

eager to receive him. But there is no evidence that he ever took their complicated and nonsensical theories seriously. "Das Kapital" must have seemed to him, if he ever actually read it, to be mainly bolony. His mind did not run in the direction of economic astrology. He was born a simple sentimentalist, and a sentimentalist he remained until his day was done. When, in his old age, the Bolsheviki began setting the world an example of what Socialism might be in practice he was frankly horrified. He was really no more than a Liberal, and, like all other Liberals, he spent a large part of his time mourning the treason of men he had trusted and revered. Some of them survive in the labor movement to this day, and are intimates of Dr. Hoover, and go to banquets in plug hats and white gloves, and tour the country in Pullman drawing-rooms. Old Gene, when he traveled, commonly hopped freights. He knew all the conductors and brakemen, and they were glad to accommodate him.

Despite his untiring devotion to the toilers of the land, they will probably forget him very quickly—if, indeed, they remember him even now. Perhaps they recall him, if at all, simply as a German spy who tried to stab Our Boys in the back and was clapped into the hoosegow for it by the great patriotic idealist, Dr. Wilson. Many of them belong to the American Legion today, or, if not to the American Legion, then to the Junior Order of United American Mechanics, the Patriotic Order Sons of America, the Ku Klux Klan or some other such tinpot organization. As members thereof they are committed to the doctrine that fellows of Debs's ways of thought should be stood up against the nearest wall and shot. The whole labor movement in the United States is in the hands of sleek, oily gentlemen who have learned that it is far more comfortable to make terms with the bosses than to fight them. These gentlemen, as I have said, are well fed and well tailored, and have no sympathy with dreamers. Presently they will be collecting money for a monument

to old Sam Gompers. But they will never propose a monument to Debs.

In the long run, however, he will probably be recalled, at all events by romantics. There was genuinely heroic blood in him, though he sacrificed himself to a chimera. Mr. Coleman has told his story very well.

### *Sassing Teacher*

THE CRITIQUE OF HUMANISM, edited by C. Hartley Grattan. \$3.50. 8½ x 5½; 364 pp. New York: Brewer & Warren

THIS symposium seems to be a counterblast to a volume called "Humanism and America," noticed here last May. Its contributors are mainly very young men, though one of them, Burton Rascoe, has got to the great age of thirty-eight, and another, Henry Hazlitt, is so old that he remembers the Taft administration and the trial of Lieutenant Becker. They fall upon the embattled Humanists from different directions and with different weapons, but all lay on with great energy. Mr. Grattan, in his opening essay, takes the metaphysical line, and shows that he is quite as much at home under the Portico as Professor Paul Elmer More. Edmund Wilson, who follows next, isolates half a dozen thumping imbecilities from the canon of More and Babbitt, and has some quiet fun with them, partly in the vulgate and partly in very fair Greek. Malcolm Cowley denounces the Humanists as snobs, Mr. Hazlitt exposes amiably their muddled and nonsensical thinking, Allan Tate shows how they bawl for something without knowing precisely what they want, and Mr. Rascoe, turning from doctrines to personalities, treats the heroes of the movement to an amusing psychoanalysis. There is even a champion from Greenwich Village, presumably in response to Dr. More's revilings of the magazine called *transition*. His name is Yvor Winters, and it appears, somewhat oddly, that he is currently a pedagogue at Leland Stanford, told off to teach the nascent Hoovers there the mysteries of beautiful letters. "It is my opinion," he says flatly, "that [Dr. William Carlos]

Williams is a major writer." Well, the Baroness Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven thought the same, as readers of Miss Margaret Anderson's autobiography will recall.

The volume is far better written than the one it tackles, and shows, in general, much clearer thinking. In any stand-up argument, indeed, the poor Humanists are bound to make a sorry showing, for the job before them is the almost hopeless one of fitting the ethical and æsthetic theories of small-town Methodists into philosophical frames. One and all, they are preëminently men who have been educated beyond their intelligence. Some of them, though surely not all, are of a very considerable learning, as learning is understood in the colleges. They have read many dull books and manage to remember what was in them. But whenever, turning aside from this second-hand wisdom, they essay to think on their own account, it appears at once that their mental processes are indistinguishable from those of any ordinary investment banker or devout police sergeant. On all the grave questions of being and becoming they reason exactly like Bishop Manning. This gives them a high respectability, but it corrupts their plausibility. Read carefully, Dr. More's "Christ the Word" turns out to be mere pious flummery, and Dr. Babbitt's recurrent bulls incite to mirth.

But it is this very feebleness, of course, that makes them popular among certain varieties of sophomores, both in and out of college. They give comfort to youngsters who might otherwise suffer damably, confronting a skeptical and ribald world. These youngsters are the sons of Babbitts and are doomed to go through life as Babbitts themselves. But when they get to college and begin to read forbidden books they make the disconcerting discovery that most of the values they have been brought up to revere are widely questioned, and by men who appear to be well regarded. Their dismay may seem comical to the spectator, but to them it is agony. I believe that Humanism, like its brother, Rotarian-

ism, relieves that agony effectively, and is thus worthy of the support of all humane men. It convinces them that, after all, the pastor back home is probably right—that papa, running his sash-weight factory, is really a better man than Cabell or Dreiser—that the United States sought no profit in the late war—that the editorials in the *Saturday Evening Post* are wise and profound—that Sacco and Vanzetti, being wops, got only what was coming to them. Thus convinced, they proceed to their destiny with glad hearts, and are naturally grateful to their deliverers.

The authors of the present volume make much of the fact that the Humanists, in the course of their deviling for the Watch and Ward Society, have cleared off virtually the whole of modern American literature, leaving only Dr. Babbitt's four or five volumes, Dr. More's series of tracts, and Dorothy Canfield's novel, "The Brimming Cup." I suggest that the gap be filled by the works of Dr. More's brother Brookes. I was reviewing his poems so long ago as November, 1917, but they failed to catch on. They are of a lush and voluptuous loveliness, and stand to the ordinary poesy of the day as the scientific works of the third More, Louis, stand to the Red ravings of Whitehead and Einstein. The best of them are to be found in the volumes called "Sweet Maggie McGee" (1916), "Great War Ballads" (1916) and "Songs of a Red Cross Nurse" (1918). Let Mr. Winters give his eye to these pieces and he will be less sure about the genius of Dr. Williams.

### *The Tarheel Empire*

NORTH CAROLINA: *Economic & Social*, by Samuel Huntington Hobbs, Jr. \$3.50. 9¼ x 6; 391 pp. Chapel Hill, N. C.: *The University of North Carolina Press*.

NORTH CAROLINA, once a spiritual and intellectual desert comparable to Delaware, West Virginia or Afghanistan, is now probably the most civilized of all the Southern States. I do not forget, of course, the recent tumults at Gastonia; on the con-