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NEW MASSES

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SPECIAL CULTURAL ISSUE

KOESTLER: PHILOSOPHER OF BETRAYAL

by JOEL BRADFORD

THE THREE TASKS OF ART

by ANNA SEGHERS

FRANKLIN: AMERICA'S LEONARDO

by SAMUEL SILLEN

NOTES FROM PICASSO'S STUDIO

by XAVIER GONZALES

ALSO: *Witter Bynner, Dmitri Shostakovich, Isidor Schneider, Eve Merriam, David Burliuk, Moses Soyfer, Raphael Soyfer, Marc Chagall, William Gropper, Chaim Gross, Frank Kleinholz, Waldo Peirce, Minna Citron, Joy Davidman, Martha Millet, Alan Whyte, Elizabeth Thomas.*

ART YOUNG PRIZE CARTOON

BETWEEN OURSELVES



WE WANT to make an announcement that is of first magnitude both for ourselves and our readers. On January first Isidor Schneider joins our staff as literary editor. He was last seen hereabouts in that function some eight years ago, and to say we are glad to welcome him back is to achieve perfection in understatement. He is as lovable as he is learned and his warm-hearted presence will ornament NM's office as his copy will ornament our pages.

For the benefit of our newer readers (those who have acquired the *NEW MASSES* habit since Schneider was literary editor) we repeat some of his biographical data. He was born in the Western Ukraine in 1896 and almost immediately made tracks for America (some say with his parents' help). Having been only a few months old when he first landed here, he confesses that he is somewhat hazy and therefore not too articulate concerning his first impressions. But of his later days he is certainly eloquent enough, as witness his many books and articles. He is the author of two novels, *Dr. Transit* and *From the Kingdom of Necessity*, two volumes of poetry, *The Temptation of St. Anthony* and *Comrade Mister*, and hundreds of critical pieces that have been published in magazines, anthologies and literary year-books. He is a Guggenheim Award winner, and was for a year and a half one of the editors of the English edition of *International Literature* in Moscow. It is thus easy to see that Schneider is at home in any form of writing, and is totally familiar with the "practice" of literature. With his coming the literary department of the magazine will take its proper place in the editorial sun. We thus invite the participation of young and new writers. Knowing Isidor Schneider as we do, we can guarantee careful attention to and a warm welcome for their work.

NEW MASSES has formulated plans for a largely expanded editorial board, of which

the acquisition of Mr. Schneider is only the first step. We will soon be able to announce similar additions representing the various fields of politics and culture. Such news will appear in this column.

THE thirty-third Artists and Writers Ball has come and gone, but what distinguished this edition from the previous ones was a new feature, the introduction of editors and contributors. Joe North, Abe Magil, John Stuart, Virginia Shull, Mike Gold, Joe Starobin, Fred Field, Louis Weinstock of the AFL Painters Union, and Arthur Horner, head of the South Wales Miners Union, made speeches of welcome to the many hundreds of *bons vivants* who up to last Saturday doubted that the editors really danced. The appearance of Mr. Horner was definitely a happy surprise. He had been sent to this country by the British Trades Union Congress to address the delegates of the AFL convention on the matter of joining the World Trade Union Congress in London. Incidentally,

we received several letters from old-timers who insist that the dances of their day were infinitely more riotous than the pale affairs we fashion today, and where did we get off to call the early dances "waltz-me-around-again" tea parties? Not having been in these parts at that time, we are not in a position to joust with these masqueraders of old. However, their protest strikes us as another variant of nostalgia for the "good old days"—and who are we to spoil their fun?

BILL GROPPER's birthday celebration at the Commodore on December 2 was one of the most memorable parties we ever attended. There is too little space left to describe the number and variety of greetings that were brought to the dais from all over the world, and to enumerate the who's who of culture there in person. We will therefore go into the matter in greater length in a subsequent issue.

N.B.—*NEW MASSES'* New Year's Eve Costume Ball: Judges from the arts and the theater. War Bonds for the funniest and the most original costumes. Plan your costume now and win a bond.—Webster Hall. Details—page 29. J. F.

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The Bitter Company

By Joel Bradford

AT FIRST glance it might seem that an intelligentsia would readily recognize its place in society. The members of such a group are presumably educated and are persons of "independent thought," as that activity is rather hopefully called. Yet there is far from unanimous agreement among them concerning their station, and indeed they seem eagerly engaged in demonstrating how erroneous one another's conceptions are.

The latest attempt to inform the informed and enlighten the enlightened is an essay, "The Intelligentsia," by Arthur Koestler in a recent issue of the *Partisan Review*. Since this gentleman has been received into the literary firmament with the awe properly bestowed upon comets and meteors, we are bound to expect some of those "revelations, disturbances, and elevations" which were discoverable in Lewis Mumford's *The Condition of Man*. In this and subsequent articles I shall set forth what it is we find.

In the essay we are to examine, Mr. Koestler has not been sparing of words or of ideas. What he presents is nothing less than a complete world-view. It is a world-view which he thinks is appropriate to intellectuals and which he hopes they will adopt. Analysis will show, I think, that it falls into three parts, three doctrines: that independent thinking is the chief characteristic of an intelligentsia, that intelligentsias operate upon the "cultural aspect" of history, and that the members of such a group, precisely because of their membership, inevitably develop neuroses. In the present article I shall confine myself to the first of these.

Mr. Koestler begins, as all writers must nowadays begin, with a ritual bow in the direction of semantics. The word "intelligentsia," he tells us with prudent hesitation, is "difficult to define." He turns, therefore, to the *Oxford Dictionary*—indeed, not to one Oxford dictionary but to two: the *Concise O.D.* and the *Shorter O.D.* He turns thither, I suspect, less because he wants what the dictionary has than because the dictionary has what he wants.

The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (3rd edition, 1934) gives the following: "Intelligentzia, -sia, 'The part of a nation (esp. the Russian) that aspires to independence thinking."

The *Shorter Oxford Dictionary* (2nd edition, 1936) has: "The class consisting of the educated portion of the population regarded as capable of forming public opinion."

The second version, says Mr. Koestler, constitutes a "significant change," which is due to "the climate of the pink decade and the popular front." Under Bolshevik influence, that is to say, the exercise of intelligence was replaced, as a mark of the intelligentsia, by a talent for propaganda. Thus did echoes of the popular front reverberate among lexicographers.

Did Mr. Koestler think it would occur to no one to look up the *first* edition of the *Shorter Oxford*? Now, the first edition was published in 1933, one year before the "significant change" began. In it the diligent scholar may find *verbatim* the identical definition which Mr. Koestler quotes from the second edition. He will find, further, that the earliest use of the term in this sense is dated 1920; and, if he consults the preface, he will find that the editor who provided the definition died in 1922 without even

a prophetic acquaintance with the popular front.

The "significant change" is therefore Mr. Koestler's own contribution to lexicography. It rests upon as much evidence as is supplied by the fact that the second edition of one dictionary was published two years after the third edition of another. I think it is clear that Mr. Koestler is able to construe a remarkably bland datum in a remarkably malicious way.

Of the two definitions Mr. Koestler accepts the first. Had he exhibited that definition alone, he could have grounded upon an eminent authority the view he personally desired. But his zeal for defamation could not withstand the faintest seeming opportunity. He therefore provides us with a bit of spurious exegesis and himself with a competing definition. It is not an auspicious beginning for an inquiry into truth.

If these are the results of "independent thinking," one may be pardoned for preferring the firm embrace of fact. Mr. Koestler's own methodology could serve as a warning against the conclusions he desires to establish. Nevertheless, it must be admitted, that in asserting independent thought to be the special characteristic of an intelligentsia, he has a doctrine of unflinching and universal appeal. Here he has hit upon the dearest belief and the proudest boast of scientists, writers, and philosophers in the modern world.

THE statement "X is a man who thinks for himself" is, of all compliments, the most laudatory. The statement "X believes what he is told to believe" is, of all insults, the most devastating. Intellectuals generally (and I am willing to confess myself among them) conduct a frantic struggle to merit the first and avoid the second. In each of us who profess the activity of thinking there is a stubborn core which appears sometimes as simple personal integrity and sometimes as intellectual pride. I doubt whether anything else has kept American scholars away from Marxism as much as the belief, slanderously conceived and assiduously propagated, that Marxism forbids the practice of indepen-



Pen Sketch, by Minna Citron.



"In the Station," by Raphael Soyer.

dent thinking. It is of the first importance to nail this charge by analyzing the concept itself.

What does independent thinking mean? We can explain the concept in two ways: by describing its history and by determining its present content. A full analysis requires both.

History has many martyrs to the cause of independent thought, of whom Socrates (at least as Plato presents him) is by no means the first. Even the Middle Ages, which in retrospect often present a deadly uniformity, possessed that rebellious eagle, Abelard. As a matter of fact, medieval philosophy, during its heyday, was rather undecided as to the nature of orthodoxy. It was not until feudalism consolidated its ranks against the rising bourgeoisie that pedants and inquisitors grew certain of their ground.

Now this is the point at which the modern notion of independent thinking begins. After Copernicus evolved his

heliocentric hypothesis and Galileo discovered the law of falling bodies, it became obvious that human thought could advance only in proportion as it broke away from medievalism. The great scientists and philosophers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were independent thinkers in respect of the fact that they refused to move any longer within the concepts of medieval philosophy. Historically, then, "dependent" thinking meant feudal thinking; "independent" thinking meant non-feudal or anti-feudal thinking.

At the same time, the modern world was dominated by the concept of the Individual. This was an inevitable recoil from the stratification of feudal society, from a system of classes, membership in which was conditional upon birth. It was also grounded upon the individuality of the man of commerce—an atom of self-interest armor-plated with a cover of natural rights. The general fact has, by

frequent iteration, become fairly trite, but I think it is less often observed how pervasive the individualist idea actually was. Descartes, for example, couched his famous principle *Cogito, ergo sum* in the first person singular, and it seems never to have occurred to him to wonder why he chose the personal "I think" as against the impersonal "Thinking goes on."

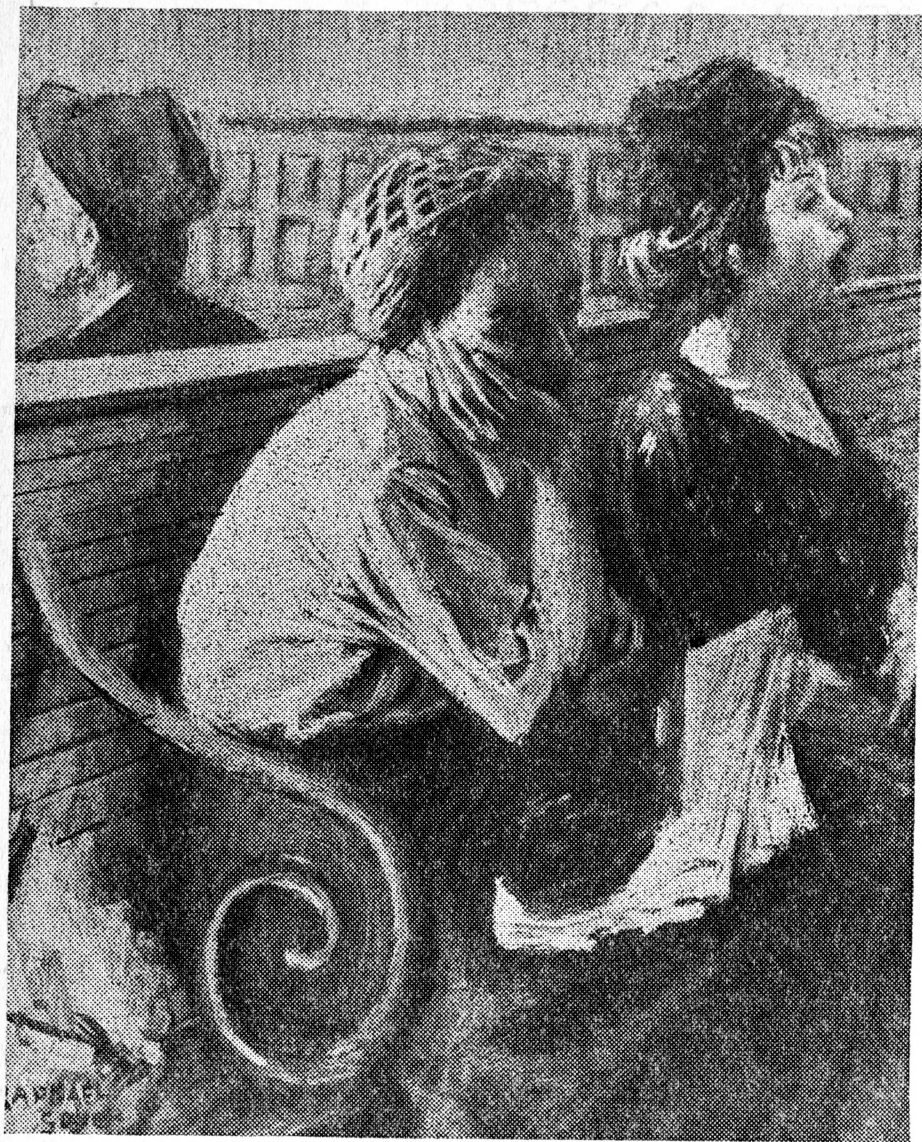
Moving beyond anything that Descartes intended, we might take the "I think" as the very epitome of bourgeois philosophy. And so long as science was extending itself from astronomy, through physics and chemistry, into history and biology, the individualist thinker and the anti-feudal revolutionary were at one. For three long centuries truth lay at the side of the nonconformists, and the belief developed that one's grasp of truth bore a constant ratio to the independence of one's thinking.

From this belief curious results have followed. If, say, five philosophers are in equal possession of exact truth, it would seem logically necessary that they should agree. But agreement is precisely what philosophers do not show. In such a case they can say that truth is five-fold and that each has his private illumination; or they can say that, although each of them is more or less mistaken, the views of each are at any rate his own.

In either of these ways the independence and individuality of thinking seems to be rescued. But, alas, such independence begins to assume the character of independence from truth. The flattering trait which began as a flight from error has turned into its opposite, a flight from truth.

When we examine the present content of the idea, we must be struck by the fact that independence of thought is very popularly supposed to be the same thing as resolute disagreement. If two men disagree, they are independent of each other in the sense that neither has accepted the opinion of the other. They have, in fact, rejected each other's opinion. Rejection is thus a spectacular type of non-acceptance, and serves to demonstrate publicly the independence of one's views.

It is of course possible for two people to reach the same conclusion separately, and therefore agreement is perfectly compatible with independent thinking. But, by virtue of many fears and sneers, agreement has grown so closely associated with mere following, mere aping, mere partisan zeal, that many intellectuals would rather die than espouse a theory held by anyone else.



"In the Station," by Raphael Soyer.

Thus anarchism, which is pretty dead as a political theory, survives as a sort of conditioned reflex among intellectuals. The right of private judgment is regarded as more important than the content of the judgments which are judged. There is no especial harm in this so long as the question is whether water is wet, or Santa Claus exists, or the moon is made of green cheese. But in social issues, where the welfare of mankind is constantly at stake, a very different condition prevails.

Whenever the welfare of mankind is at stake, it is supremely important not only to reach an opinion, but to reach a correct opinion. Making up one's mind is undoubtedly valuable, but it is infinitely less valuable than human welfare generally. Quite a few independent thinkers have had to do their later thinking in concentration camps, because they could not, or would not, agree upon correct policies. Still others (conscientious objectors, for example) escape that fate through the willingness of the rest of mankind to do the job for them.

The welfare of mankind requires collective mass action. Such action on the part of separate wills, anarchically bent on disagreement, is altogether impossible. Independent thinking, in this gross and absurd sense, has presented Hitler with nations already divided and prepared for conquest. Even now, when his defeat is certain, there are perhaps enough "independent thinkers" around to corrupt the just consequences of that defeat. There are rugged individuals among the intelligentsia as among the capitalists, and their social effect is much the same.

The welfare of mankind particularly requires the existence of an organized group which shall maintain a constant watch upon the course of events, recognizing new historical situations as these occur, and formulating the appropriate programs of action. The theory governing the practice of such a group will be scientific in the sense in which any theory is scientific, namely, that its statements correspond accurately with the real nature of things. The "things" in question are the general nature of existing society and of the special situation now to be acted in.

When a group of people profess a certain theory or a certain body of knowledge, there is only one important question to be asked of them: are the statements which compose the theory scientifically correct? No one has ever asked Einstein whether, in developing the relativity theory, his thinking was "free" or was "coerced" by other physi-

cists. However arrived at, the relativity theory is true; and its truth is what is important about it.

Exactly the same situation holds for Marxism. The statements composing the theory are held by Marxists to be true, are fully public, and are open to debate, if anyone wants to debate them.

★ ★ ★

The Penny Hero

Peace is coming home at last.

After the screamingly silent months,
how shall we greet him?
What leaping words will span the arch
of war?

He was such a boy when he left,
and so much has happened since he went
away.

It seems as though we hardly knew him
at all . . . !

Who is that in the corner whispering
perhaps we never did?

Hurry,
his train is slowing down!

Quick, quick,
the wreath,
the roses,
the Mayor,
the pretty girls,
the band beaming,
self-conscious Sunday clothes,
and everybody *sing!*

Oh my God.
His head is bloody.
And his foot—
dear God.

How can we bear to look at him?

Peace,
the penny hero,
cheap, common,
millions like him.
Stumping along in his ragged uniform,
khaki, crude color of earth.

Do not dare to turn away.
And do not take him in
to pity him.
Give him work to do.

Great warring work
that peace can do
for things that shall be common as bread
and salt.

I pray you, go with peace.
And never pity him.
Instead,
break bread with him.

EVE MERRIAM.

The question of their truth or falsity, however, is the important thing. If they are true, then society will go on behaving as Marxism says it does; and upon that inescapable passage of events the dependence or independence of anybody's thinking will have relatively little effect. That is why it is so silly to talk about "orders from Moscow." The essential point is not the source of the statements, but their accuracy.

In much the same situation is the question whether any organized group, or its leadership, can claim infallibility. Of course it cannot, since all human thinking is subject to error at one time or another. But this, again, is an oblique approach to the problem. The question (we must never forget) is not whether such-and-such persons are infallible, but whether the statements asserted by those persons to be true are really true. And this will be determined by comparing the statements with the objective reality.

I know that there must always be a certain difficulty in following policies laid down by a leadership, when one does not fully understand the policies or does not fully agree. In such a circumstance, one must certainly make a resolute attempt at understanding, so that disagreement, if it finally remains, will be based upon knowledge and not upon mere surface conjecture. If disagreement persists and the consequences of isolation have been accepted, there is nothing left, I suppose, but to depart. None of these conditions, however, will entitle anyone to heap lies and abuse upon the leadership he has lately followed, or to dedicate his remaining years to a vast, cathartic self-justification.

In Mr. Koestler we have a man incorrigibly fractious. There is no one with whom he fully agrees. He agrees, indeed, not very well with himself. Clad in goat-skins and living upon herbs, he cries in what he takes to be a wilderness—another John the Baptist, but not, I think, preparing the way of the Lord. If this be independence, he is making the most of it.

Will he continue to have imitators? That depends upon whether intellectuals decide to seek truth rather than isolation, whether they bend their separate wills to the common task of benefitting mankind. This is the basic choice, and for many intellectuals it is obscured. Once they discover it, however, the decision to side with the angels will not be as difficult as it has seemed.

This is the first of three articles. The second will appear next week.

Franklin: America's Leonardo

By Samuel Sillen

IN HIS eloquent introduction to *Dialectics of Nature*, Frederick Engels describes the Renaissance as a mighty epoch "which called for giants and produced giants—giants in power of thought, passion, and character, in universality and learning." The founders of modern bourgeois rule, Engels notes, had anything but bourgeois limitations. Inspired by adventurous times, travelling widely, commanding four or five languages, they shone in a number of fields. The Renaissance man was a whole man, not a one-sided man. He had not yet come under "the servitude of the division of labor."

Leonardo da Vinci, Engels reminds us, was great not only as artist, but as mathematician, engineer, and physicist. Albrecht Durer, painter, engraver, sculptor, and architect, also invented an excellent system of fortifications. Luther cleansed the German language as well as the Church. Machiavelli, statesman, historian, poet, was at the same moment "the first notable military author of modern times."

What accounts for this fullness and force of character, this amazing versatility? The special characteristic of most of the Renaissance giants, writes Engels, was that they pursued their lives "in the midst of the contemporary movements, in the practical struggle; they take sides and join in the fight, one by speaking and writing, another with the sword, many with both." The revolutions which they achieved, whether in art, science, or society, were possible only through "practical struggle," the union of ideas and deeds.

The closest American parallel to this period of intellectual ferment is the epoch of Franklin, Jefferson, and Paine. This revolutionary age too called for giants and produced giants. Thrown "in the midst of the contemporary movements, in the practical struggle," they shaped the American nation and left a durable imprint on American thought. They defined the specific features of the New World's most vital intellectual tradition, and if we would understand the tradition we must in the first instance understand them.

Even a relatively obscure figure of the period like Francis Hopkinson reveals the Renaissance man—the whole man—in America. Skilled musician and composer of the first song published

here; mathematician, chemist, physicist, and inventor; lawyer and judge; satirical pamphleteer and clever artist with pencil and brush; poet who did for Washington's army what Tom Paine's *Crisis* did in prose—this signer of the Declaration of Independence also designed the American flag. Yet Hopkinson was a distinctly lesser figure compared with the towering genius of Jefferson, whose stupendous range will not be comprehended even in the fifty-volume edition of his work now in preparation at Princeton.

THE very archetype of versatile genius in his age was Benjamin Franklin, whose long life, extending from 1706 to 1790, embraced not only a century but a world. Franklin was an astute businessman and ideologue of the Enlightenment, journalist and inventor, scientist and statesman, diplomat and poet (though not an awfully good one). He knew Washington, Adams, Jefferson, and Paine in America; Priestley, Adam Smith, Hume, and Burke in England; Mirabeau, Condorcet, Robespierre, and Voltaire in France. To the noted scientist Beccaria in Turin he was *vir praeclarissime*, and Catherine of Russia feared this democratic titan more than ten divisions.

At what point did his life fail to touch the century? He founded the American Philosophical Society in 1743, and in 1751 the Philadelphia Academy (now the University of Pennsylvania). He established America's second oldest magazine (by three days) and his experiments with electricity liberated the energies of nature. He produced the Franklin stove, bifocal glasses, the lightning rod, and a new instrument for which Mozart and Beethoven wrote music. He secured the indispensable alliance with France during the Revolutionary War, and overcoming the intrigues of seditious agents he signed the Treaty of Paris ending the war. The Continental Congress appointed him, along with Jefferson, to the committee that drafted the Declaration of Independence. Beyond eighty, he took part in the convention which framed the Federal Constitution.

And withal, a gentle humor that delighted his contemporaries. We are not quite fair to Franklin when we think of "Early to bed and early to rise" and

other homespun homilies. *Poor Richard's Almanac* also contained: "Fish and visitors smell in three days," "Where there's marriage without love, there'll be love without marriage," "Marry your son when you will, but your daughter when you can," "Keep your eyes wide open before marriage, half shut afterwards."

But *Poor Richard* was only an incident, though a highly profitable one, in Franklin's career. It scarcely explains why Karl Marx should refer to "the celebrated Franklin" several times in *Capital*. These references are significant not only because they heighten our respect for the man's intellectual stature but because they suggest a key to the source of his strength and that of his fellow-titans.

Franklin was a shrewd political economist—author, among other works, of a *Modest Inquiry into the Nature and Necessity of Paper Currency* as far back as 1729. "The celebrated Franklin," writes Marx in the opening pages of *Capital*, "one of the first economists, after William Petty, who saw through the nature of value, says: 'Trade in general being nothing else but the exchange of labor for labor, the value of all things is . . . most justly measured by labor.'" In another significant passage, Marx writes: "The use and fabrication of instruments of labor, although existing in the germ among certain species of animals, is specifically characteristic of the human labor process, and Franklin therefore defines man as a tool-making animal."

NOW there is a very definite relation between Franklin's cogent definition of man as a tool-making animal and his labor concept of value. In his *Autobiography* Franklin tells us that his father, a tallow chandler, tried to find a trade for the obstinate boy who refused to be a candlemaker and threatened to run off to sea. "He therefore," writes Franklin, "sometimes took me to walk with him, and see joiners, bricklayers, braziers, etc., at their work, that he might observe my inclination and endeavor to fix it on some trade or other on land. It has ever since been a pleasure to me to see good workmen handle their tools; and it has been useful to me, having learned so much by it as to be able to do little jobs myself in my

house when a workman could not readily be got, and to construct little machines for my experiments, while the intention of making the experiments was fresh and warm in my mind." Franklin worked as chandler, cutler, printer. The young journeyman had his feet on the ground. He reflected an environment in which the mechanic and artisan played a significant role.

What might be called the "tool-consciousness" (or the "gadget-mindedness") of Franklin constitutes a striking trait of a host of early democratic giants like Paine (who invented a crane, a planing-machine, and a model iron bridge), Robert Fulton (who built canals, steamboats, submarine torpedo boats—and drew fine portraits), and Joel Barlow (who was the close friend of both). In Jefferson's White House study, as Van Wyck Brooks has recently reminded us, were not only books and maps, but carpenters' tools and gardeners' tools, a drafting board and many scientific instruments. Jefferson's numerous inventions included a plough, a sundial, a swivel chair, a sheltered weather vane, a lock-door for laying up vessels, a folding ladder, and a two-way dumb-waiter.

These men were not indulging in leisure-hour "hobbies." The improvement of productive techniques was as much a part of Franklin's ambition as the improvement of relations with France. Both enterprises belonged to full citizenship, to human wholeness. Franklin was a member not only of the Royal Society (Britain's most distinguished scientific group) but of the Premium Society, whose purpose was to encourage "arts, manufactures, and commerce." Not only did he have a principal share in launching the first American voyage of Arctic exploration, but he joined (without feeling in the least prosaic) the first board of directors of the first American fire insurance company. His tool-mindedness did not distinguish between "pure" science and the practical improvement of man's living conditions.

"What signifies philosophy that does not apply to some use?" Franklin asked, as he described his experiment proving that white clothes are more suitable than black for a hot, sunny climate. He crusaded for inoculation against smallpox, defying superstitious theologians with the simple truth that "The most acceptable service to God is doing good to man." He formed the earliest city fire company and regular police force; he organized the first systematic sweeping and paving of streets; he sponsored the



"Sundown on Grove Street," by Frank Kleinholz. At the Associated American Artists Galleries, through December 30.

first public hospital and public library. And in such activities he propagated a spirit of intellectual freedom and liberalism as surely as in his studies of evaporation, ocean temperatures, and the course of storms over the Atlantic.

As REVOLUTIONIST, scientist, and practical humanitarian, as citizen of the world and presiding genius of nascent American capitalism, Franklin typifies a philosophy that contrasts strikingly with the German ideology so mercilessly analyzed by Marx and Engels. The difference reflects the opposite courses of American and German history. Our country began with a successful democratic revolution which Franklin helped effect. Germany has never achieved one. In a recent booklet on *Reactionary Prussianism* prepared by the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute in Moscow and based on the writings of Marx and Engels, we read:

"But the utterly contradictory course of German history left its imprint also in the sphere of ideology. It was inevitable that an ideology divorced from vital revolutionary practice and devoid of active influence upon politics should become abstract and detached from life. Powerless to stir the masses to great revolutionary deeds, it confined itself to a 'revolution in thought'; but being revolutionary only in the sphere of 'pure

thought', it rapidly became reconciled to the wretched, backward realities of German life."

The pettiness and philistinism of the German middle class and its ideologists were due to the lack of national aspirations, to the glorification of obedience to Prussian usurpation. And conversely one may say that the largeness, daring, and universality of our Revolutionary titans were due to their national aspirations, their refusal to put up with reaction and oppression. There is a restless striving in the this-worldly philosophy of a Franklin. Like Jefferson, he dedicates himself to the techniques of progress, whether they be ideas, tools, or social movements.

It is for this reason that the American democrat, whose name is today taken in vain by the *Saturday Evening Post*, not only attacks Negro slavery but adds: "The accumulation . . . of property . . . and its security to individuals in every society must be an effect of the protection afforded to it by the joint strength of the society in the execution of its laws. Private property therefore is a creature of society, and is subject to the calls of that society, whenever its necessities shall require it, even to its last farthing; its contributions therefore to the public exigencies are not to be considered as conferring a benefit to the public, entitling the contributors



"Sundown on Grove Street," by Frank Kleinholz. At the Associated American Artists Galleries, through December 30.

to the distinctions of honor and power, but as the return of an obligation previously received, or the payment of a just debt. . . . On these considerations I am sorry to see . . . a disposition among some of our people to commence an aristocracy by giving the rich predominancy in government."

Thus speaks this giant of our Renaissance, rebuking the intellectual midgets who assail Roosevelt today. His "practical struggle" included both the fight

for political freedom and the fight to conquer nature. And this dual struggle, combining the scientifically practical with a passion for freedom and justice, is the tradition of the whole man which is the really great tradition of American thought.

In the course of a century and a half, with the development of capitalism, it appeared at times to be at the point of disintegration. The gulf widened between the poet and the man of affairs,

the scientist and the statesman, the patriot, and the citizen of the world. But are we not again challenged today by "a mighty epoch" to grow beyond a crippling one-sidedness, whether as a nation or as individuals? We require a breadth of sympathy, a power of "thought, passion, and character" that many decades of indifference and selfishness have threatened. We have much to learn from a remoter but more enduring past.

Thoughts Upon a Fallen American

By Alan Whyte

This much is certain:
Some sly mouth will say
That he is home at last.
And other mouths,
And some benign,
Will sentimentalize half-truth,
That this man was
American.

For he is not at home.
He is a thousand miles from home.
A million.

He lies upon the sand
And in the sand
And of the sand
And intermingled with the sand
In sun and blood and khaki.
He is clotted, cloven and corrupt.
He is foul and black and terrible.

And he was American.

Strong runner
And a whistler-after-women.
Singer of the tin-pan ballad,
Knower of the darkest benches
In the evening park.
Before a heavy date
He spent a dollar in the barber chair.
Religion was a Sunday mixture
Of the altar and the comic strip.
He was a ham-and-egg guy
An apple pie guy
An arguer.

Yet he was more than these.
He was more than he knew.
He was more than he could remember.

If he was of subways
And the downtown cafeterias,
If he was of uptown buses
And the Harlem hotbeds,
Probably he did not know
The paveless streets of Memphis
Or the Carolina patches
Or the deadly hovels of Mobile.
And if he was of these

He did not know
The heat of swollen bodies
Massing in the rush-hour of New York.
Yet he was all.
He might have been drunk
In any of them.
He might have been brilliant
In all of them.

Now he lies in sand,
Recalling nothing.
How much did he know before?
Did he remember back to Attucks?
Had he ever heard of Douglass?
Did his heart pound with the glory
Of the Toms and Bobs and Catos—
They who strangled the Secession
So that Sherman might prevail?

It is doubtful if he could remember all
Or comprehend all
If he could remember.
Not from the textbooks.
Not from the prostituted leading citizens.
Not from the sly mouths.
Not from the laws they used against him.
Not from the sermon of humility.
His bread was eaten
In the sweat of his face.
It was also eaten in his blood.
It was fruited
With the hooded rope and faggot.
It was moldy
With the pork disease.
It was bitter bread.

Perhaps his heart was bitter . . .
And yet one thing he knew
With all the driving certainty
Of birthright.
And it throbbed in brain in muscle
As it throbs in all of us
Forever.

It was
The will to freedom.

He was American.
It gave him little.
It gave a heritage of struggle
And an afterward
Where struggle will avail.
It gave him everything.
He fell in Africa
From whence his forebears came.

Among the first Americans they came.
Not, escaping tyrants,
In the storied ship of Plymouth.
They sailed in chains
In leprous hulks
In full-rigged coffins.
They found the tyrants
Waiting in the marketplace.

Blood
Upon the corn
Upon the cotton
The tobacco.
Blood
Upon the lash.
In worship,
Blood.
Worked off.
Sold down the river.
Hunted.
Bred like animals.

And yet
They stayed to be American.

Secret language,
Stealth,
Escape from yesterday,
The strangely burning manor
And the bursting heart.

Douglass said it:
America will die
Unless she frees her strong black hand
To fight.

And Lincoln listened.

The Tasks of Art

By Anna Seghers

A Negro soldier
Intermingles with the sand.
He was no different from the rest.
Piled upon each other
From our hard beginnings
As a freedom-fighter,
The shell-torn bodies
Of their nameless dead
Would top the mountains
Of the land for which they died.
Their blood runs
Rich and red and singing
In our upward-surging history.

And yet,
Upon the day
That saw this soldier fall
In Africa,
His people trembled
In the maddened alleys of Detroit.
And on that day,
And in Detroit,
A white American
In khaki
Clutched a frightened Negro
To his breast,
And so defied the lynchers.

There is a tie between the two.
A living fibre
Swelling to proportions
Of a new and free America.

He lies in sun and sand.
And part of her
Lies with him.
The deathless part.
The upward-surging part.
The part of a nation
That is part of the world.
The part of America
That will triumph.

As he has triumphed.

In sun and blood,
In sand and rot,
He is a people's answer
To Detroit and Beaumont and Mobile;
To the fascist
The race-hater
The sly mouths.

The peoples rally
And their banner flames
From ever higher ramparts
Of the citadel of dawn;
In the spirit of Lincoln
And Douglass
That all men shall be free.

Sleep well,
American!
For you have given us
A handhold on Tomorrow.

WHAT is the role of art today in the struggle that is gripping the world? What role will it play tomorrow, when the struggle with weapons will have been decided, but the grim fight between opposing world outlooks—a struggle of mind against mind, spirit against spirit—will long continue? What impact will art, with its infinitely subtle means, produce on men who have grown accustomed to artillery shells and robot bombs?

The history of remote epochs and peoples contains legends that tell of the revolutionizing effects of modest, delicate works of art. In the biography of Confucius it is recorded that when he wrote the history of his state, corrupt and lying ministers took fright. So today, the military leaders of the United Nations must welcome allies in the cultural field whose songs and novels and frescoes strike fear in the hearts of the corrupt and lying fascists.

Formerly, when we broached this theme in articles or conversations, artists quickly divided into two groups. The major slogans were: "Art for art's sake" and "Art with a purpose"; and there were other slogans for every level in between. Some felt that political art narrows, debases, falsifies the meaning of creative activity. Others scorned art that, seeking only self-expression, served no social aim. This second group held that such a politically aimless art was either idly esthetic, petty bourgeois, or hollow. In both groups true and false ideas were hopelessly intermingled. Some time ago Georg Lukacs pointed out in *International Literature* that so-called political writers are too prone to underestimate an author like Thomas Mann or a painter like Hodler, failing to realize that these men have, without taking a political stand, conveyed a deeper sense of human solidarity and better expressed the most vital questions of the young people than many a political artist.

Art's revelation of reality embraces every domain in life. "Art as propaganda" neglected many broad domains—and fascism later exploited these emotional vacuums for its own ends. "Pure artists" create an even more dangerous vacuum,

for they omit the most important, the most human, the history-shaping element. Fascism chose to lump these two hostile camps together when it organized its exhibition of "banned art": Van Gogh, Kaethe Kollwitz, and Barlach the sculptor were all exhibited together. Fascism attacked every unfalsified presentation of the elements of reality, every social theme, but it also attacked minutely painted faces or landscapes. Fascism considered the mere anatomy of reality an abomination.

Today on every hand there is much discussion of the "reeducation" of the lost German youth. By "reeducation" people mean something akin to rescue, for reeducation presupposes some kind of education, however false. Where and what shall we reeducate, if German brothers and fathers have been led by "national" motives to slaughter Jews and murder prisoners *en masse*? The noblest work of art can scarcely "re-educate" a brain that has undergone such training. But in transforming a people, that book or play can be useful which places before the younger generation some lost concepts, some long-falsified ideas.

The artist has always broken new ground. In the ancient world Myron



"Cellist," by Waldo Peirce.

Defeat

On a train in Texas, German prisoners eat
With white American soldiers, seat by seat,
While black American soldiers sit apart—
The white men eating meat, the black men, heart.

Now, with that other war a century done,
Not the live North but the dead South has won:
Not yet a riven nation comes awake.
Who are we fighting this time, for God's sake?

Mark well the token of the separate seat—
It is again ourselves that we defeat.

WITTER BYNNER.



Sonnet to Various Republicans

The frightened man, over the abyss of time,
sees the tiny fields of future lie
bright as a landscape in an opal's eye,
a hundred years below, too far to climb
down, too far to crawl down, too far to get down by
undulating meekly like a worm
to the lovely watermeadows and the corn;
the only way to get there is to fly.

Denies the angel at his shoulderblade
prickling the skin of his poor back with wings;
retains the ape who tumbled through the air
and did not die, and cowers in the blood
afraid to fall. Cries, "There is nothing there,
Nothing but ruin and the death of kings."

JOY DAVIDMAN.



counterposed the simple athletic man to the exalted gods. On the Parthenon the Greek sculptors fashioned in stone the labors of Hercules beneath the figure of Goddess Athena, patroness of Athens. Thus for the first time in antiquity they introduced the concept of human labor, which even sanctified the "cleansing of the Augean stables." In the ensuing centuries of Christianity people were imbued with the concept of man the sufferer rather than man the victor—the martyr rather than the hero. Later, art helped to remove once and for all the halo from man's head by daring to show him in his everyday beauty. Art helped form a picture of the world in the ancient world, in the Christian era, and in the Protestant Reformation. Long after Balzac depicted the rising new middle class in his novels, French painting showed the modern industrialized city with its streets and human

beings. It made the middle classes conscious of their world philosophy; and then called it into question again. It will also help with pen and brush in the destruction of fascism, in the liberation of subjugated countries and minds.

THE artist of today must understand how and where to attack if he is to free the nazified youth from their fearful madness, their fraudulent conceptions, their convulsive, deathly rigid straining after domination, and their automaton-like obedience. He must never shrink from using the basis of attack on which Karl Marx insisted in his own day: making Germany's present degradation even more terrible by making Germans conscious of that degradation, by exposing uncompromisingly every mark and consequence of their political impotence.

Artists must reawaken three values

in the youth of Germany: that of the individual, the nation, and humanity. The poisoned young people must again realize what man means—the *individual* with all his inextinguishable qualities, with his social conditioning, his open and hidden passions. The French writers found the apt expression: *dignite humaine*. Human worth! Rembrandt's "Jacob's Blessing," the light falling across the hands of the patriarch; Bach's fugues; Goethe's *Faust*, containing every possible human complexity of his times—all these contain *dignite humaine*. But are they able to convey to the brothers and sons of bandits and murderers even a smattering of human worth? Generations of artists will have to teach the brutalized German people what the indivisible, inviolable individual means. They must again learn how to read Gorky's *Mother* and see how it unfolds the highest concept of human worth on the lowest level of human privation. They will have to recognize once again in the portraits of Holbein and Cezanne the miracle of the individual, with his life branching out in all directions—the miracle of man whom Marx called the root and goal of all existence. For *dignite humaine* does not simply mean sublimity; it means the right of every individual to freedom of thought, feeling, and action. Only then will men be freed of the concept of "masters"—*Herrenmenschen*—which has suppressed the concept of the free individual within them.

Just as art must help restore the individual human being, with his emotions and passions, his personal relations in love, friendship, and the family, so it must also help restore the new anti-Nazi concept of *nation* (*Volk*). It will not represent the nation as race or the product of "blood and soil." It will depict the nation as did Shakespeare, Manzoni, and Tolstoy—as a living social unit which has developed on the same territory as a result of common work, history, and culture. Youth must learn to view the nation no longer as a static force predestined to rule, but as a dynamic force coming together as a result of passionate clashes, evolving through contradictions.

THE debasement of part of the German people, whose cowardly thinking goes hand in hand with their barbaric actions, has changed the German language from a proud possession to a heavy burden. Many would like to cut all ties with the nation, as many an individual feels when he breaks with his family

that has fallen into disgrace. Among these ties is language—and every word in a language denotes a concept that has grown up among a people across centuries of work and struggle in common. Here and there an individual may succeed in breaking away: so too can those minorities who are the products of another tradition. The German language, from Luther and Thomas Muenzer, Goethe and Kleist, Hegel and Marx, has shaped concepts which in the last twelve years the Nazis have blasted to bits. The writer, in whom language can never die out, must rebuild these shattered concepts with the means at his disposal; he must use the tie that knits men together, not the one that tears them asunder.

The third word the artist must present in a new way is *humanity*. The Nazis declared their own people the master race, the only ones fit to dominate; and the man who best expressed the values attributed to the master race

was placed at the top. The Kharkov Trial shows what has become of these members of the master race, brought up in Hitler schools and "citadels" of learning. But the artists who will soon return home from their exile, have years of apprenticeship behind them; and they have learned what other nations and peoples have contributed to humanity. In opposition to the Nazis, they will show that foreign nations have arisen like their own. They have not grown haphazardly like some wild plant in nature, but have arisen as a result of social and historical conditions. They will show that foreign nations are no less clearly "destined for freedom," in Humboldt's phrase, than their own.

Artists have always felt called upon to portray this freedom. Herder led a powerful literary movement which utilized folk songs to give the German people an insight into humanity. Brahms did the same in his gypsy songs; Goethe expressed it in his *West-East Divan*. He

may have been the most German of Germans: in his creative work he never belied the sources of strength of other peoples. The clarity of his own mind made him judge the clarity of others at its true worth. In Mexico the novelist B. Traven has helped men understand that nation's face. Writing in the German language and revealing the social structure of the Mexican people, he has, in this racial mixture of speech and content, struggled against racial obscurantism and lust for domination.

In their books, plays, and pictures artists aid the struggle against the monstrous conceptions—corrosive, crime-breeding conceptions—that have lodged in the young people poisoned by fascism. Such conceptions not only thrive in disguise in the ominous and oft-discussed fascist underground; frequently they even lurk in the unconscious. If sincere artists help expose and refute these ideas, they are helping by their books and pictures to destroy fascism.



"Children of Stalingrad," oil by David Burliuk.



"Children of Stalingrad," oil by David Burliuk.

Partners

These are my deeds; Death is my buddy,
Gave me this accolade; red-hot
The brand of the bomb on my shoulder.
He guided my right arm; the grenade
Fell true; grimly he silenced
The ridge overhead. Death my buddy
Laid his ivory jaw smooth
To my rifle-stock, struck
At trail's turn the haughty,
Hard-eyed Nipponese carbineer.
Death is my buddy, lean his jaw
Like a Southern man's; he grins
With me; we have knowledges in common.

CPL. HARGIS WESTERFIELD.



Eugene Karlin.

United Nations

China is millions far away.
China is old.
China is yesterday.
Live like cattle. Die like flies.
Yellow faces. All talk queer.
China never can be near.

Russia's a foreign land.
Russia is very big.
Too big to understand.
Used to hardship, used to tears.
Mountains of coal. Valleys of wheat.
Winters are cold. Too great to heat.

2.

Freedom's an abstract far away.
Freedom is old and long ago.
1776: powdered yesterday.
Peruke and jabot.
Queer talk—*thee* and *thou*.
What's freedom to do with here and now?

Courage is a big word,
Bigger than Fascism planned.
Used to hardship, used to tears.
Courage is fear that has dried its tears.
Courage is a great word: greater than any land.
Are you great enough to understand?

E. M.

Three Poems

Hands

How shall we remember hands
Dead of so much doing?
Hands gripping hammer, pencil,
Chalk, level; hands wooing,
Waking keyboard, pouring speech,
Playing ball on Sunday beach,
Fondling female, infant cheek,
Turning heat up, holding book;
Hands that reached to sun,
Hands that reached for gun.

How shall we remember hands
Dead of so much doing;
Memory of hand-held things,
Past pursuing?

They have bloomed under earth
They have known second birth,
They have grown
Into our own.

Duty

Dip the pen
In the blood
And indite:
Nature meant no creature should
Bear what these dead withstood.
And write:
The grass of time cannot efface
Scars carved upon this average place.

The world turns its cheek of horror,
And the gashes are fresh.
The world seizes sword and fire
To purify the flesh.

Each wound a well.
Dip pen and tell.
When this well dries
The red tears of uncounted more *arise*.
Proclaim
The crimson calender of shame.

Blood Gift

Blood, spill into his torpid vein,
Give him to drink, wash away pain,

River of pulse and power pour him,
Make him whole for her who bore him.

I shall never know his face;
Reach, red artery, to distant place
Twining him and me as one,
Till my blood commands the gun.

I live twice, from my own seed
And in him whose heart I feed.

Rush, red courier, ignite
In a black man; in a white.

MARTHA MILLET.

December 19, 1944 **NM**

The Heavy Folks

By Elizabeth Thomas

HOEING his vegetable garden, Pop Bent was half asleep in the summer heat. It was a clear burning day when everything glistened under a blue sky; even the few round white clouds carried something of the sun in themselves. Yet the old man in overalls and no shirt, his back bare and browned, was able to keep on working under the heat, for it felt good to his thin bony frame, gave him energy he didn't have in winter.

His little shore farm drowsed with him. It was old like himself, older even, in working years, and had a right to drowse. From the patch where he stood, sometimes resting on his hoe looking around, he could see the pasture and his cow lying in the shade of a maple tree; the orchard silent of its birds; at one end, the blue sea lapping the big red rock on the beach, at the other his house, low and grey-shingled and once bursting with children, now quiet with only Ma and himself. The one new thing about the place was the small light truck Tom had bought just before the war to haul seaweed and bedding and to carry a few barrels of pears or apples to market. Even that looked sleepy now, standing inside the open doorway of the barn.

BUT if the farm was silent and sleepy, nothing else was. From the water, from the air, from the low hill beyond his pasture, the noises of war crashed and battled around Pop Bent. A plane flew over him trailing a shiny target and from the small island in the inlet anti-aircraft batteries began to crackle. On the hill a warning red pennant drooped and swung in the heat, the crew grooming a long-range gun to fire at a target far out to sea. The rifle range sounded like Fourth of July. Boys learning maneuvers of war. . . . You'd better learn to care for an orchard, the old man grumbled, or weed these hills of corn. You'd better learn to live good lives in peace. But you have to be saviors. Save them heavy folks. He thought of them as the heavy folks, he and Annie called them that, those Europeans stooping under affliction, heavy with sorrow and the weight of their dragging upheaved roots and their wounds of soul and body. Pictures of them in the papers or the films showed

women walking slowly by the sides of carts piled with household goods and babies, walking away from their homes; or showed old men sitting hopelessly among ruins. Such women as lived in this very township, old men such as himself. Pop fancied grimly how they suddenly one day, for all that sad weight, sprang into the air, arms up, hands waving, smiles light as thistle-down at sight of some of these saviors. Saviors from the skies, jumping out of planes, saviors in tanks and jeeps, saviors driving trucks bringing food. And one of the saviors his own boy Tom, Annie's baby. . . .

He had complained when Tom went, not even waiting to be drafted. "You're in a great hurry to help other folks," he had said. "What about helping your old Pa and Ma?" But Tom had only grinned and answered, "Gee, Pop, you're lucky, you don't need no help. Take care of my farm till I come back." The other children were older, married and living away. The farm was for Tom. And now he was flying somewhere up in foreign skies. Hell and tarnation, it was all wrong! Pop jabbed at a weed, struck a stone instead and the hoe slipped from his hand. "Gosh amighty, even the hoe's contrary!"



"Anna," oil by Moses Soyer.



"Anna," oil by Moses Soyer.



"John Brown at Harper's Ferry," by Nicolai Cikovsky.

Then his feet began to hurt so he sat down on the wheelbarrow and took off his shoes. He clasped one foot in his gnarled old hands, then the other; they felt good, let out to breathe this way. A dirt farmer couldn't get far in bare feet, though; lots of them heavy folks got bare feet, I guess.

ANNIE was coming out on the kitchen porch making her way toward him. She walked with quick light steps over the sunburned grass. Annie was spry, didn't seem to feel her age as he did his; but gosh, she was four years younger. He was glad to see her come, a stout little figure of a woman, her apron always spandy clean over a clean dress, her brisk white hair shining.

"Seen you resting yourself on the wheelbarrow," she said when she stood over him, "so I knew you was beginning to feel your rheumatism. Leave me have one."

She sat down beside him and took his right foot in her strong straight fingers and gently kneaded it. An airplane flying at great speed swooped low over them, startling them with its noise and nearness; then it cleared the orchard and was gone, humming farther and farther away and vanishing in the distant sky. Pop shook his fist after it.

"Them contraptions! Hard enough anyhow, I should think, for a fellow to fight in such a war. What's he choose to be perched up in one of them things for? Along with the risk of being shot he runs the risk of falling out of the air. Why couldn't he fight just as well, say

driving a truck, maybe one like his own here, if they got 'em in the Army? Or on one of them goddam motor bikes—"

"Or if he was a coastguard," Annie put in.

"Yes, I suppose you think he'd be stationed right here on this shore so's you could have him to home nights and feed him johnny cakes."

"Well, I'd know where he was. This way—"

"Gosh, why do mothers always want to know where their boys are?"

Annie smiled but made no answer. She kneaded Pop's left foot gently as she had done his right. For a few minutes no planes came over, no nearby guns were fired and silence fell on land and sea. A warm, basking, summer silence. If it were early morning, five o'clock say, you could hear the veery singing, ringing its bells. Or the field sparrow singing alone at night away off in the meadow. At this time of day . . . Annie pointed to the old Rose o' Sharon bush which stood at the edge of the garden toward the house. It was so old it had grown nearly as tall as a tree. Every branch was pretty with ruffled pink blooms nested close among leaves. But Annie wasn't pointing at the blooms.

"Look at them humming birds," she murmured low so as not to scare them away.

She need not have fretted; they were so busy fighting they would not have heard a shout. Four or five tiny creatures were darting fiercely at one another, swooping or climbing like airplanes above

and around the bush. They made angry snipping sounds, their wings whirred, with their long, sharp beaks they threatened one another. From time to time when one of them tired he flew low, hid himself for a minute deep in a blossom, perhaps found honey to refresh him and then, his dander up again, he mounted and swirled in the savage battle. Up and down and around they went, the bush their globe; up and down and around went the airplanes of war above them.

"One kind's as frail as the other kind," Pop said. "Their bones is brittle, their blood leaps out, the same for both. One perishes inside his little feathery carcass; the other, the big one, he crashes. How can any of 'em do any good?"

"Gracious, Pop!" Annie exclaimed. "What makes you talk that way? Of course they can do good. Suppose you was one of them heavy folks like sheep or cows pastured inside a barb wire fence. Suppose you seen some little birds like these flying round a bush, fighting, and you had nothing to eat, nothing to do all day but look at 'em. Couldn't you take heart pretending they was airplanes and watch how the battle goes? This way, that way, which side is winning? Shall we be saved? Couldn't you feel some hope of life, some lift of your spirits, seeing them birds fly at each other like planes in the air? And then, well maybe, you never can tell, pretty soon some real planes might come over and everybody be saved."

"HI, POP!"

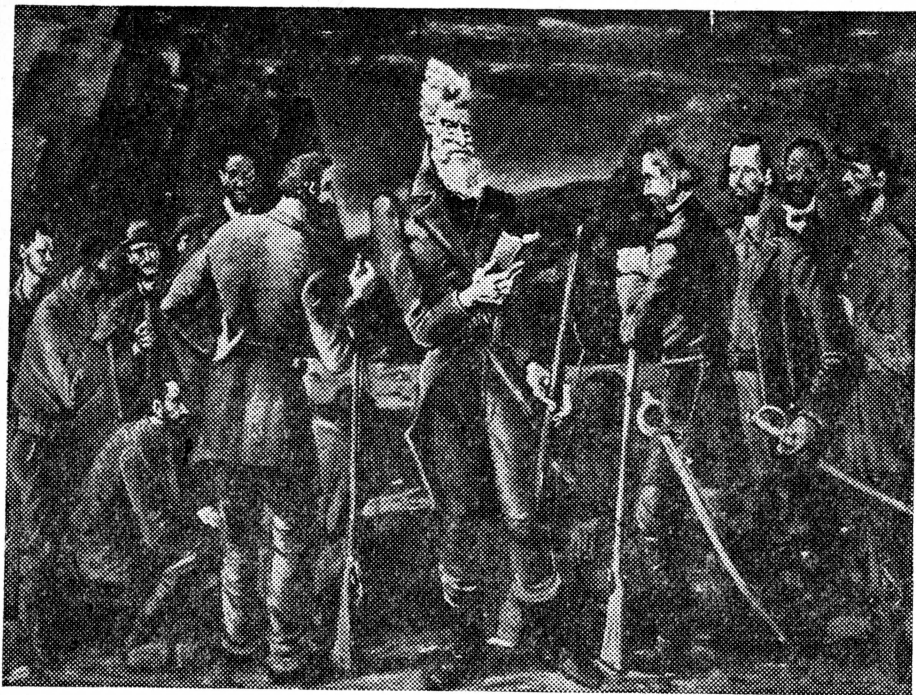
They glanced around to see their neighbor, Cal White, limping across the field toward them. Cal was a tall, lank, white-haired old man about Pop's age but older seeming because some past illness had hunched one shoulder higher than the other and given him a slow, crooked way of moving. Though he was crippled he had two sons at home to help him, so his farm made out well. It made out better than the Bent place: Pop had felt resentful ever since Cal's boys had been deferred from Army service to work the farm and enlarge it. Still, Cal was the father of Lucy, Tom's girl, and Lucy was all right: pretty and sensible and sweet. Pop painfully tugged his shoes on while Annie smoothed her apron and stood up to greet the old man.

"Well, Cal! Long time since we seen you. How are you? How's Mary?"

"We're first rate and trust you're the same. But we're all pretty busy this year, you know."

"Guess everybody is."

"Even got us old grandpas working, eh, Pop?"



"John Brown at Harper's Ferry," by Nicolai Cikovsky.

Pop snorted.

"Don't know when we didn't work."

"You're right. Heard from Tom?"

"No, we ain't," Annie said. "Not since the last letter we read to you."

"Well, no news is good news. But it's kinda hard on you two, ain't it, left to work the place by yourselves?"

No one made any answer. Come to crow over us, has he? thought Pop. Cal fingered his white stubble of beard and stared at Ma and Pop Bent from under his bushy eyebrows. They knew his visit was special, for, though this was afternoon of a working day, he wore a clean shirt and overalls that smelled of wood smoke from having been hung above the kitchen stove to dry.

"We was talking things over last evening, the boys and me," he said after a while. "We thought we'd like to help you out some."

Pop scowled, twitching his stubby brown fingers on the hoe handle. Not going to have them smart young fellows that's living safe to home show me how to work my farm. He cleared his throat slowly, then spat.

"Thanks, Cal. I manage good enough. Annie don't have to do no field work. Some of our crops is missing this year, 's true, for I'm old and my feet hurts me. If it wasn't for keeping up the farm for Tom, I'd lay down this hoe. He sends us—"

"I know, I know. Guess I ain't made myself clear."

Cal hesitated. Stooping, he chose a grassblade, plucked it and began to chew; for a moment he glanced uncer-

tainly away, then he stared again at Ma and Pop, less keenly this time, more questioningly, from under his eyebrows.

"Way we look at it over to our house, Pop: my boys ain't flying in the air to be shot at, nor they ain't being drowned by submarines, nor going over the top of no West Wall. They ain't nohow any targets for them Nazis. Me and my folks we can't tell you how proud we are of Tom. Tom's fighting for us; we want to help him. Not the boys—gov'ment don't allow it, says they got to work their own farm; soldiers has to be fed as well as them poor suffering folks across the world. And Lucy's doing a man's work in our dairy shed. But if you was willing, Pop, to have this old shuffler underfoot, I'd like to try to carry a little of Tom's weight working here with you till he comes back."

POP stared at Cal.

"You mean you want to work here 'stead of on your own place with your boys?"

"Shucks, them boys don't want me. They been to farm school, they know everything." The old man chuckled. "I can't keep up with 'em; get in front of their scythes—they slice my heels off. So . . . well, I just thought I'd step over and ask you . . . if you was willing. Us two old codgers together taking our time could maybe . . ."

His voice trailed off shyly and he stood, grassblade in hand, one crooked shoulder close to his ear, looking at his friends, waiting for their answer. Pop

did not know what to say. So he hasn't come to crow. He wants to work this little old one-horse farm along of me just as if he hadn't a big farm of his own and everything to do with. He wants to work for Tom. Pop looked at Annie to see how she was taking this surprising offer. Her eyes were shining and she was smiling.

"We take it kindly of you, Cal, and so does Tom, I know," she said.

"Why—why, then, so we do," Pop echoed.

Cal grinned.

"Shake on it."

Pop rubbed his hand on his dusty overalls and offered it.

"You ain't getting no bargain. I ain't so spry, you know. But I can spell you working between these rows. Tomorrow I'll fetch some tomatter stakes and we can tie up these plants 'fore they gets to laying every which way. Pretty soon when them early apples in your orchard is ready for picking I'll get the boys to bring over the long ladder. What say?"

So it was agreed. Annie went lightly back to the house among the renewed clamor of sounds. Again from the water, from the air, from low hills beyond the pasture, noises of war crashed and racketed. A plane flew over trailing a shiny target and from the small island in the inlet anti-aircraft batteries began to crackle. The crew made ready to fire the long range gun at a target far out to sea. The rifle range sounded like Fourth of July. In the midst of it all, the two old men unheeding set to work slowly, eagerly, to keep Tom's farm for him.

READERS' FORUM

Can Writers Change?

TO NEW MASSES: I read and re-read Samuel Sillen's article "The Challenge of Change" in the last literary issue, and found it very stimulating and good criticism.

It is being said again that "radical" or "left-wing" or "socially conscious" literature is no longer needed. It had its place in the thirties when the growth of unions and the depression gave birth to Odets' and Steinbecks, but now that national unity is the byword, what's the use of radical literature? So the argument goes. This is an aspect of the Challenge of Change too. These critics can't see that socially conscious literature is still needed, but in different forms. What they see is that

the thirties produced literature of protest and criticism. What they don't see is that now we need a more positive literature with definite values. To integrate the complexities of American life is a real task. For Mr. Sillen I might add, where are the poets? I've been looking as a potential one myself.

J. A. M.

TO NEW MASSES: I should like to comment on one of the points Samuel Sillen raises in his article, "The Challenge of Change." He quotes the remark Malcolm Cowley made in his article "The Happiness Boys," but he omits a significant question Cowley raised in

another article, I believe, dealing with their discussion. Cowley asked, in effect, "And where is this literature of affirmation that Sillen talks about?" I repeat the question, for Sillen hasn't answered it. It's important to answer it; if we don't, we find ourselves in the position of saying only that writers *should* view life as if they believed it worth living, as if they saw a decent future for men. Many of our writers are too busy fighting to write. But many others are at home and are writing—and in general writing with pens that haven't been dipped in Teheran ink. Rather their work has the crabbiness of *Partisan Review*—Edmund Wilson esthetes. Why is this so? Some of them are determined to write so because they believe this is the only valid literary attitude. But there are others, I believe, who want to write otherwise but in their experience have found nothing to force the change. They have not gone to war. Their horizons are limited to the home front. Sillen speaks of the "realistic perspective of an enduringly cooperative world" and the ascendancy of the progressive

forces in the world. But have these generalities been translated into the detail of life that is the writer's material? Is the spirit of Teheran, the progressive spirit, evident in the warp and woof of American life? Has the war brought a revival of faith in progress to the ordinary man to the extent that the writer can, in observing the ordinary man, fulfill in literature the new perspectives?

ROBERT RAHTZ.

New York.

Esthetics and Society

TO NEW MASSES: More of articles like Moses Soyer's on the problems of art! Only in a very few periodicals like NEW MASSES can the problem of art for the people or art for artists be faced squarely, because of the timid nature of the press in general. However, Soyer posed some questions to me which I had to answer for myself. With the advent of Matisse, he states, "French art became spiritually hollow and esthetic, and ceased to reflect the life and aspirations

of the people of France." Later on, "The people, after so many years of physical suffering and spiritual blackout, will not be content with the merely esthetic art of the past. They will demand . . . a return to the fundamentals and greater verities, and the artists will have to keep pace." This is the central fact in art today. But I am going to quibble about a word, to clarify this fact for the artists who will say: "How are we sure of these fundamentals, and how do they work with esthetics? Or do we abandon esthetics?"

Nearly every artist sees the difficulty of basing his art on two things: esthetics and society. And that is how artists fail to grasp the necessity thrust upon them by their society, how they fail to attain their artistic freedom. They have been confused into thinking esthetics and society are exclusive poles. Mr. Soyer has treated of the glaring contradiction between bourgeois esthetics and the people's needs, as if there were no other esthetics, as if esthetics were only artistic technique. For the young artist the conflict is

only clarified, the hints to its solution being only hints.

The truth is so plain it is ignored. For Hegel and other philosophers, esthetics was never so narrow. Now the character and needs of society must become part of esthetic theory for every artist, must become welded into his idea of art. These needs are not opposed to esthetics, these are precisely what will save esthetics and make it into a science at last. The feebleness of bourgeois art, all the Matisse's, and the first strivings of proletarian art, both owe their weaknesses to this lack of a unifying theory. Great works, in all arts, have resulted from integration of a people's life and time with a resulting historical technical expression.

No one, by the way, should take Soyer's last challenging statement to mean that no artist can become great in a bourgeois society. It is a call to see the limitations and rise above them, it summons artists to bring art to all people today over and around the barriers social conditions have thrown in the path. Vancouver, Wash. LOWELL RICHARDS.

ART YOUNG MEMORIAL AWARDS

In the last cultural issue New Masses announced its plans for Art Young Memorial Prizes of \$100 each for the best work submitted in art, poetry, short story and reportage. The first of these competitions is now complete. New Masses is glad to announce that the art prize was awarded to Harry Sternberg, a New York artist, for the drawing on the facing page, entitled "Twilight of the Gods." Judges were Daniel Fitzpatrick (St. Louis Post-Dispatch), William Gropper, Rockwell Kent, and Moses Soyer (NM art critic). Runners-up given honorable mention are: John Wilson, a young Negro artist from Boston, whose work will be printed in a forthcoming issue; and Edith Glaser, promising art school student, for her "Bastille, 1944" (published in New Masses, July 18, 1944).

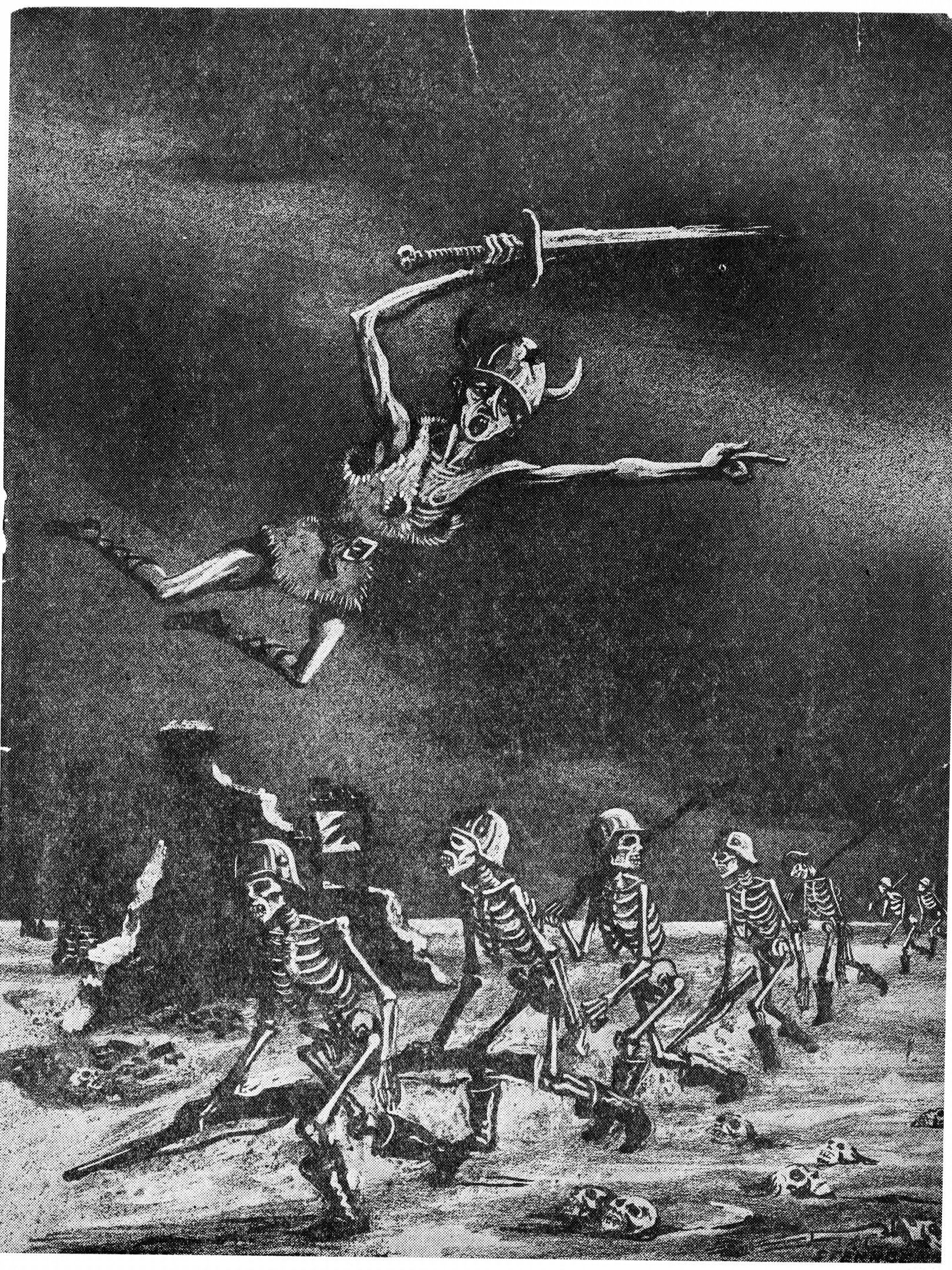
Poetry

The next Art Young Memorial prize will be awarded for poetry. Judges for this category are: Mark Van Doren, William Rose Benet, Isidor Schneider, new literary editor of NM, and Alfred Kreyborg. All poems must be typewritten on one side of the paper, and submitted to Art Young Memorial Awards, New Masses, Box 115, Station D, New York 3, N. Y. Deadline for all poetry contributions is March 15, 1945. Each entrant may contribute as many poems as he likes.

Short Story

Deadline for the short story contributions is June 1, 1945. Contestants for the story award must keep their manuscripts to within 3,500 words. Scripts must be double spaced and typewritten on one side of the paper only. There is no limit to the number of stories each person may submit. Incomplete list of judges includes Whit Burnett, editor of "Story Magazine," Isidor Schneider, and Leane Zugsmith. In both competitions judges, members of the staff and their families are ineligible to compete. Poems and stories in this and subsequent issues of NM will also be eligible for the awards.

We request that you send in your contributions as early as possible.



What the Greek Crisis Means

By John Stuart

AT A CRITICAL juncture in Allied policy—and there have been few crises during the war to match the current one—our government stepped forward with a pronouncement of faith and attitude that does honor to American leadership in world affairs. It boldly undertook to repair the damage done Teheran by the British government. If a high official of the Soviet Foreign Office had said what Mr. Stettinius did last week it would hardly come as a surprise. In prejudiced quarters the opinion might even be advanced that the Soviets affirming now the self-determination principle had some ulterior motive. But it was a capitalist state which asserted that it was against interference in the internal affairs of the United Nations and no one can charge it with a hidden desire to “Bolshevize” Europe.

At any other time or in any other context the State Department's condemnation of policies that frustrate by violence or pressure the desires of other peoples to order their own national life, would have been an event of singular importance. But coming at a moment of the most serious trouble, when traditionally diplomats become more diplomatic and are inclined to the silence of what is called watchful waiting, the American government's forthrightness is an expression of maturity and confidence such as we have not witnessed often. It means that after much groping we have emerged to a point in international policy that is the reversal of what we pursued toward France before her liberation. It undermines the reactionary AMG thinking such as possessed Charles Poletti months ago. It recognizes that our own future is bound closely to the future of Europe and that a Europe in turmoil would again encompass the United States in another war. It says once and for all that we cannot treat the United Nations any worse than we treat ourselves. This is the golden rule clothed in the garments of genuine statesmanship.

Above all, when the Department of State says “that we expect the Italians to work out their problems of government along democratic lines without influence from outside” and that “this policy would apply to an even more pronounced degree with regard to governments of the United Nations in their liberated territories,” we are dramatically sloughing off what has been the source

of fog and confusion in our dealings on the Continent. And that is the unfounded fear of people's movements as a form of “Bolshevist menace.” In my opinion, this is the heart of the rebuke delivered to Mr. Eden and Mr. Churchill with his “Communist dictatorship” talk about Greece.

The State Department, for all the pleading of the *New York Times* that it modify its pronouncement to mean the opposite of what it intended, tacitly repudiates a threadbare Goebbels technique. In essence the Department says hogwash to the ancient trick of reaction screaming “revolution” when reaction is opposed to normal democratic progress. How this conversion came about is not hard to fathom. Its foundation was laid at Teheran but it took the mandate of an election to convince many policy makers that if Teheran were carried to logical conclusions they would have the major support of the American people. The “resignation” of Assistant Secretary of State Adolf Berle—among the most notorious proponents of the Communist menace nonsense—is also part of the State Department's indictment of Nazi propaganda methods. It was inevitable that when Mr. Dewey was defeated, those who practiced Red-baiting in foreign affairs would also feel the weight of the ballot boxes over their heads.

WHAT I have said until now represents a transcendent aspect of the American position. But when that position is expanded in all its meaning it also says that to obliterate the Nazis physically is not enough. And it is over this point that the American attitude also diverges from the British. No one can question Mr. Churchill's desire to destroy the Wehrmacht. Nor can there be a moment's doubt that the British have made and will continue to make enormous sacrifices for victory. To that they are committed and they have fulfilled their pledges with great honor to themselves. But Mr. Churchill, who at one time said that this is not a war of ideologies and then went on to prove it by singing Franco's praises, would apparently like to stop short of taking the measures guaranteeing that fascism will never have an opportunity to return.

Somewhere in Mr. Churchill's outlook is the false belief that a Greek fas-

cist parading under another name, or a Belgian fascist for that matter, is more tolerable because he wraps himself in his country's constitution. Fascists are fervent believers in constitutions when it suits their purposes. Nevertheless the Greeks still call them fascists regardless of their outer trappings. To them the test of anti-fascism is not “constitutionalism” but whether those who espouse a belief in organic law do so out of a profound desire to see their land genuinely independent from foreign control. Mr. Churchill does not see eye to eye with that concept and charges those Greeks who disagree with him as plotting a “Communist dictatorship.”

His charge, of course, is utterly without foundation. Anyone familiar with the Greek scene knows that the EAM (the Greek Liberation Front), against which Mr. Churchill has sent tanks and planes, is not Communist-controlled. It is no more a Communist organization than are the liberation movements of France or Belgium or a half dozen other countries. In fact, there are not enough Communists in Europe to make up by themselves the power which the resistance forces have shown. If it were Communists alone who were fighting Nazis, their relatively small numbers would have spelled their doom a long time ago. No, it is the Communists in alliance with other parties and groups, from Catholic to atheists, from conservatives to members of the extreme left, who are the bone and muscle of the liberation battalions in Greece and elsewhere.

But even if the EAM were Communist led, Mr. Churchill's position would be equally untenable. For it would reveal an enormous hypocrisy in British foreign policy. Tito, whom the Prime Minister has praised, is a Communist; and Marshal Stalin, for whom Mr. Churchill has expressed the highest regard, is a Communist. There are Communists in the governments of every liberated country, or there will be, and Mr. Churchill would think ten times before insisting that they are attempting to set up “Communist dictatorships.”

IN REALITY it is not the Communists who worry Mr. Churchill. He can get on with them when he wants to and when he has to. What worries him is



Groppe

the Greek liberation movement as a whole, for it stands in the way of transforming Greece into another colony or another satellite in a projected British orbit such as has occupied the mind of Marshal Smuts. There are of course more immediate reasons for the bloody skirmishes in Athens, but at rock bottom the reason is the Greeks' insistence that they rule themselves, that their sovereignty not be despoiled by outside interference even when it comes in the name of liberty, justice, law, and order. The Greeks know the genuine articles from the fraudulent ones. They know that while Dictator Metaxas is dead, his disciples are not and that they are again trying to impose a dictatorship to fulfill their role as servants of the London banks. We do not yet know all the facts, but some day it will be clear that there are a number of Greeks who have secret commitments to British financial interests—the same Greeks who want to see the EAM disarmed while the quisling Security Battalions retain their rifles for an all-out war on the ELAS.

What Mr. Churchill has to learn—and he has given evidence in other instances that he can—is that Greece belongs to the people who liberated her. He will have to learn that the sun does not rise and set on No. 10 Downing St., that he cannot engage in unilateral action thus violating his Teheran commitments, and that the British word is no longer law in a number of small countries in western and southeastern Europe. And finally he will have to learn that there will be a number of radical social and economic transformations on the Continent. They may not meet with his approval but that will not matter so long as these changes keep Europe peaceful, democratic and prosperous.

BRTAIN's bullheaded blundering in Greece, as in Italy and Belgium, evokes a number of questions all of which I cannot discuss here but three are worth mentioning. First and foremost, the whole coalition suffers from the fact that Britain is not at the moment employing her fullest resources in arms and men against the enemy. Every plane and tank sent against the EAM means that the Germans have that much less to contend with. And equally shocking is the fact that the ELAS (the EAM's armed contingents) is forced to defend itself when its deepest desire is to join with the Allies against the Germans. Even if the war is thereby prolonged for only one day it is enough to condemn, if on no other

grounds, the British government's action. Second, is the question of what the British are trying to do in the Mediterranean area. Are they trying to establish a sphere of influence under their private and exclusive direction? They know that they will never be able to press this project forward if Greece sets up a representative government with a foreign policy not subservient to British will or to the will of any other power. The new Greece will want relations with other states on the basis of equality; it will want to substitute Dumbarton Oaks for the power blocs of the past. In other words, another element at stake in British policy towards Greece is the injury which Dumbarton Oaks can suffer by the attempt to substitute in one part of the world a system of private protection for the collective security envisaged at Teheran and in the United Nations plan.

And finally, the question is asked how much damage has been done the Teheran agreement or whether Teheran has been cancelled out of existence by the British Foreign Office. There is no doubt that Mr. Eden and Mr. Churchill are violating this fundamental commitment, that theirs is a move away from it. But despite them Teheran remains in full operative force and its magnetic powers are so great that Mr. Churchill will be pulled back to its center. If Teheran depended exclusively on Mr. Churchill's whims then we might have real cause for anxiety. It does not, however, and one need only scan the dispatches from the British press to see how the outburst of indignation from all classes is the best token of how seriously the British people take the Teheran agreement. In other words the Prime Minister was acting without British majority support and he will have to submit to it soon or late if the whole of Tory fortunes are not to founder on the rocks of selfish interest. He may not be impressed by the editorial opinion of the London *Daily Worker* but when the conservative London *Times* writes with the same angry phrases as does the *Daily Worker*—well, then, Mr. Churchill will know that he is bucking the tide and that he must either swim with it or be swamped. The vote in Parliament should mislead no one. If the number of abstentions are added to the "no" votes then they total larger than the "yes." Even very many of those who voted "yes" did so out of a desire not to upset the government coalition and not because they approved Churchill's policy in Greece.

The defenders of Teheran have

never for a moment thought that once the document was written all the world's problems were automatically solved. Far from it. While Teheran is a beacon shedding light on how problems are to be settled, while it is a source of tremendous political energy, its light can be clouded by the events we have witnessed in the past month. There have been differences before, there are serious differences now, and there will be differences in the future. "The surprising thing," said Stalin last month, "is not that differences exist, but that there are so few of them and that as a rule in practically every case they are resolved in a spirit of unity and coordination among the three great powers." The issue of the second front, infinitely more difficult than the Greek crisis, was solved at Teheran and it will be at the second Teheran that the three chiefs of state will find ways and means of settling the current dispute.

At the same time a special resolution of the Anglo-American rivalry must be made both as an obligation to Teheran and to enrich even more the American pronouncement of last week. Some progress in that direction has already been made through a redefinition of the lend-lease program for Britain in order to help her revive her export trade. Much more will have to be done, however, before the fears of the British traders are allayed. This fear accounts mostly for what the British have been doing in western Europe and their conduct is undoubtedly motivated by the need to place themselves in what they consider to be the best bargaining position *vis a vis* the United States. But this much must be said about such dangerous bargaining: instead of helping the British it harms them by reducing their prestige in the Allied world. Whitehall's conduct adds more tinder to the fires of anti-British prejudice, making even knottier the task of coming to a substantial understanding with this country. The President's hand is stayed and he cannot proceed rapidly to agreements when his supporters among big business (not to say anything of his opponents) use the Greek incident to justify their unwillingness to come to terms with their brethren in London. Here is one ample reason why Americans everywhere should express a profound satisfaction with the way Mr. Stettinius, as Mr. Roosevelt's lieutenant, dealt with the Anglo-Greek eruption. A torrent of letters and telegrams of approval will make it possible for him to proceed with the same confidence in unravelling the Anglo-American web.

NM SPOTLIGHT

The Changes in China

A good deal has happened in China since the crisis which occurred over the recall of General Stilwell. The changes in the cabinet are evidently more important than certain skeptics in this country at first thought. If nothing else they brought into extremely influential positions two patriotic men, General Chen Cheng and T. V. Soong, both of whom are friendly to China's allies and advocates of military, political and economic reform. Soong represents those elements among China's big bourgeoisie which believe in internal unity as the condition of victory.

The Kuomintang-Communist negotiations have been resumed. Major General—now Ambassador—Hurley deserves much of the credit for that. The negotiations, however, have not been completed and there is again evidence that Chiang Kai-shek is taking a position considerably short of what the situation demands. Nevertheless the unity discussions are proceeding in an atmosphere more favorable than at any period in the last few years. Major General Wedemeyer has had a series of conferences with the Generalissimo and with the new Minister of War. As a result China's forces have been regrouped in such a way that some of the troops previously wasted in the notorious blockade of the Northwest have been sent against the Japanese. This does not mean that the blockade has been broken, but it does indicate a new willingness to compromise.

All of these events are nothing more than preludes to the basic changes that must be made if China is to resume her place as a fighting ally. This is virtually Chungking's last chance to save itself. It has no time nor space for further delays. For Chungking and for Chiang Kai-shek the alternatives are immediate and drastic changes in policy, or suicide. China's people and her democratic leaders supported by the United States must prevail upon the Generalissimo to take the only realistic course—a coalition government.

CTAL Convenes

THE second general Congress of the Confederation of Latin American Workers (CTAL) which is meeting in Cali, Colombia, from December 10 to

15, marks more than just another gathering of trade union representatives from sixteen Latin American nations. That in itself would be important, for under the inspiring leadership of Vicente Lombardo Toledano the CTAL has become perhaps the greatest single factor in welding Latin American unity behind the war effort.

What is particularly noteworthy about the present meeting is that it is the first all-hemisphere labor conference ever held. For the first time Canadian labor is represented. Together with the delegation from the CIO of the United States it means that from fifteen to twenty million workers of the western hemisphere will discuss, through their representatives, problems of mutual concern.

The Congress agenda is well designed to stimulate discussion and decision on the cardinal issues of the day. The danger of Argentine fascism will be given a prominent place. The urgency of raising the standard of living in Latin American countries and the related problem of a rapid postwar industrialization program will be discussed. Also on the agenda is preparation for the London World Labor Conference, to be convened next February, and the security organization projected at Dumbarton Oaks.

All these events reveal the fantastic insanity of the resolution passed recently by the AFL Convention authorizing the executive council to call a conference of western hemisphere unions in order to check Lombardo Toledano and the CTAL. We can well imagine such a conference. Mr. Woll would find himself fraternizing with the fascist unions of Argentina (the democratic ones are in the CTAL and will be represented at Cali), and with a few delegates carefully picked by President Vargas of Brazil for loyalty to the *Estado Novo*, and possibly a well-manicured stooge of Dictator Trujillo of the so-called Dominican Republic. Well, maybe it wouldn't be such a strange group of bedfellows at that!

The Jewish Congress

THE growth of unity, nationally and internationally, in any group inevitably augments the unity of the whole. Two important Jewish conferences have just been held that illustrate

this point. The first was an emergency conference of the World Jewish Congress, held at Atlantic City; the second was the meeting of the American Jewish Conference in Pittsburgh.

The conference of the World Jewish Congress was like a small-scale gathering of the United Nations. Despite wartime conditions, delegates from Jewish communities in nearly forty countries were present and in various languages—English, Yiddish, Hebrew, French, Spanish—came to an agreement on the most important problems facing Jews as citizens of the world. They declared their faith in the United Nations and their determination to support to the utmost the prosecution of the war and the building of an international organization to safeguard peace. And who will deny that when the conference called for the enactment of an international bill of rights and for the outlawing of anti-Semitic and racist activity in all countries it was advocating measures to strengthen peace and democracy for all nations?

The conference also urged reparations from the Germans to Jewish individuals and communities, as well as to the Jewish people collectively, supported the establishment of a Jewish commonwealth in Palestine, called for the drastic punishment of war criminals, demanded the abrogation of all anti-Jewish laws and the restoration of all Jewish rights, and adopted measures for furthering the rescue of the Jewish victims of Nazism. The conference also showed warm appreciation of the role of the Soviet Jews and expressed the hope for closer collaboration.

The session of the American Jewish Conference, organized last year, strengthened its role as the most representative body of American Jewry. But unfortunately the paradox pointed out by Daniel Haas in an article in *NEW MASSES* of December 5, that the conference excludes from consideration all domestic Jewish problems and concentrates solely on Jewish affairs abroad, was not resolved at this year's meeting. Nor were the efforts to establish it on a permanent rather than a temporary basis successful. On both these questions, however, there was far greater support from the delegates than at last year's session. The conference made an important advance toward comprehen-

PM's Private War

IF IT were not for the fact that nothing *PM* does surprises us, we would be shocked to the marrow over the criminal war it has been waging against the State Department's reorganization plans. Let it be said outright that these dyspeptic liberals are doing as much to arrest a maturing American foreign policy as any tin horn fascist in and out of Congress. In fact, *PM* has joined forces with the isolationists of the Senate to do a job on Mr. Roosevelt which Thomas Dewey and Col. McCormick and Hearst could not do through the ballot. While it would seem outwardly that it is only a William Clayton that *PM* is wailing against, the effect of all its hysteria is to provide ammunition for those who hate what the President stands for in international life and to make it infinitely harder for him to beat them down. When the notorious pro-fascist Sen. Langer uses a *PM* editorial by Max Lerner, when he inserts that editorial into the *Congressional Record* (November 28, page A4886) as his tacit reason for refusing to affirm the appointment of Mr. Stettinius, we have the final proof of the great harm wrought by *PM's* fraudulent crusade.

PM says it is against pushing people around. As one of its battle cries you will find that slogan time and again in its columns. When will *PM* stop pushing the President around? When will it stop hinting that the President is so much a fool that he would appoint men to office who would destroy the policies he has launched? But more, the *PM* campaign, reaching a fury at a moment when the State Department came forward with an important pronouncement on the right of self-determination for other peoples, undermines the support which the administration must have in order to keep its hand strong. *PM's* blasts simply encourage the confused to vote no confidence in Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Stettinius when they need all the confidence they can get.

Some liberals are saying, and we are dismayed to find the *Nation* joining the chorus, that the State Department is being transformed into a "millionaires' club." The truth is that the test of patriotism in this war is not and never has been the size of a man's bank account. This is every man's war and its success depends on the unity of all classes. Without that unity Mr. Roosevelt would have been licked on November 7. If *PM* and the *Nation* insist on disqualifying men because of their wealth from participation in the government they will have to take the next step of disqualifying them from the management of war plants where they have helped break production records. If they insist on disqualifying men from office because of conservative political opinions they will also have to take the next step of demanding that some of our best front-line generals be immediately recalled from action.

Mr. Roosevelt's strength is dependent on a coalition of diverse political elements. He must have the united support of labor, of big business, of the middle classes. If Max Lerner and James Wechsler of *PM* were entrusted with choosing the personnel of the State Department—we can imagine no worse calamity—they might find such simon-pure characters as themselves. But they would have no majority behind them. Their opposition to patriotic big business is the reverse side of their opposition to Communists and their antagonism to both would leave the White House with diminished backing.

Happily there are liberals with sanity and perspective and one must not for a moment think that *PM* speaks for the whole liberal camp. It was liberal Samuel Grafton, in a recent syndicated column, who picked the *PM* mind apart when he wrote: "The important point about the Clayton appointment . . . is not that the President has yielded to conservative business opinion, and given it power over our foreign policy; but that conservative business opinion has yielded to the demands of our foreign policy, and has agreed to support it. . . . We ought to be grateful indeed that we have, at this particular juncture in world affairs, a President with enough iron in him to be able to do what he has to do to get the job done."

sive Jewish unity by voting to admit the delegates of the Jewish People's Fraternal Order (International Workers Order). On some questions the conference paralleled the decisions of the World Jewish Congress, which is all to the good. One of the important steps it took was to vote to join with other groups in setting up a representative body to express the views of American Jewry before international conferences and agencies.

The NAM Stands Still

CONSERVATIVE ideology persists long after the conditions out of which it arose begin to alter. The convention of the National Association of Manufacturers last week is an illustration of this contrast of old reactionary social views in a changing world. The resolutions adopted by the NAM this year could have been passed at almost any dozen previous gatherings. Once again the NAM passionately reaffirms its faith in "free enterprise" and brands all social regulation of economic life as totalitarian collectivism. Social security is condemned as tyranny and labor is begged to trust management as its chief friend and benefactor. Representatives from scores of great industrial enterprises with established and even mutually satisfactory trade union agreements talked as if they lived in the nineteenth century. On the whole the progressive currents stimulated by the war bypassed this important gathering of men charged with the management of the nation's basic economy.

The du Ponts, the Pews, and other fascist-minded elements from the old guard Republican camp control the NAM and provide most of its funds. The wholesome outlook of a substantial and growing body of big and small businessmen with constructive postwar views was not reflected at this gathering. This was very unfortunate, because a postwar economy, with full employment and full production, requires the cooperation of all business with organized labor and the government. The progressive circles in the business world symbolized by men like C. E. Wilson of General Electric and Henry Kaiser have an important role to perform among their colleagues. And it is to be hoped that the government and organized labor will assist the backward sections of big business to see that their best interests lie in mutual cooperation with all groups and classes in serving the needs of the people.

Tchaikovsky's Legacy

By Dmitri Shostakovich

There is not a single Russian composer of the end of the nineteenth or the beginning of the twentieth century who is not to some extent indebted to Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky. His work, including six symphonies and the finest, most popular operas of the Russian repertory, represents one of the greatest contributions to Russian music. In his person we find the happy combination of a really extraordinary native talent and a constant flow of creative inspiration which knew no ebb over a period of decades. There is literally not a single type of musical composition to which Tchaikovsky did not make significant contributions. Songs and symphonies, operas and romances, sonatas and ballets, concertos and musical humoresques—all of them are represented in the opus numbers of Tchaikovsky.

Tchaikovsky's influence was felt by his contemporaries irrespective of their artistic styles and principles. But even greater has been the influence of Tchaikovsky on his successors. The traditions of Russian music taken up by Tchaikovsky from Glinka were continued by his pupil Taneyev, and later by Scriabin and Rachmaninoff. I cannot name a single Soviet composer of our generation who has not experienced the beneficial action of Tchaikovsky on his work. In different aspects, but to the same degree, Shaporin and Shebalin, Myaskovsky and Prokofiev, Khachaturian and Dzhherzhinsky, have all "issued from" the melodic and harmonic traditions of Tchaikovsky. My own mind carried deep impressions of the philosophical and musical tenets of Tchaikovsky. In anticipating the writing of some new score, I involuntarily turn to the ideas and methods of this incomparable master, our common teacher of the art of composition.

It would be difficult to define the exact source of my admiration for Tchaikovsky. This would require a special essay devoted to detailed analysis. But if it is permissible to express in a single sentence the cause of my particular respect and devotion to Tchaikovsky, then I should say it lies in the utter absence of indifferences, of idle sound recording, in his works.

Tchaikovsky is dear not only to us who are musicians. Like Pushkin, he has become part of the very national consciousness of Russians. We cannot live

without Tchaikovsky during the days of national grief; he is our companion likewise in the hour of victory, and in the years of mighty upsurge of the Russian national spirit.

Here I should like to clear up two disputable points. We often hear the opinion expressed that the works of Tchaikovsky are touched by the spirit of pessimism. This is the result of mistaking pessimism for a keen sense of the tragic, a misconception found among certain contemporary investigators, and common to most pre-revolutionary musicologists and critics. No one throughout the history of art has given better expression to man's feeling of the tragic than the authors of the great Greek tragedies. Yet it has never entered anyone's mind to accuse them of pessimism. Tchaikovsky also sensed a tragic conflict in the development of the individual and society. With the penetration of a great thinker and the intuition of an artist he grasped life's contradictions, the dialectic development of the world, the fate of the individual and of mankind as a whole. But the work of Tchaikovsky does not bear the stamp of fatalism, depression, belief in a blind fate. His most tragic compositions are imbued with the spirit of struggle, and the desire to conquer blind elemental forces.

Tchaikovsky believed in the irresistible power of reason, in the strength and harmony of nature. All of Tchaikovsky's creative work is illuminated by this belief.

I should like to refute another current opinion: "theoreticians" have announced that Tchaikovsky was one with Chekhov and Levitan in singing

the twilight of Russia at the end of the nineteenth century. This is as untrue of Tchaikovsky as it is of Chekhov and Levitan, whose creative work is marked by an indisputable affirmation of life. But Tchaikovsky, Chekhov and Levitan have much in common—their elegaic perception of the beauty of Russian scenery, their delicate lyricism, and most important, their passionate relationship to their surroundings. Tempestuous blood always pulsed beneath the restrained forms employed by each one of these artists.

Their affinity is further marked by a common sense of the tragic. Tchaikovsky wrote his Sixth Symphony, Chekhov *The Black Monk* (incidentally, one of the most musical of literary works, written almost in the form of a sonata). And how much feeling and artistic sensitivity Levitan revealed in his paintings of a Russian storm! It should be emphasized that, just like the classics of Russian realistic literature and painting, Tchaikovsky's most tragic compositions (such as the Sixth Symphony and *The Queen of Spades*) are dominated not by a feeling of resignation, but by a challenge to struggle and to the conquest of "Fate."

So far it has been customary to speak of Rimsky-Korsakov's Russian school of composition as the dominating one. It is high time to give due credit to the school of Tchaikovsky and to appraise properly all the wealth and variety of his technique. He is peerless in the field of orchestration and theme development. I find that the secret of his supremacy as a master of orchestration lies in the fact that ordinarily he did not orchestrate a written composition, but as it were, composed prior for the orchestra, thought in terms of the orchestra.

The national traits of the composer are defined by his profound understanding of the soul of his Russian contemporaries and his sensitivity to the beauties of the Russian countryside. Not being a composer of purely national limitations, Tchaikovsky often turned to other subject matter, as was true of all three of his ballets, of *Yolantha* and *Capriccio Italien*. But in spite of their non-Russian subjects, these compositions are no less Russian in spirit and character than all his other works.

The music of Tchaikovsky is not only one of the cornerstones of Russian (and



of world) music. It is a kind of artistic and technical encyclopedia, to which every Russian composer finds it necessary to refer in the course of his practical work.

The musical inheritance left to us by Tchaikovsky is particularly dear to Soviet people. It was not for nothing that

the German vandals, with their evil intention to wipe out Soviet Russian culture, wrecked the home of Tchaikovsky at Klin. Dire punishment awaits the instigators and executors of that unprecedented crime.

During the most racking days of this war, our thoughts turned to Tchai-

kovsky. And in the hour of the people's triumph, our souls are filled with the music of Tchaikovsky. It will enter organically into the fabric of that triumphal march which will rise above the vast expanses of our land on the day of the final destruction of the Hitler hordes.

Notes from Picasso's Studio

By Xavier Gonzales

These marginal notes from a sketch-book were made in Paris during the Spanish War. Picasso was at this time one of the leading figures in the French movement to aid the Spanish Republic.

I TELEPHONED Picasso. He asked me to come to his studio on Rue de Grand Augustin the next afternoon at three o'clock. It was a large house with a courtyard at the entrance; the concierge told us that Picasso lived on the third floor. At the top of the stairs there was a small door that could hardly be seen. I pressed the bell and Picasso himself opened it. He has wide shoulders, a large head and dark piercing eyes. I was surprised to notice how short he is; but after a while he became again the giant that I had previously visualized. He had a certain kind of reserved look. His voice is high and his accent Andalusian.

There was not an unoccupied chair in the studio—everything was covered with books, colors, and brushes. Picasso looked at us with a peculiar smile as though he were amused by some inner thought. "Look out," he said, "for the electric wires. They are taking pictures in color." Pictures that I thought were still echoes of the murals of Guernica, except that these were painted in rich purple and flesh. It was cold in his studio. He had on a couple of sweaters: one dull green, the other, a smaller one, had that indefinite color of something that has known perspiration, sun and rain. The studio was large and formed an L. The ceiling of the largest room had enormous beams sunken by years of strain. Toward the rear there was a stove that looked like a monument.

We spoke of travels and places. And when I told him that I was originally from Almeria, he said he had lived there long years before and looked at me carefully. "You are certainly a typical Spaniard, but where did you lose

your accent?" I told him I had lived many years in Mexico. After a while we noticed a dog sleeping on a dilapidated sofa—a thin dog with a black pointed nose. A narrow stairway at the left of the entrance was piled high with books. Among these I noticed several dealing with Catalonian art, and several editions in different languages about Picasso's works.

He took us into another room that was a sort of gallery for his paintings. There we saw many large canvasses resting precariously here and there against each other and the wall. I recall especially large pastels, heads and figures of a certain neo-classical struc-

ture. On the right wall there was a large tapestry made from a cartoon by Picasso, and on a little bookcase there were long, thin bronze figures, the skull of something like a large cat and some other amorphous objects. On the walls hung some African musical instruments: one, a large mandolin broken in the center and receding at an angle from the body of the instrument. In the center of the room was a massive piece of furniture more like a carpenter's bench than a table; black, damp and of an unhealthy velvety quality. The floor was covered with mats of a sort of rough jute. After a while he came in and as I was attentively looking at some of his pictures at



"La Ville," by Marc Chagall.



"La Ville," by Marc Chagall.

December 19, 1944 **NM**

a very close range he asked me what I was doing. I answered that I was smelling them. He laughed and said, "I too like to smell them and particularly to touch them."

I SPENT this afternoon with Picasso. His face was golden brown; that sunburn produced in Mediterranean people by southern climate. I asked him if he had been out of town. He said yes, he had been in the country. He was very happy. Two small kittens were at that moment running around the studio sharpening their claws on the canvasses. I asked him if the kittens had any respect for art. He said, "No, no respect at all." Then his man came in with an engraving. I think it was a dry-point. He looked at it carefully, getting closer to a window. He passed it to me and we began to speak about Juan Gris. He said, "He worked very hard, and the life of misery which he lived killed him. Sometimes he lived with only a few sous a week. Just when he began to do something he died."

WE JUST left Don Pablo. He was doing a large charcoal drawing of a terrifically dramatic rooster. "Roosters—" he said, "we always have roosters, but like everything else in life we must discover them. Just as Corot discovered the morning and Renoir discovered little girls. Everything must be discovered—this box—a piece of paper. You must always leave the door open, always open—and the main thing is never to turn back once you pass through that door. Never to dismay and never to compromise. Roosters have always been seen but seldom so well as in American weather vanes."

ON ONE occasion I met Picasso when I had just left the subway. "I have seen workers removing the old posters from the subway and pasting up others," I said. "Some of the surfaces are covered with fragments of previous posters and the effects are beautiful." "Yes," he answered, "nothing is an accident. A man destroys here, puts something there. There is something mysteriously conscious and deliberate that takes place in the mind of the man who pastes and tears these posters. The result is not only accident."

On another occasion I was talking to him about a cobbler in Spain who was repairing my shoes while I was looking at a magazine with reproductions of Picasso's paintings. And the

Destination: Oblivion

IN AMONG the marble fascist mothers, *bambinos*, and youth, all wearing the Mussolini scowl at the 1939 New York World's Fair there was an exhibit made up of convoluted ribbons of steel dedicated to Italian futurism and the works of the writer F. T. Marinetti, who died the other day. It was inhuman and pretentious—and as pitifully laughable as the frowns cut into the faces of the sculptured fascist infants.

And now Marinetti, the futurist who betrayed the future to an attempted revival of the worst in the Italian past, has died almost as if in a last characteristic symbolic gesture. He enters the immortality that history reserves for examples of evil.

But in an analysis of Marinetti it would be a mistake to merge in his infamy the cultural currents that he fouled. Just as not all armed uprisings are revolutions: just as, among those who invoke tradition, we must distinguish between progressives who keep clear the channels of a nation's historic progress and reactionaries who seek to fix and sanctify social inequalities: so we must remember that not all modernism took the course of Marinetti. Among many others there are Mayakovsky who called himself a futurist, and Picasso, greatest of modernist painters.

The distinction between the progressive current and the reactionary current in modernism was always clear. The insurgence of a Mayakovsky and a Picasso was for the liberation of the people. The insurgence of a Marinetti and an Ezra Pound was for the setting up of an elite over the people.

Therefore in consigning the memory of Marinetti to the infamy he has earned, let us keep clear that he earned it as a fascist and as a perverter of cultural insurgence to fascist ends.

cobbler seemed to be curious. I showed him the magazine and said, "This is the work of one of your countrymen." The cobbler looked at it thoughtfully and said, "You know, everything in life has two things, and there are things that have three things." Afterward Picasso loved to tell that story.

ONE day the studio was full of important people. These people were looking at the paintings with a reverent attitude when the bell rang loudly—not gently and discreetly as before—and in came two workmen carrying their empty lunch pails. They were gay and smelled of wine. Without taking off their caps, they came in and greeted Picasso with a kiss on each cheek. Picasso looked over at me and blushed. In Spain this manner of greeting among men is not customary.

WE WERE talking about the Guernica mural. I said, "Don Pablo, I

have been following your painting carefully for years and never before have I seen any type of propaganda in your pictures." "I do not know what is the matter with me," he answered, "I have never been interested in propaganda, *pero no se,* poor Spain. It is something that happens inside, and you cannot help it. The same thing happened to Goya."

PICASSO was examining a copper plate. I think it was a dry-point. As I recall, in the subject matter there was a minotaur. He was examining it with a peculiar attention that he gives to everything he sees, slowly and deliberately. He was close to a window. He is short and stocky. His hair is grey and long and looks as though it has been whacked off with a knife from time to time. It was winter. My impression of this melancholy afternoon was that I was near a man interested in the essence of painting. A painter's painter. Always influenced by new discoveries, someone

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possessed with the idea of creating something new out of new materials—card-board, paper, glass, glue, and paint. Pigment as pigment, graphic symbols, human gestures of a dignity not previously realized. A man responsive to many different winds. A prophet of new emotions, a mirror of our time and one who makes us understand that to be able to mark a surface in order to communicate our ideas by calligraphy or graphic elements is the basis of pure painting.



MUSIC

BRITISH and American ballads and folk songs sung by Richard Dyer-Bennet deserve his peerless interpretations. His small but qualitatively pleasing voice projects the humorous, romantic, tragic, earthy, and heroic elements of the folk art with superb effect. A considered and original self-accompaniment on the guitar aids Mr. Dyer-Bennet's flexible voice in setting the tones of grotesque overstatement and fanciful understatement, so characteristic of some of the songs.

His reputation as mastersinger of the ballad form was established within the confines of small rooms with lowish ceilings, and on good recordings. That is why I went to his Carnegie Hall concert recently with definite misgivings. It would be so easy for a subtle whispered word to be lost in a large concert hall; some delicate shading missed; a finger-flick on the guitar marooned in the middle of nothing.

From a seat down front I heard to perfection a couple of songs that very often go pianissimo; but I purposely did most of my listening in the balcony. There *Drill, Ye Tarriers, Drill* was heard without difficulty because it is sung with a strong consistency of rhythm and timbre; and none of the effects of *John Henry* were lost. It was evident, however, that the singer could not make himself heard in the lower registers of quieter songs.

Dyer-Bennet is now a member of that club the entrance requirement of which is the ability to pack Carnegie Hall; and it is not an easy club to get into. That he can command so large a following is obviously a tribute to his feeling for what he sings. In a large auditorium, however, where only a third

of the audience can hear without strain the words, music, and interpretation, he is definitely out of place. People who are, at last, given an opportunity to hear art in their own language—something they can easily follow and enjoy—must be permitted to catch every word and meaning. This can only be accomplished in the proper setting for ballad singing: intimate surroundings.

I would suggest that Mr. Dyer-Bennet do as Lotte Lehmann does with songs in her language: sing them in a series of two or three concerts in Town Hall (or somewhere like it) and not in Carnegie.

It's always a pleasure to advise those of us who generally run a little short towards the end of the week of great value in music for comparatively little. An out-of-the-way pilgrimage to the Theresa L. Kaufmann Auditorium of the YMHA, 92nd Street and Lexington Avenue, will net all sorts of dividends for different kinds of people. The size of the hall lends an intimate warm quality which makes one feel personal contact with the artists; and no finer acoustics can be found for chamber music presentation. The performers themselves seem to be affected by the atmosphere. To take one example, Ralph Kirpatrick, at the harpsichord, and Alexander Schneider, formerly with the Budapest Quartet, dug into the archives and gave three concerts consisting of Bach and Mozart sonatas for violin and harpsichord. The blend of precise and sensitive ensemble playing of delicate and moving music, with the coziness of the hall, made the series one of the inspiring events of the season.

When the time came for encores. Mr. Kirpatrick asked as naturally as though he were in a drawing room: "What shall it be, Bach or Mozart?" The answers were flung back by partisans of both. The artists, of course played Bach and Mozart and everybody was happy.

In reality, the music season at the "Y" is complete in itself. The Budapest plays there. A concert series of trios, violin sonatas, piano quartets and cello sonatas is presented with such fine artists as Mr. Schneider, Benar Heifitz, Itar Kahn, Joseph and Lillian Fuchs, Nadia Reisenberg, Felix Salmond, Rudolf Firkusny, and Marcel Hubert collaborating in various combinations. Soloists still to be heard from in another series are Milstein, Lotte Lehmann, Isaac Stern, Casadesu, and Serkin.

JOHN KITTON.

“Road to the Ocean”

Reviewed by Isidor Schneider

LEONOV headed a recent list of lecturers at the Gorky School for Young Writers which is run by the Soviet Authors' Union. Next to Simonov's *The Russian People*, Leonov's play *Invasion*, a war drama notable for its subtle characterization, is the most popular play on the Soviet stage, being on the active repertory of some 200 theaters. Such items are, of course, incidental to the aesthetic significance of the work of a major writer. But the unhappy truth is that, as yet, no Soviet writer gets a normal critical evaluation here. For that reason these incidentals take on importance.

For example, American reviewers of this magnificent book* have to account for a work so uninhibited in its imagination and in its play of form (and which therefore confounds the notions left in their minds by the “experts”) that they meet their problem by calling Leonov “atypical.” Yes, Leonov is atypical, but not in the way these reviewers assume. He is atypical as Sholokhov and Ehrenburg are—that is as any artist who has a matured integrated artistic personality. But he is not atypical to Soviet cultural life. Like other distinguished Soviet writers he participates in organized literary activities; and, as is true of them, his public is not a coterie.

It is also necessary to correct another reviewers' mistake. To this, probably, the publisher's blurb gave the impetus. The blurb cites Gorky's judgment of Leonov as “the greatest of the group of modern Soviet authors whose work continues the tradition of Russian classical literature. I place him with the greatest figures of our old literature—Pushkin, Turgenev, Dostoyevsky, and Tolstoy.” To this list I would have added Gogol.

From this the blurb writer takes off on the most fashionable figure on the list—Dostoyevsky: and the reviewers sail along, that being the steadiest trade wind. I have no quarrel with Gorky's judgment. But it is important to recall that it was made to apply to a special situation no longer urgent today. It was made at a time when it was still necessary to affirm the positive values of the Russian literary tradition. Today the emphasis needs shifting.

It is true that there is a trace of Dostoyevsky in Leonov's occasional glances into psychiatric behavior: but it is no stronger than the touch of Gorky in his interest in scientific advances; or the touch of Gogol in his marvelous characterization through physical description. In short Leonov, like any sensitively observant writer, has drawn in a whole complex of influences from the culture which he continues. But this culture is not exclusively Russian and its qualities in this creatively reactive writer have had a transmutation into contemporary terms. The general line of world literary development is traceable

in Leonov's work along with the line of Russian development which, after all, has now been part of world literature for nearly a century.

Therefore, just as Prokofiev and Shostakovich belong to contemporary world music, so Leonov belongs to contemporary world literature. For this period it is more to the point to recognize in Leonov a man in one of the strong literary currents of our time, a man to be thought of in the company of modern masters like Joyce, Malraux, Huxley, Lorca.

The content of *Road to the Ocean* is Soviet man in the stream of history;



“Circus Girls,” by Chaim Gross.

* ROAD TO THE OCEAN, by Leonid Leonov. Translated by Norbert Guterman. Fischer. \$3.



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for the Five Year Plan that the story deals with has deeply probed origins in the past and exhilaratingly scouted perspectives in the future. The form of the book is rich in structural ingenuities in which vivid symbols play a large part. The main symbol is the ocean, which begins as the unrealized destination of the youth of the principal character, Kurilov. In his growth, the sense of space gives way to the sense of time. The ocean transforms into the future to which all desires lead.

Neither this nor any of the minor symbols are left in static images. They are metaphors in motion, energetically fulfilled in action. In the development of the main symbol, Leonov devises a remarkable method for appearing directly among his characters. He is Kurilov's collaborator in the oceanic fantasy in which they stage the last revolutions, the last world war, and the first interplanetary pioneering.

Road to the Ocean is, in fact, a structure on three time levels. Most of the action, of course, takes place on the level of the present, on which we see Kurilov, head of the Political Department of a Soviet railroad, win, without his realizing it, his last battle with the White Guard enemy. The level of the past is entered through the researches of the historian of Kurilov's railroad. Some of the figures of the history step over into the present. And, in the same way, in Kurilov's contacts with the young and with children, horizon lights of the future shine in the present. The traffic between the three levels is incessant. What is most extraordinary is that there is no sacrifice of realism in this interpenetration of the present by the past and the future. Rather it makes possible a new and grander three-dimensional realism in which we feel the vast and plastic contours of time.

To analyze Leonov's achievement is a difficult undertaking, for it has that quality which lifts it beyond any teachable method, the quality we call genius. For example Leonov makes a dazzling and audacious use of the apparatus of scholarship to gain vivid literary effects. But we could not hope that the most painstaking imitator, unless he were a Laurence Sterne, could ever match footnotes so satirically pointed and apt.

Particularly impressive is the vitality of the writing. The words, the images, the ideas, the characters, the symbols all are tirelessly alive. A phrase like "the boyish clouds" immediately transmits the sense of invigorating weather. A metaphor like "Snowflakes flutter and

slowly choose a place to fall on" gives us the exact quality of a windless snowfall. These are not select examples. Every page seethes with this wonderfully active writing, which never sounds excessive except when, entering as casual conversation, it seems for the moment exaggerated for the character. In these small lapses, it is true, Leonov's wonderful eloquence and wit fall into excess.

As remarkable as anything in the book are its symbols. These are never used as substitutes for action. We are not asked to contemplate them; the symbols culminate the action and intensify it. Let us take, for example, the scene in which Liza admits to her surgeon husband—whose hobby is collecting clocks—that she has had an abortion and deprived him of his hoped-for child. It would seem that every drop in the husband's emotions of rage and grief and Liza's mingled defiance and contrition has been realized. But a fuller emotional measure is reached by climaxing it with the following symbol: Liza breaks one of her husband's treasured clocks—and then helplessly tries to stuff back the metal organism into the wound.

Another example: A Tartar mother travels far from her native village to see her Komsomol son, who has abandoned the old life to become a railroad engineer, lord of a formidable machine. She hopes to draw him back to the old life, and to the obedient passive girl she has picked to be his wife. Patiently she waits on, hoping that the boy will fail to master the machine and in his humiliation return with her.

"From time to time," writes Leonov, "she cast a silent and stern glance at the portrait of Stalin, and Stalin looked back at her just as steadily from the wall." And in this almost ritual exchange of glances we have an image of the struggle between the past and the future for the soul of the new generation.

I hope I have given hints, at least, of the scope, the richness, the vitality, and the significance of this remarkable book. As for the translation, Mr. Norbert Guterman has carried through a challenging assignment with distinction. It was a task almost comparable to translating Joyce. Leonov's range of interests is very large, and he has the conscientious writer's scruple in his choice of terms. In addition many of the scenes deal with a railroad yard, which has its special language. Then Leonov is careful to use the slang of past periods and

the dialect of remote districts, which impose additional strains on the translator. Finally, to reproduce the remarkable imagery of Leonov called for dexterity—and labor. Considering the general low level of translations from the Russian, it is fortunate that Leonov fell into Mr. Guterman's hands.

Mission Accomplished

A WALK IN THE SUN, by Harry Brown. Knopf. \$2.50.

WAR wastes many things, including a great store of words. While we have had a quantity of good war reporting, little American fiction written about the war thus far will live as literature. Harry Brown's short novel, however, is a masterpiece of writing. It may still be around when other epics of blood and thunder are so many spent torpedoes.

The *Walk* is the mission of a GI platoon in a beach-head landing. It is brilliantly reasoned from the general to the particular. Somehow there are thousands of men in that one platoon: thousands of American Joes, guys from the corner drugstore, behaving like soldiers.

The snafu is there. No one knows what good the platoon's mission will do if it succeeds. The shavetail lieutenant is brained by a wanton splinter of shell. "I don't want any fighters to catch me in an open field," says a southern boy named McWilliams; ten minutes later, curious to see what's burning beyond the ridge, he is running in the open when three Messerschmidts streak over. Sergeant Porter, battle weary, lies down and cries because his mind has given up the effort to think. But the scared, wisecracking platoon moves up the road, ambushes an armored car and tackles the farmhouse which is their objective.

Such is the canvas to which Private Brown has limited himself in his tight, sharply-defined portrait of the American Army, 1944. Privates Carraway and James discuss music (the Andrews sisters) and art (*Saturday Evening Post* covers). Farmer Sergeant Ward thinks about apples and studies the worn Italian soil. We recognize these fellows. We knew them on summer nights when they could still walk down to the delicatessen for a bottle of cold beer, come home and toss it off, and after a while climb in between clean sheets.

It is perhaps a comment on the quality of our wartime fiction that the *Walk* is right up there among the top two or three of the list. For it makes no pretensions. The beam it throws is power-

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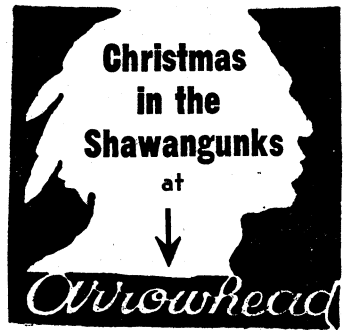
History a la Wiswell

WIFE TO MR. MILTON: THE STORY OF MARIE POWELL, by Robert Graves. Creative Age Press. \$2.75.

You can judge the general tenor of Mr. Graves' historical novel about John Milton pretty accurately from the publisher's blurb, which recommends the book for its "astute study of the 'sublime' Milton of *Paradise Lost*, at last portrayed in his true light, in those characteristics which led him to become Oliver Cromwell's Dr. Goebbels." And lest you think the publisher is letting his metaphors get the better of him, Mr. Graves provides a foreword in which he damns Cromwellian policy as "undisguised fascism." He grudgingly admits, however, that Milton was the author of *Areopagitica*, a plea for freedom of the press, and hurriedly passes on to say, "but almost as soon as the fighting was over he became Assistant Press Censor for the Council of State and helped to enforce a most repressive censorship law. This council was the executive of a minority government set up by the mutinous New Model Army, after they had suppressed the House of Lords and had forcibly reduced the Commons, by a purge of the conservative majority, to a small party of Independent members who were willing to cooperate in the execution of the king and the abolition of the monarchy."

It need scarcely be pointed out that Mr. Graves' view of England under the Protectorate is no more accurate history than is Kenneth Roberts' account of the American Revolution through the eyes of Oliver Wiswell. To both democracy is a sorry state of affairs whose every weakness is to be leaped upon in order to prove that it is fit for neither man nor beast.

Wife to Mr. Milton is, however, only indirectly a political tract, since Mr. Graves seems to be chiefly concerned with peeping through the keyhole into Milton's boudoir in an apparent attempt to show that Milton, a democrat, was quite inescapably a lousy lover and inconsiderate husband. Writ-



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ten in the first person as the story of Marie Powell, who was sixteen when Milton, at thirty-three, married her, the book is a series of complaints: Milton's courtship was not ardent, he failed to arouse her passion on their wedding night, he did not spend much money on her, he seemed more concerned with his than her affairs, he looked down on her as an inferior, he talked "over her head," he was a strict patriarch around the house, he lacked many of the social graces. Name any fault except infidelity that a husband has, and Milton had it.

All these faults, of course, flow from Milton's bourgeois-democratic politics, his association with Cromwell and other crude and disgusting wretches who overthrew Charles I. Was it not Milton who wrote:

... There can be slain
No sacrifice to God more acceptable
Than an unjust and wicked King.

With thoughts like that running around in his head, how could Milton be anything else but a domestic tyrant?

For Mr. Graves, the pity of it all is that the world moves; he would be much better off, and so would his readers, if he were, like Margaret Fuller, to accept the Universe, and quit such puerile mud-slinging as *Wife to Mr. Milton*.
STEPHEN PEABODY.

Brief Review

THE AMERICAN REVIEW OF THE SOVIET UNION, published quarterly by the American Russian Institute. Vol. VI. No. 1. 65¢ per copy.

IT is good to see that this invaluable quarterly has resumed publication after a lapse of nearly three years. For the expert in American-Soviet relations, the *Review* has provided in the past many useful articles and translations not available elsewhere in English. For the average reader it was a distinct service in building his knowledge of recent Soviet developments in industrial and cultural life. The new quarterly maintains this high tradition and its fresh dress makes it very attractive. The present issue is full of meat. There is a fine piece by Harriet L. Moore on "The USSR and the Pacific War," articles by Major General C. M. Wesson on "Administering Lend Lease for the Soviets," by Archibald MacLeish on "A Slavic Center for the Library of Congress," by Andrew J. Steiger on trends in Soviet aircraft production. Hans Blumenfeld's study of Soviet city planning is excellent.

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