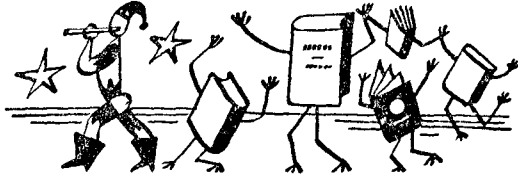

THE CHECK LIST



BIOGRAPHY

LINCOLN'S HERNDON, *A Biography*, by David Donald. \$5.00. *Knopf*. Here is the first full-length biography of Lincoln's partner and it is a magnificent job, both as research and as sheer writing. With this book Dr. Donald, who is an instructor of history at Columbia University, instantly joins the company of the great Lincoln experts of our time. He does for Herndon what Herndon tried to do for Lincoln in his celebrated biography of the martyred President: that is, he tries to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. He points out that Herndon was somewhat slipshod in various phases of his life, that he was familiar with the bottle, that at times he wasn't too scrupulous with facts, but he also shows that he, more than anybody else, gave us a full-length portrait of Lincoln which clashed sharply with the rapidly growing fictions about him. "Thus Herndon stands, in the backward glance of history, myth maker and truth teller." Carl Sandburg contributes a very appreciative introduction. There are several illustrations, a good bibliography and an excellent index.

A MAN CALLED WHITE, by Walter White. \$3.75. *Viking*. As a representative of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Mr. White has been involved in virtually every important battle for Negro rights in America during the past 30 years. Although he is obviously a man of invincible good will, his autobiography makes it clear that fighting for Negro rights

can be, to put it mildly, an exasperating occupation. It is not only the Rankins and Talmadges that he has to contend with, but also many of the people who profess friendship for his cause: the Southern liberals, who want to solve the Negro problem in their own way and their own sweet time; the Northern liberals (including President Roosevelt), who can think only in terms of long-range educational programs; the Communists, intent on exploiting the Negro for propaganda purposes; and finally, some of the Negroes themselves, who are passionately devoted to White and the NAACP, but who are still chary of acquiring reputations as "trouble-makers." The author does little editorializing; he is content, for the most part, to let the facts speak for themselves. Altogether, a deeply moving book.

HARVARD YARD IN THE GOLDEN AGE, by Rollo Walter Brown. \$2.50. *Wyn*. Mr. Brown, who knows Harvard as few other Harvard men know it, has assembled here a collection of profiles of a dozen eminent characters at the University of thirty, thirty-five years ago. Among them are "Copey," Le Baron Russell Briggs, Charles Lyman Kittredge, George Herbert Palmer, William James, Josiah Royce and George Santayana. All Harvard men will read them and re-read them with increasing pleasure and delight, for Mr. Brown writes simply, charmingly, and with the proper amount of sentiment. All the chapters are so good that it is really impossible to single out any one or two for special mention, but perhaps Harvard men will incline to rate the one

on "Copey" as somehow more flavorful than the others. That chapter is a warm and pulsating and highly revealing portrait of a man the like of whom has probably never before graced American higher education and probably will not do so again for a long time to come. Incidentally, non-Harvard men also should find the book of much interest, for the character studies are fascinating in themselves, whether the subjects were personally known to the reader or not.

WOBBLY, by Ralph Chaplin. \$5.00. *Chicago*. Mr. Chaplin was one of the builders of what is roughly known as radicalism in the United States. For some fifty years he lived and thought it, and he was on very friendly terms with such men as Debs and Bill Haywood. Lately, as the saying goes, he has calmed down a great deal and is now inclined to put far less faith in Karl Marx than in the Sermon on the Mount and the Bill of Rights. His present book is somewhat rambling and occasionally verbose, but it is also full of excitement and color, and will doubtless be a source book for future histories of American labor.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

THE NEW MEN OF POWER, *America's Labor Leaders*, by C. Wright Mills. \$3.50. *Harcourt, Brace*. Professor Mills considers American labor leaders to be in a peculiarly strategic position. He feels that by virtue of their "control" over 14 million workers, they would be able, in the event of a depression, to save the country from war or fascism. The purpose of this book, which appears to be written from a socialist viewpoint, is to analyze the labor leader—to find out his social beliefs, and to estimate what he would be apt to do in a time of crisis. Professor Mills' answers to these questions are based on an elaborate, but scientifically dubious, poll of labor leaders. He mailed out 1026 questionnaires to various officials of the AFL and CIO, and got 410 "usable returns." The size of this sampling, and the failure to provide assurances that it is typi-

cal, can only induce skepticism about the complicated statistics based on it. How much confidence can we have, for example, in the precise assertion that 34 per cent of all CIO officials who joined their unions before 1935, and 44 per cent of those who joined after that date, believe business will try to "break" the labor movement? This statistical foolishness is all the more unfortunate in that Professor Mills is otherwise a shrewd and original observer, who writes without any of the partisan hysterics commonly found in books on this subject:

THE PROPER STUDY OF MANKIND . . . , *An Inquiry into the Science of Human Relations*, by Stuart Chase. \$3.50. *Harper*. Like many others, Mr. Chase is appalled by the wide gap between man's achievements in the physical sciences and his ability to solve the problem of living with his fellows. His thesis is that social science, which he defines as "the application of the scientific method to the study of human relations," is "the last best hope for man's continuing on his evolutionary way, unimpeded by gamma rays." The nub of the book is that we must turn social science into a study as near in exactitude to the other sciences as possible, transferring it from the academic level to the practical and abandoning the system of water-tight compartments which today separate the various social studies from one another. The five chief elements which must be integrated into the new social science he lists as anthropology, psychology, sociology, economics and political science, while mathematics, statistics, logic and semantics are the "tools" with which the operation can be performed. As usual, Mr. Chase combines an extraordinary erudition and remorselessly logical mind with a gift for getting down to the reader's level and putting his points across in terms that make them stick.

THE INSIDE STORY OF THE LEGION, by Justin Gray, with Victor H. Bernstein. \$3.00. *Boni & Gaer*. The author of this irate volume worked on the Legion's American-