to Manself to take back something of the wall, the house, the dam; to take hard muscles from the lifting, to take the clear lines and form from conceiving. For man, unlike any other thing organic or inorganic in the universe, grows beyond his work, walks up the stairs of his concepts, emerges ahead of his accomplishments. This you may say of man—when theories change and crash, when schools, philosophies, when narrow dark alleys of thought, national, religious, economic, grow and disintegrate, man reaches, stumbles forward, painfully, mistakenly sometimes. Having stepped forward, he may slip back, but only half a step, never the full step back. This you may say and know it and know it.

Many authors today would agree with that; some might have written it; few indeed could so perfectly make the idea a living reality in fiction. We all talk about the hope that lies in the masses, but it is a very different thing to make that hope palpable. Steinbeck does it because he knows where to look. Not in Casy's eloquence, moving as that is, not in Tom's heroic decision, not in the glimpse of the strike, but in Ma Joad's unshaken determination lies the hope of the future. "We're the people that live," she tells Tom. "They ain't gonna wipe us out. Why, we're the people—we go on."

So we come to the end of our list of qualities. There are others: there is humor, for example, much of it unprintable in a family journal such as *NEW MASSES*; there is pathos ("Why, you can't get through nine months without sorrow"); there is a sentiment of a perfectly legitimate kind. But the main thing is that there is a deep knowledge of people and the forces that move them, together with a remarkable, carefully acquired skill in communicating what is known.



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It would be a crime to break up into parts a book of the stature of *The Grapes of Wrath* if it were not that its stature is being fully realized. We can afford to learn what we can from Steinbeck, to make this novel an occasion for clarifying our views of proletarian literature, because it is becoming widely known that this is a book that must be read. However, it may be worth saying, to avoid any chance of misunderstanding, that *The Grapes of Wrath* is an experience, as every novel ought to be and few are, a significant experience, a heart-rending experience, a tremendously encouraging experience. Other critics can argue whether it is a book for the ages. I am content to say that it is preeminently and beautifully a book for our times. Posterity can take care of its own literary judgments.

GRANVILLE HICKS.

"God's Valley"

Willson Whitman's account of the TVA and the region it affects.

It's wonderful, the things that can be done once you start building dams. With flood control and navigation, the step into power production is natural. Trying to remedy erosion, you take on problems of crop rotation and land management. There is a supply of phosphate to be turned into fertilizer and distributed to the farmers. All these things require workers, workers must have homes, and as long as you're constructing houses you may as well have a model, planned community. Finally, if mosquitoes can be killed off by simply manipulating the water level in the reservoirs, it would be silly not to do it.

Willson Whitman, in *God's Valley* (Viking Press, \$3), tells how TVA is doing all this and more, in an area extending through seven states and a hundred counties. She also tells about the South itself. Her narrative resembles a documentary film in its forward, precise sweep of imagery and fact, set forth in the order of their perception, with the camera lingering on a piece of farmland or a Labor Board hearing, picking out the detail of a steam shovel, an Appalachian crag, a lump of metaphosphate. But it is a film many times average length, and with more voices. Without skimping on technicalities, Miss Whitman gives us, more than anything else, a picture of this Yankee invasion of the South in terms of people—specifically, people without money, living in a region that "with the possible exception of Vermont . . . leads the country in the conviction that things are terrible and nothing can be done, especially by outsiders." In such a region the TVA authorities have moved mountains, men, and graveyards to construct dams. They've encouraged labor unions, paid fair wages, and given equal pay to Negroes; educated and persuaded farmers into using scientific methods; established schools and libraries; even influenced 132 farmers to organize as a board of trustees administering a huge demonstra-

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tion community with its own five-year plan.

There was opposition of course. The hypocrisies of the private utility and sweat-shop lords—which Miss Whitman exposes with easy, conversational wit—had their effect both South and North. And the rural folk made jokes at first about the “night-club boys from New York.” But fertilizer, electricity, security from floods have stronger appeals than tradition. The TVA personnel itself—a large percentage of which is Southern—was a big help. Even Dr. Arthur Morgan, another Great Engineer who aired his hair-shirts in public, was a help at first. (Dr. Morgan’s disappointment with God’s valley, it appears from Miss Whitman’s account, came with the realization that he wasn’t to be God.) And the men and women of that region are not divided between planters and denizens of Tobacco Road. They are mountain people, tenants, croppers, and mill workers; they include labor organizers, and girl strikers who make Scarlett O’Hara, sassing Sherman’s troops, look like a paper doll. Poor people, beginning to understand why they are poor and not content with understanding; you can’t scare them easily with talk about Mr. Berry’s marble claims or the perils of regimentation.

To describe the cash results of TVA—let alone its social implications—in terms of transportation costs, electricity rates, flood control, soil saving, the salvage of bankrupt counties, employment, and by-product improvements is not possible in this space. One aspect of the valley’s resources deserves especial emphasis: phosphate ores for munitions. The United States, Russia, France, and Great Britain own the world’s important deposits of phosphates; according to Dr. H. A. Morgan, “These four countries could declare peace.” Right now we are selling phosphates abroad—to Germany, Italy, and Japan.

BARBARA GILES.

Manhattan Panorama

“Changing New York,” Berenice Abbott’s camera studies.

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The Press

New York, fortunately or otherwise, is the center of American journalism. From New York come the ideas that finally find their way into the small town papers, and to New York come the best practitioners of those ideas. The press services are centered in New York. The New York *Times* is the sacred cow of American journalism, and the *Tribune* is runner up.

Robert Terrall, author of the article on the *Herald Tribune* in last week's NM, has written a series on the New York newspapers. Terrall, who has spent months investigating his subject, has turned over to us a number of sprightly, fact-laden pieces, the next of which deals with Roy Howard's New York *World-Telegram*. They will appear in shortly forthcoming issues of NM, and no one seriously interested in the press and its relation to social and economic progress will want to miss them.

The WPA Arts Projects

No American institution is healthier or more progressive than the government-sponsored arts projects which came into being with the New Deal. The people know that, but the Tories don't, and the result is that the life of these projects is threatened from a dozen sources. Congress has cut down WPA appropriations, and the arts projects will be early candidates for suspension. The WPA investigating committee is concentrating its Dies-like tactics on the theater and writers projects.

Within the next few weeks NM will present a series of articles surveying both the work of the projects and the various attempts on their life. Joseph Starobin, the author of the articles, went to Washington to talk with Representatives Martin Dies, Joe Starnes and others who want to knife WPA. In New York and elsewhere he gathered facts and figures on what the projects have done, what they plan to do, and what they are capable of doing.

New Masses

You'll get these articles and dozens more in NM during the coming months. If you subscribe now, you can get fifty-two issues of the magazine and a copy of William Z. Foster's *Pages from a Workers' Life* for \$5.50, or \$4.50 for NM and Granville Hicks' *I Like America*.

New Masses, 461 Fourth Ave., New York City.

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studies of a cabbage in cross-section, it led in other instances to a recognition of the camera as a tool both of exact registry and of social use.

Changing New York by Berenice Abbott (E. P. Dutton & Co., \$3) is primarily an excellent introduction to the fascinating panorama of our giant metropolis; but it is much more. It records sights that have documentary and historic significance and it comments keenly on forces of which those sights are outward symbols. It is dramatic as well as exact. The picturesque and esoteric are given place in it because they are in a sense also typical. There is the Swiss chalet adopted to the uses of an El station; there is the scramble of several architects' styles in the Old Post Office; there is the New York baroque in the Alwyn Court. The queerest of all is perhaps the Gambetta Shop. Presided over by a wooden Indian (who is Scotch), the showcase advertises Russian snuff by means of a genuine double-headed imperial Russian eagle supplemented by a text written in a quaint though somewhat illiterate Yiddish. Talk about the melting pot!

One of Miss Abbott's predilections is for the repetition and the massing of detail as in "Hardware Store," the "News Stand," the "Traveling Tin Shop," the "Cheese Store." Despite the similarity of underlying intention, these pictures differ widely because of the difference of emphasis and compositional arrangement.

Changing New York includes among the more obvious sermons in stone, such as the contrasts between the luxury of mansions and the poverty of slums, more subtle sermons such as the proximity between the temples of God and of Mammon. The rich church of St. Bartholomew is flanked protectingly by the towers of Waldorf-Astoria and General Electric while the Church of St. Nicholas rests in the shadow of Rockefeller Center.

This enumeration is, of course, only the beginning of the rich content of *Changing New York*, which could be fully appreciated only by actual contact with the pictures themselves. The value of the book is further enhanced by the contributions of Mrs. Audrey McMahan, who wrote the introduction, and Elizabeth McCausland, who supplied the pungent captions. LOUIS LOZOWICK.

Ten Best Plays

The social theater's outstanding short dramas in one book.

IT WAS time for this book to appear (*The Best Short Plays of the Social Theater*, edited with an introduction by William Kozlenko; Random House, \$2.50) for most of its ten plays have reached the stature of contemporary classics. Moreover, they are as living as the eager audiences who even this past year have, to the number of several millions, participated in the four hundred American Little Theaters where these plays were shown. *Waiting for Lefty* is here and *Bury the Dead*, *Hymn to*

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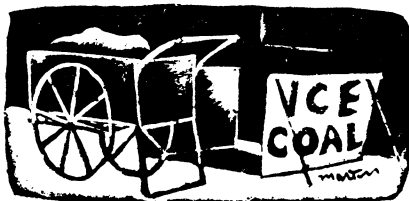
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the *Rising Sun*, *Private Hicks*, *The Cradle Will Rock*, and *Plant in the Sun*. It is hard to believe that only four years have passed since *Lefty* almost literally brought down the roof of the old Civic Repertory Theater at a "New Theater Night," and proved that Agit-prop had reached artistic maturity. Since then these plays have spread their influence into every corner of the land; their forms and themes have even reached the mass millions of the radio networks. They were the mainstay of the first working-class theaters in England, until these developed new playwrights of their own.

Among the plays in the book, those less generally known include Kozlenko's *This Earth Is Ours*, a factual dramatization of the Crempa case. There is Claire and Paul Sifton's *Give All the Terrors to the Wind*, a powerful action play about marine workers on an unseaworthy freighter, battling not only the bitter storm but the "business men that'll put the ship through with the heaviest cargo in the quickest time at the least expense . . . and to hell with the crew." These organized seamen have traveled far since they first shipped on Eugene O'Neill's *S.S. Glencairn*. John Wexley's *Running Dogs*, which, though a complete one-acter, is part of an unpublished full-length play, is about one of the Kuomintang campaigns against the Chinese Red Army. The two forces had not yet united in the face of the Japanese invasion of their country—but the basis for that union is implicit in the conflicts of this play. The once fabulous Chinese are realized as human beings motivated by the same needs as are the poor of any nation. These plays, though in varying forms, derive their themes from the occupations men live by, the hazards they face, the conspiracies that betray them, the dignity they attain through understanding and struggle.

It is regrettable that the book fails to mention the vital role of the New Theater League in stimulating the writing and production of most of these plays. If the purpose of the editor is to show that good social drama is literature for reading as well as a scenario for actors, he has succeeded. But he cannot be unaware of the reciprocal relation between playwrights and the non-commercial theaters which first gave writers of integrity a chance on the modern stage. It is doubtful whether, without the New Theater League, many of the best short plays of the social theater would have been written. Certainly it is the league which is continuing to provide new talents with the encouragement they need to produce the best social plays of the future.
BORIS GAMZUE.



Charles Martin

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French Social Films

How the films of the Popular Front are made and distributed. Jean Renoir's achievements. Film decrees threatened by Daladier.

ALTHOUGH the excellence of the social films of France seems to be due to the predominance of the director in film production, there are several permanent organizations, which receive little publicity abroad, whose efforts have insured the prerogatives of the director. Salient among them is Les Films Populaires which represents the cultural program of the Front Populaire in the movie field. This is a distributing organization, handling films of a positive social value and artistic quality. It has had to find its exhibitors outside ordinary commercial channels; clients include trade unions, the Communist and Socialist Parties, cultural clubs, and independent exhibitors mainly in Paris and environs. An important function of Les Films Populaires is the bringing of social pictures to the village and countryside by traveling caravans, equipped for screening sound films in rural halls. By this energetic system villagers who have scarcely seen commercial films will turn out for pictures like *Heart of Spain*, *Return to Life*, *People of France*, *Cherry Time*, a feature picture about old age pensions, and special newsreels of Popular Front activity.

In 1938 the 166,000 people reached by these rolling cinemas gave 70,500 francs to Spain and bought 10,500 francs worth of Popular Front literature. This attendance figure has been achieved by reaching and creating an audience entirely outside the commercial audience.

Avant-garde directors have long seen the need for working within such a producer-audience organization. France's greatest director, Jean Renoir, son of the painter, is the most active figure among the directors. Renoir will be familiar to American audiences for his beautiful films *Grand Illusion*, *The Lower Depths*, *The Loves of Toni*, and *People of France*, a film he directed anonymously for the Communist Party election campaign in 1936. He is also the author of the epic film *La Marseillaise*, financed by hundreds of thousands of tiny contributions from rank-and-filers in the Front Populaire. This, and perhaps his latest film, *La Bete Humaine*, will be seen in New York this fall.

Renoir believes it feasible to produce social pictures in the commercial market, which is more nearly possible in France than the United States because of the difference in the nature of the French industry. France is the country of a hundred small producers, analogous to the situation in the United States in about 1915. The motion picture industry has not been monopolized to the degree of American films. Thus it is possible, if hazardous, for sincere film makers to enter the market

without bucking a fully organized monopoly over production, distribution, and exhibition—the condition exposed in America by the federal government's anti-monopoly suit. Premier Daladier has taken tentative steps to encourage monopoly and bring capital "out of hiding." Recently a film commission appointed by Daladier recommended a cinema decree which includes several fatal blows at the type of films distributed by Les Films Populaires. It is proposed that a film project be given a legal status upon the submission of a full outline of production. This legal status is in effect a government guarantee to investors that the project will be carried through to completion and that their money will be returned. Other provisions include a ban on "undesirables" in the industry, to be defined by the Ministry of Education.

At a recent interview in his Montmartre apartment, I asked Jean Renoir how he could continue making people's films in the commercial setup. He reiterated his belief that fundamental social reactions could be set into commercial films, by getting the spectator to reflect on the direction of his own life and

of others like him, confronting him with a broader conception of the oneness of society, shaking loose some of the provincial ideas, digging into the crust of prejudice accumulated through years of commercial films.

"Then why," I asked, "did the big movie houses sabotage *La Marseillaise*, which was the first large-scale commercial picture with these worthy motives?"

"Our experience with *La Marseillaise*," he said, "has convinced me that this sabotage could have been turned into box-office enthusiasm by a better developed selling organization on our part. It is a question of dealing with buyers, for example, who think that *Dead End* would have no success with the French public because it shatters the cherished and accepted picture of rich America. These buyers are blocking popular hits with a sure-fire appeal simply because they are unwilling to change their clients' favorite dish." He pointed out that before releasing another major production, the *Marseillaise* company intends to get some good pointers from the experience of organizations like Les Films Populaires.

BARBARA STAVIS.



FRANCIS LEDERER AND EDWARD G. ROBINSON in a scene from "Confessions of a Nazi Spy," the remarkable new Warner Bros. film which opens at first-run movie houses throughout the country this week.

S. N. Behrman's Play

"No Time for Comedy" is comedy with a serious note.

THAT S. N. Behrman took the time to write a comedy and called it *No Time for Comedy* is a sign of something or other. It is a sign that Mr. Behrman is perhaps more in character than any of the characters he has created. The odd fact, however, is that Mr. Behrman not only knows this but could sit you down for several hours and tell you all about it. As a matter of fact, he does. For *No Time for Comedy* is more of a confessional than a play. A dramatized biography, as it were.

In this play Mr. Behrman poses the problem of a writer of high comedy who is tortured by the inadequacy of his plays—shadows in a world of substance. The realization that his characters are merely theatrically fortuitous images silhouetted against reality gnaws at his brain until it threatens to cramp his style.

Gaylord Easterbrook, the successful playwright, is married to his star, Linda Paige, for whom he has been grinding out high comedies. Along comes Amanda Smith, every bit as married, and begins to "influence" him. She sees his latent possibilities, unrealized capacities. Gaylord can and should, as he wants to, be writing more important, more significant plays. *No Time for Comedy* concerns itself with the hero's timeworn pendulum swing between the two women. The playwright threatens to go off to Spain with Amanda but winds up staying home and starting a new comedy for Linda.

The plot, as Mr. Behrman will be the first to agree, is beside the point. The characters and situations are merely externalized symbols of the type of inner conflict that besets most writers nowadays. That Mr. Behrman is by no means above the conflict is by now obvious to all who are familiar with his work. Somehow Mr. Behrman comes closer to stating the problem than he has before. The solution in the play is obviously a theatrical one. In fact it is no solution at all. For what guarantee is there that the playwright won't rebel all over again when his new comedy is finished?

Mr. Behrman has been trying for some time now to say something more significant than the limitations of his metier permit. In this light, *No Time for Comedy* is a vast improvement over his previous efforts. It is not a simple task to inject a genuinely serious note into a high comedy without making the humor seem heavy-handed or the message ludicrous.

Katharine Cornell, as the actress, is very nice and not much more than that. High comedy does not seem to be Miss Cornell's forte but I suppose the theater's great must be permitted their little larks. The other members of the cast are quite good, especially Laurence Olivier.

STEVE MORGAN.

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Brunswick, Columbia. The discs of the Hot Record Society and the United Hot Clubs are \$1 each.

Under each record I have listed only the well known players on the record. I have not listed the personnel of Count Basie and Duke Ellington because every member of these orchestras is a star. The following are orchestras composed both of Negroes and whites: Coleman Hawkins, Teddy Wilson, Mound City Blue Blowers, Frank Newton, Tommy Ladnier. The last two organizations were gathered by Hugues Panassie, French swing critic.

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"Boogie-Woogie Stomp" & "Nagasaki" with ISRAEL CROSBY (*bass*).
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"Got No Blues" with KID ORY (*trombone*), JOHNNY DODDS (*clarinet*), LILLIAN ARMSTRONG (*piano*) & "West End Blues" with EARL HINES (*piano*), ZUTIE SINGLETON (*drums*).
- LOUIS ARMSTRONG (*trumpet*) and orchestra [VOCALION 3008]
"St. Louis Blues" with HENRY ALLEN (*trumpet*), J. C. HIGGENBOTHAM (*trombone*), LOUIS RUSSELL (*piano*), POPS FOSTER (*bass*), PAUL BARBARIN (*drums*) & "Basin Street Blues" with DON REDMAN (*sax*), EARL HINES (*piano*), ZUTIE SINGLETON (*drums*).
- COUNT BASIE (*piano*) and orchestra [DECCA 1880]
"Swinging the Blues" & "Sent for You Yesterday and Here You Come Today" with JAMES RUSHING (*vocal*).
- SIDNEY BECHET (*clarinet and soprano sax*) and orchestra [BLUEBIRD 7614]
"Maple Rag" & "Sweetie Dear (Polka Dot Rag)" with TOMMY LADNIER (*trumpet*).
- BIX BIEDERBECKE (*cornet*) and orchestra [VOCALION 3042]
"Jazz Me Blues" & "At the Jazz Band Ball" with DON MURRAY (*clarinet*), FRANK SIGNORELLI (*piano*).
- BIX BIEDERBECKE (*piano*) and trio [VOCALION 3150]
"In a Mist" *piano solo* & "Wringin' and Twistin'" with FRANK TRUMBAUER (*C-Melody sax*), EDDIE LANG (*guitar*).
- JOHNNY DODDS (*clarinet*) and orchestra [DECCA 7413]
"Shake Your Can" & "Blues Galore" with O'NEILL SPENCER (*drums and vocal*).
- DUKE ELLINGTON (*piano*) and orchestra [BRUNSWICK 8256]
"Prologue to The Black and Tan Fantasy" & "Please Forgive Me."
- BENNY GOODMAN (*clarinet*) Trio and Quartet [VICTOR 26090]
"S Wonderful" & "I Must Have That Man" with LIONEL HAMPTON (*vibraphone*), TEDDY WILSON (*piano*), DAVE TOUGH (*drums*).
- COLEMAN HAWKINS (*tenor sax*) and orchestra [DECCA 661]
"Chicago" & "Netcha's Dream."
- EARL HINES (*piano solos*) [HOT RECORD SOCIETY 11]
"Chicago High Life" & "Just Too Soon."
- MEADE "LUX" LEWIS (*piano solos*) [BLUEBIRD 10175]
"Honky Tonk Train Blues" & "Whistlin' Blues."
- BESSIE SMITH (*blues singer*) [COLUMBIA 3176]
"Nobody Knows You When You're Down and Out" & "Backwater Blues" accompanied by JAMES P. JOHNSON (*piano*).
- TEDDY WILSON (*piano*) and orchestra [BRUNSWICK 7859]
"I Must Have That Man" & "Why Was I Born?" with BILLIE HOLIDAY (*vocal*), BENNY GOODMAN (*clarinet*), LESTER YOUNG (*tenor sax*), JO JONES (*drums*), WALTER PAGE (*bass*), BUCK CLAYTON (*trumpet*), FREDDIE GREEN (*guitar*).
- ADRIAN ROLLINI (*bass sax*) and orchestra [DECCA 359]
"Davenport Blues" (Bix) with BUNNY BERIGAN (*trumpet*), BENNY GOODMAN (*clarinet*), GEORGE VAN EPPS (*guitar*), JACK TEAGARDEN (*trombone*), ARTIE BERNSTEIN (*bass*).
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"Rosetta" & "The World Is Waiting for the Sunrise" with MEZZ MEZZROW (*tenor sax*), JOHN KIRBY (*bass*), COZY COLE (*drums*), JAMES P. JOHNSON (*piano*), PETE BROWN (*alto sax*), ALBERT CASEY (*guitar*).
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GOINGS ON

ANALYSIS OF THE NEWS of the Week every Sunday evening at 8:30 p.m. at the Workers School, 35 East 12 Street, 2nd floor. Admission 20 cents.

LOUIS LOZOWICK—lecture "In a Medieval Artists' Guild"—Illustrated with slides. Sunday, April 30, 8:30 p.m. American Artists School, 131 West 14th St., N.Y.C.

"Dark Victory"

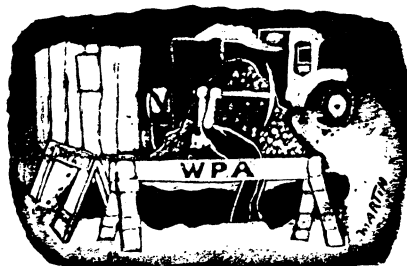
New film shows Bette Davis languishing for eight reels.

NOBODY doubts that Bette Davis has talent. It sticks out all over. She has won the Academy Award twice, and there is a great temptation to describe every one of her impersonations of heartless, angry, nervous females as a masterpiece. After one or two more pictures she will probably be referred to as the Grand Old Lady of the screen.

If Bette Davis doesn't win the Academy Award again, for her performance in *Dark Victory* (now at the Radio City Music Hall in New York), you can knock certain New York critics over with the appropriate small bronze statuette. There is certainly no reason to go to *Dark Victory* (if you can afford Radio City prices) except to see Miss Davis laugh, cry, pull desperately at a cigarette, and make uncomplimentary remarks. The picture itself is not especially gripping. The question is, if you knew you were going to die next August, what would you do, get drunk or go quietly and beautifully? Warner Bros. has perhaps been over that ground before, and most people by this time should have resolved the problem to their own personal satisfaction. The few unfortunates who have actually just learned the bad news from their doctors will probably not be at the movies at all, but out getting drunk and otherwise disporting themselves as Miss Davis does in *Dark Victory*. So the picture is not going to appeal to many members of the cinema audience as an honest, sincere statement of their particular problem, or even the particular problem of anyone they know. The field is further limited by the fact that Miss Davis is a representative of the Long Island group of people usually called horsy; and the tribulations of the horsy set were beginning to get a little tiresome about the time of introduction of sound in movies.

When Bette Davis first finds out about her fatal tumor she starts drinking recklessly (implying that the only girls who drink too much in Long Island society are those who know they are about to die), then in the end, as everyone has been confident she would, she decides to pass away calmly, happy in the belief that she will meet George Brent, with that perfectly dead pan of his, somewhere in the hereafter. *Dark Victory* is one long dying scene. No actress could mess up a dying scene which lasts approximately eight reels.

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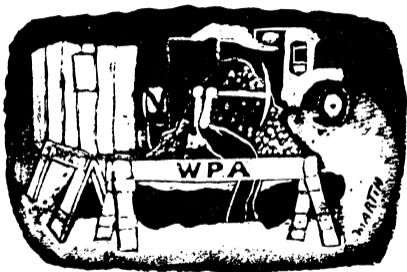
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1. OH, SING A SONG OF LABOR UP-ON THE FIRST OF MAY!

2. SING MILLIONS STRONG WHO MARCH A-LONG IN PROUD AND GAY ARRAY.

3. OH, SING A SONG OF STRUGGLE IN LABOR'S CAVALCADE,

4. SO LEFT, RIGHT, LEFT IS RIGHT, WORKERS ON PARADE.

Suggestion for Singing: After the round has been sung to exhaustion, the first three voices can repeat No. 4 until last voice reaches it and all stop together.—H. R.

Specially composed for New Masses by Harold Rome