

## A LECTURE FOR DOROTHY

(Continued from Page 3, Col. 5)

naturally into blank verse. For when once this misled visionary mounts the platform, he becomes conscious that no supermen assemble to honor him. His flesh and blood audience is not even, in any real sense, sympathetic; at best it stays receptive, waiting to be wooed, waiting to be roused into approval of him, by its own standards. He perceives, too, that this audience (in common with any audience ever assembled anywhere) is not, or at least is not preeminently, intelligent. As a whole it very much prefers, it demands, and it awaits, those sleek false formulae which the wise honor with lip service in public. So the entrapped word-monger begins with his "Ladies and gentlemen," and after losing this trial balloon of fancy he is soon well under way in imaginative truckling.

I have been privileged at odd times to sit, serene and duteless, upon the rostrum whence some less lucky author was presently to address his public; and I have considered his raw material. Not ever did the spectacle prove exhilarating: never did I covet his job. To be applauded by such people seemed to me, in all honesty, compromising. Sloth, and ostentation, and a timid lechery, and light-headedness, and self-conceit, and disapproval, and inattention, and boredom, I found over plainly inscribed on the raised faces turned upward. And in yet more liberal quantities, of course, was to be seen gaping at us that dull-mindedness which continues to betray an unconcerned people into paying for, and even into using, tickets for a lecture.

## III

Now I daresay, my dear Dorothy, that these are the prevailing traits in any human assemblage of the better sort when one views it without prejudice. I admit that, by and large, it is to just this partially cultured audience every American artist must appeal. But my point is that the American author who is seduced into lecturing cannot any more evade this discouraging fact: night after night he faces directly his potential admirers, in the persons of you and of the other flibbertigibbet students and of the depressed faculty and of their frowzy friends. He regards perforce this squatted herd of Mammalia at close range. No further delusion is possible. He sees immediately before him his paymasters, in the sensual, the indifferent, the chuckle-headed, and the smug middle-classes of an imperfectly civilized nation, upon whose favor and whose shifty whims he and his famousness and all our national art are dependent, at the last pinch.

The point is, furthermore, that no intelligent person in such circumstances will elect to speak with intelligence. Instead, "subdued", as the phrase runs, "to what he works in", he will cannily assume the thin virtues, the high-minded illogic, and the false good-humor which all better-thought-of Americans admire; he will prattle; and he will thus earn his lecture fee honestly, by purveying the sane and edifying entertainment he promised.

But the more wise, the more cautious writer, remains snug in his study, at play with his words, and happily imagining that he addresses an all-worthy audience. That audience is in some sense the masterwork of every writer's invention. That audience does not exist anywhere in flesh, and at bottom he knows this. But in his bemused fancy that audience exists clearly enough throughout the while that he writes, and for that while it contents him.

## THE IGNORAMUS AS NOVEL READER

(Continued from Page 1, Col. 2)

loudly as every one else. It must not be imagined, however, that yearning is exclusively a Continental habit, for certainly, in my opinion, American novelists carry off the prize for depreciatory advertisement of their own land; they introduce a quite new yearning element—the yearning for Culture—surely the dulllest yearning of all.

## II

During my fairly frequent visits to the United States, I always think that Americans lead rather exciting lives—a little more exciting—(though, as an Englishwoman, I think a little less interesting)—than the average Western European. But then somebody gives me The American Novel to read, and it gives the lie to all I know of America. American novelists, so far as I can see, always tell their own story; they all lead exactly the same life. Of course I may be unlucky in the novels I have read—or possibly I keep on reading the same novel again and again by mistake, but, rightly or wrongly, I am convinced that I have followed fifty times the following narrative—or something very like it:

American novelists are always born on a prairie, of a tyrannical farmer father and a worn-out domestic mother (or vice versa). From the very start they are far, far too cultured for their surroundings. As a rule they love their mother or father to excess—never both. Their hearts seethe more and more with repressed culture, and they yearn continually to go to college in some prairie centre and live among cultured persons and learn to read Homer, Havelock Ellis, Nietzsche, Bertrand Russell and Freud. At last college is achieved, usually with the help of maternal self-sacrifice connected with the secret sale of eggs, but unfortunately culture is found to be lacking, even in college. Our multiple hero's character is moulded, (a) by a sympathetic assistant instructor who knows all about Karl Marx, can quote Kipling and T. S. Eliot in one breath and is presently fired for teaching subversive principles; (b) by the fact that a Fraternity called after a section of the Greek alphabet snobbishly refuses him on account of his poverty; an (c) by a Passionate Experience with some prairie vamp of oddly undelirious charm.

Our hero—but I must refer to him in the plural, since his name is legion—our heroes usually marry the vamp who immediately throws off her vampish disguise and becomes a sloven at home and a social climber abroad. Suffering is thus added to the influences that mould the character of our heroes. A baby is born, which is always adored by its father and neglected by its mother. Sometimes it is kept up late drinking cocktails; sometimes it is left alone in the house and falls into the fire or dies of typhoid; more often it simply cries itself to sleep. The family is whisked off by the fiendishly ambitious wife to Chicago, New York, or even Europe, and there the heroes are obliged to attend parties of uncultured persons to satisfy the wife's social aspirations. Very frequently the wife is so mad with ambition that she finally manages to noble an English baronet—or even, in extreme cases, an Earl—as guest at one of her soirées. The cultural level, however, remains as low as before. (American novelists have at last discovered that English baronets do not say "Bloody" or "Strike Me Pink," but baronets are believed to be poor fish, all the same,—probably rightly.) The wife lives beyond her income, although the heroes—suffering like anything, of course, all the time—are kept hard at it earning their living by selling something very uninspiring. At night the poor fellows try to write a Great Novel, but the constant soirées interrupt their work.

If a visit to Europe is achieved, the same thing always happens. The suffering heroes pursue culture in and out of cathedrals, ruined abbeys, the studios of expatriated Americans, Communist meetings, museums, etc.—but the wife Will Not Understand. At last the tide turns. The wife runs away with a Continental nobleman—usually the baby is seriously ill at the time—and our heroes are free to return to New York or Chicago and Begin Again. Immediately they re-discover a dear little girl whom they used to know back home on the prairie—a sinless schoolmarm, probably, who has loved them all along. She is not cultured but cooks well and has a mother heart. (A cultured wife would be almost as tiresome as a vamp to the true American hero; all he wants is the humble love of a dear little girl, and no baronets or millionaires about the place.) In the sympathetic atmosphere of a dear little home, the Great Book gets finished. It won't sell at all, one can see that—the heroes are so uncompromisingly cultured—but that doesn't matter; the dear little girl actually prefers being poor. And there is no doubt that the book is very Great. There the novel stops, because that is as far as the heroes have got with their own life.

On the whole it is perhaps more fun—(though more expensive)—to travel in person than to travel in print. It may be that the common tourist misses the essential yearning spirit of that region called Abroad—but at least he gets the illusion of variety, and that illusion alone is worth the extra money.

## SERVANTS OF GOD

## No. 12

(Their Holy House)

From the New York Tribune:

Examples of racial discrimination may be traced to the Church itself, the Rev. Dr. Allen Knight Chalmers, pastor of the Broadway Tabernacle Congregational Church, at Fifty-sixth Street, said in his sermon yesterday. "Recently I visited a church where the Fiske University singers were appearing," he continued. "The church was located in an apartment hotel owned by the church and from which it derived its economic life. There were plenty of empty rooms in the hotel but at the conclusion of the service the sixty young students were not allowed to register there but were forced out into the sleet and snow to seek lodging elsewhere."

## THE NEW DEAL?

by JAY FRANKLIN

NATIONAL politics are in the melting pot. Roosevelt's election implemented the old Jacksonian alliance of the South and West against East and North. As the implications of this alliance come to light in national policy, there will be loud yells followed by hasty counter-attacks. At present, the remnant of the Republican Party is paralyzed by the struggle for future control. Poor old Hoover thinks he can be re-elected in 1936. Somebody told him that Cleveland was re-elected after being once defeated. Ogden Mills is encouraging Hoover in the Cleveland complex. On the other hand, the "liberal wing," headed by Representative Wadsworth and Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, hopes to attract younger men into the party. The Old Guard—the Moses, Smoots and Watsons—still hold the party machinery and aren't displeased that the election went the way it did, if it succeeded in weakening Hoover's hold on the party. The Western or "progressive" Republicans, that remarkable group of elderly and loquacious Senators from the cow states, have virtually seceded from the party and are in loose alliance with the Democrats.

The Democrats are making desperate efforts to hold and increase the independent, liberal, and progressive following which holds the balance of power between the parties. Roosevelt is committed to a policy of following liberal principles. On the other hand, if the Solid South should discover that liberalism is not designed solely for export to the North and West, and should detect it below the Mason-Dixon line, where every striker is regarded as a Communist, the South would secede from the Democratic party. The Socialist and Communist party votes, and the radical parties generally, are on the decline. They went Democratic in 1932. Roosevelt cannot hold them in line, if he defers to the South; if he follows a radical policy, he may lose the South. Both of the major parties are, there-

fore, split, and the future of partisan action is prejudiced by deep and irreconcilable feuds.

These feuds will be intensified by the growth of native American radicalism, that is to say, by the growth of willingness to meet practical individual problems by new and unorthodox means. It is the greatest single phenomenon of our day. In the past four years, the United States has become socialistic in psychology, while vigorously repudiating Socialism. We are becoming communistic in practise, while violently repressing Communism. The revolt of the farm belt and the impatience of the intellectuals and the younger men with the old ways, the old ideas and the old fools who have made an economic shambles of the richest nation in the world, will make the next four years exciting, to say the least.

Organized labor is getting ready to make urgent demands. At the beginning of the depression, a prominent labor leader remarked in private conversation, "During the depression, organized labor will be too frightened and demoralized to do anything. As soon as the depression shows signs of passing, organized labor will raise hell!" With state Socialism already in force through the Farm Board, the R.F.C. and the other Hooverian institutions, Hoover's Committee on Recent Social Trends still urged that we adopt governmental and economic planning. Not so long ago, while President Hoover at Indianapolis described "planning" as a sort of "infection" from the Russian Five-Year Plan, and denounced it. We are changing.

Younger groups throughout the country are in a ferment. The League for Independent Political Action, the New National Party group, the Militant Liberalism movement, are all symptoms of the search for a practical policy. The Douglas Credit Scheme is still being discussed. The late lamented Technocracy was greeted with such a wave of hope and fear that the principle of economic and functional research involved in it was forgotten, as the word went out to pan the Technocrats among the little brothers of the rich. Nevertheless, it was taken with seriousness, especially among the conservatives, as a new and hopeful approach to the old problem of economic stability and individual security. And finally, radicalism has been given great impetus by the almost incurable stubbornness and stupidity of our business and political stuffed shirts. Unless all of the laws of politics and of human behavior are false, President Roosevelt will have to ride or resist a rising wave of radical thought and unrest among the younger men.

The muddle and mess of our foreign relations is a monument to this theory. Messrs. Hughes, Kellogg and Stimson have succeeded in undermining our power, dissipating our influence and discrediting our policies in every corner of the globe. (And they were the best lawyers in the country.) Their disarmament policy has broken down in Europe and has succeeded only in weakening the power of the American navy to support our policy in the Pacific and Far East. Their Far Eastern policy has succeeded only in goading Japan, which is now in the control of young men, into further conquests and invasions in China, while their policy of refusing to deal with Russia has robbed us of the support of the only nation which has aims and interests similar to our own in the Far East. Their Kellogg Peace Pact has pushed us into a position of moral disapproval of Japan, without enlisting significant support in Europe. Their debt policy has succeeded in alienating from us all of our former associates in the war against Germany. If we should find ourselves engaged in hostilities with Japan over Manchuria (in which we have few important interests), with an inadequate navy and without Allies, the blood of innocent people will rest on the heads of Messrs. Hughes, Kellogg and Stimson and on the memories of Presidents Harding, Coolidge and Hoover. As it is, many Chinese have died during the past two years because the statesmen in charge of our foreign policies lacked the intelligence to realize that a moderate moral pretensions, unless backed by the power to secure compliance with our views, are irresponsible and dangerously short-sighted. Our cynical abandonment of the Philippines is a symptom both of the decline of American power engendered by twelve years of old men's political rule and of the decay of patriotism engendered by an equal period of old men's greedy control of business life.

We enter the Summer of 1933 blissfully unaware of the fact that the real struggle between the pre-war and post-war men and ideas is just beginning. The old men still have the power, the young men have only time on their sides. The New Deal promises to be a race between catastrophe and the death rate.

## EIMI, EIMI, MEIMI, MO

by BEN HECHT

WELL, Tovarisch, we've been done in. Gospodin E. Cummings E. has just emerged from Russia, unholy land, all doubled up and yelling "Fou!" He no like.

In an enormous four-pound book yclept "Eimi" (for our Gospodin is a bit of a Greek scholar) E. Cummings E. has at those goddam Russian Soviets like an infuriated parakeet. Of all the dithering, fussy Maiden Aunts who ever yipped at the heels of Station Agents and Visa Officials, of all the package-dropping, umbrella-toting, yammering and perversity glass-buttocked and fretful Yankees who ever went exploring, our Gospodin, E. Cummings E., cops the ivory toilet set.

As a commentator, observer, reporter on what's going on in the Soviets, Cummings is, let me assure you, Comrades, deaf, dumb and blind. Bedevilled by bum beer, dreadful odors and the wrong kind

of mattresses, our Gospodin on arriving in the Muscovite Utopia went into a temper, stamped his foot, crossed his eyes and started keening for the defunct aristocracy. "Eimi" is the gasp by gasp account of a sort of three month fit thrown by a tourist who, howl though he would, failed to get the proper service.

And what a fit! Our Gospodin staggered in and out of Moscow speakeasies denouncing waiters, bus boys and the egg sandwiches; he fell off tram cars, cursing conductors (nobody could understand him or he might have picked up many a poke in the nose); he was swindled by guides, hotel clerks and even flower vendors; he went around with a clothespin on his nose (for he can't stand smells, O, Fair Harvard). He scratched his fanny, screamed at bed-bugs, hollered his brains out when he got short-changed, kicked up his heels at literary teas, swilled beer like a he-man and tossed off vulgarities to the left and to the right but never, O, never (being a married man, as he tells the reader) laid a finger on a wench, though this doesn't prevent our Gospodin from giving out the news that the sovietized Tootsies are pretty lame pickings in the hay—a pal told him.

He took in all the shows, squawking at the price of tickets, at the bum plots, no good acting and the prevalence of halitosis. In short, he fluttered through Moscow and Odessa, a young Coolidge on a bender, and came out wrapped in the Stars and Stripes, ready to turn State's Evidence and with a two-hundred-and-twenty-five-thousand word announcement that E. Cummings E. is one hell of a sensitive plant.

But though no inner or outer picture of Russia results (beyond a vague sense that the Gospodin hurtled through Timbuctoo in a wheelbarrow), "Eimi" is the most complete full-length combination portrait, inside and out, of a Parlor Pink put to the fire, of an American tourist (hay fever and all) embattled in heathenish foreign ports, of the Art conquers All aesthete (U. S. A. hatched) that has come skipping down the pike in a score of moons.

So, Comrades, what do we find in this latest of the Lenin hamstrings? What, as we say in our meetings, is the psychology of this Bourgeois? Comrades, the psychology of this Bourgeois is that underneath the eclectic literary hocus-pocus of which this Bourgeois has for some years been a persistent practitioner, is the mentality of a Harvard adolescent. It is a discovery difficult to make, since the Gospodin chooses to write in a very fancy style full of feather-stitchings, battenberg-work, misplaced punctuation, etc., etc., all of which must have driven the Covic-Friede printers nuts. But unfortunately the Gospodin has one fine gift. He is one of the best dialogue writers, one of the most succinct, malicious and high-handed quoting experts in these parts. As a result, an insight into his meditations, a bit confused in his more ambitious passages, becomes possible.

And with this insight we find that E. Cummings E. is basic type No. 1 of the U. S. A. aesthete—the pedant gone-a-wenching with lingo; the sub-professor reddening his nose in the hope of being mistaken for one of the boys. We find a vocabulary full of obsolete slang, attempts at airy man-in-the-street locutions of the sort that usually characterize the Realisms of the Studio tough boys. What a hail fellow this is, what a human eyes-a-twinkle laddie we have here, full of proletarian esprit and wise to the doings and sayings of the Male rampant—until somebody rubs his nose in the way the world is run. Whereupon, one whiff of a good honest healthy Russian (a wee bit high) and he is off in a cloud of New England horror. He retches, pales, stutters, pines all the type, and goes staggering down a Moscow street, undone.

The human nobility, the economic dream behind the little mishaps our Gospodin encountered in the land of the Soviets, have no meaning for him. He sneers voluminously and with considerable native talent at the tomb of Lenin. He can see in the whole Russian experiment only a dastardly effort to short-change him and interfere with his creature comforts and rare Nordic sensibilities. But enough of that.

"Eimi" is a tome of some importance, not only as a graphic, diverting, almost Mark Twainish account of a New England Bo-Peep among the wolves, but as an indication of a new style in American radicalism. It looks as if our local *Schöngeist* are doffing their Cossack hats. Bohemia, long the pale champion of revolt, is turning thumbs down on the travail of the underdog. As a result of "Eimi" there will ensue, Comrades, a wave of aesthetic yipping at the Stalin heels because Art is more important than Industry and because Artists are superior to Policemen. Sez who?

E. Cummings E.'s opus, inevitably enough, has been given courteous and oh such pleasant cheering in the press, particularly that conservative press which once roared at its book reviewer's mouth whenever our Gospodin waltzed into vision with his sputtering. But now this erstwhile pariah has been taken to the bruised but still starched bosoms of the Democracy. The subscribers are assured that E. Cummings E.'s peculiar manner of writing is as easy as pie to decipher, that a deciphering will be rewarded by some fine literary nuggets, and that every red-blooded American should really do his best to wade through the thing. Goombye Gospodin!

But in closing, thanks old chap, for the Odessa Mentor.

The Editors, with tears in their eyes, note the epiphany of Château Mouquin, 1933.

The Gold Standard: The pot without the rain-bow.

Internationalism: Mother-in-law's Day.

## PHOTOSTATIC COPIES

(Continued from Page 3, Col. 2)

husband to make a bench over from the other side of the room so that she could rest. The top had a heavy layer of dust, she observed, and there wasn't a newspaper in the room.

Feeling around in her muff, Effie came across the lyrics of the minstrel and sighed as she decided it was their lustre which must defend her from the soot. So, sparingly and carefully, she placed the sheets on the bench and sat herself within their confines. Thus, they remained undisturbed for an hour. Schuyler borrowed Effie's fur-piece and moved away from the fire but she lingered, deep in thought, until the army of officials arrived.

When her husband had been taken into the next room with the male examiners, she was left alone with two amazons. Rising, she noticed with regret that the lyrics were well-nigh indistinguishable and so threw them into the fire. This action aroused the suspicions of one of the matrons, who whispered to her companion and hurried from the room.

The remaining matron performed the customary examination and then ordered Effie to stand with her face to the wall. After a second the matron let out a shriek and Effie remembered three other women running into the room with a tripod which was lowered a trifle. There was a hurried conference among the quartet, followed by a flash and a click. Effie wondered why she should be photographed in such a unique position and felt nauseated at a second flash when she felt smoke creeping up her back. At a third explosion Effie's legs felt as if she were being burned and she fainted away, upsetting the tripod.

## II

When she awoke, Effie found herself in bed in a small room. A sheet was pinned around her and on the corner of the feather cover she saw the name of the *Hotel Central*. She rang, and the principal matron from the station stepped in. She tried to speak but the amazon guardian pushed a formal-looking paper into her hands. In large, unsteady letters, the message was written in English:

"Until Berlin further activities to announce care shall, you as a personage of suspect here held are while curious and highly interesting hieroglyphics on your person found were. Photographs of the unidentified area to Berlin sent been have and your mann is here at the hotel. His excellency the American consul from Dantzig today coming is but until the mysterious code found on you determined is, you at the Hotel Central held be shall where full pension by you, under the demands of the Berlin secret police who in a few hours arriving are, paid be will." The signature was beyond Effie and, when left alone, she went back to sleep.

She was next awakened by a number of officials standing around her room and passing copies of a newspaper from one to another. Finally they passed one to her and she emitted a faint scream as she recognized the scrawl of the minstrel. The picture was not bad, she thought, and for a first view she was rather proud of her pet birthmark.

On his first case since arriving in Europe, the young vice-consul from Dantzig was the next to appear. He had been in touch with Moscow already and had been able to identify the Hemingways, but all identification was to no avail as the photostatic copies of the mysterious lyrics had caused a mild sensation at the Wilhelmstrasse.

Intrigues of the most far-reaching influence were read into the couplets, especially as they were in four languages. Copies were sent to all the principal offices of the Secret Service, and the Emperor, in ordering a special investigation, commanded all code specialists to deduce every possible shred of physical importance from the pictures.

Effie explained everything, including the beauty mark, to the blushing vice-consul who, in his university German, struggled to convey the matter above the waist to the intelligence of the small town authorities. But, again, to no avail. Finally, he managed to sneak in several flasks of hot water to Effie which she applied to the disputed territory, thus removing any further opportunity for amateur photographers who were related to the officials: to search for sensationally provocative material.

Then the vice-consul appealed to Washington and sharp inquisitive cables were sent to Berlin in the name of Democracy. Effie even planned to notify her section of the American Women's Clubs who were short of issues to protest at the time. But before return cables were necessary, the real spies were located in Breslau and the Wilhelmstrasse turned to other matters of amusement than the blurred couplets of Frau Hemingway.

Effie offered to pay any sum for the return of the original plates but a certain Herr Jessner, who was organizing a Nacktkultur Club, bid for the property and placed them in his collection. And it was only last Fall when a new Mata Hari was discovered in Latvia that the Hemingway records were brought to light again. The Hitlerites showed great interest in the case as a valuable piece of Imperialist stupidity, but Herr Jessner refused to allow his negatives to be reproduced, maintaining that it might influence the Nazi nudists.

## REQUIRED READING

"The American Review." No. 1. April 1933

Required reading: *The New Age*, 1907-1914; *The New Witness*, 1910-1914; *The Dublin Review*, 1911-1914; *La Revue Universelle*, 1911-1914; *The Egoist*, 1913-1914; *The Nation*, 1909-1914; *The Independent*, 1901-1903; *Illustrated London News*, 1907-1914; Hilaire Belloc, "The Party System," London, 1911; G. K. Chesterton, "What's Wrong With the World," London, 1910.