

We append our answers:

1. Certainly not. It is an insult to the authors of America for some of them to pose as representatives of their profession for the purpose of furthering a particular cause, in this case the cause of Communism.

2. As a class, no. But it did very nicely demonstrate just why a large number of writers hold, and deserve to hold, an inferior position in America today: namely, because they are so chuckle-headed they can see nothing to do with their righteous indignation at modern industrial society but to put it at the service of the sham cure of Communism; to engage in all the infantile tactics of Communist propaganda, such as pretending they are interested in the veterans

getting their bonus, trying to conceal themselves in "innocent clubs" like the National Committee for the Defence of Political Prisoners, trying to see the President without an appointment to read him a "protest" consisting doubtless of misstatements, humanitarian balderdash, and a sprinkling of the horrendous Communist jargon; and then crying to heaven when their plans are balked, and acting as though it were a grave insult to Communists to be reported as going to a Communist headquarters, or to children to be treated like children.

3. The writers we speak of are not indifferent to burning social questions; they are merely stupid about them.

4. No more than the above; except to linger for a moment to remember sadly the contributions of Sherwood Anderson and Waldo Frank to American literature, and to wonder what James Rorty, William Jones, and Elliot E. Cohen may have done for the cause.



E. M. FORSTER

Will Rothenstein's portrait drawing of the subject of an article in this issue. Reproduced from the handsome volume of Rothenstein portraits published by the Viking Press.

Tempest in a Bookshop

No literary anecdote which has recently come to our attention so neatly sums up the atmosphere of a period as the one with which our contributor Hugh Kingsmill opens his new biography of Frank Harris (*Farrar & Rinehart*, \$2.50). The time is 1912. The scene is the inner room of Dan Rider's bookshop, off St. Martin's Lane in London. Middleton Murry, who was running a wildly enthusiastic article on Harris in the forthcoming number of *Rhythm*, had brought Katherine Mansfield along to meet his idol. These two, Kingsmill, and others were awaiting the Great Man's arrival.

Our talk, as we waited for Harris, was desultory, like the talk on the battlements of Elsinore before the arrival of Hamlet's full-throated fa-



Vaughan and Freeman

PHYLLIS BOTTOME

the English novelist, who writes an article on her craft for this issue of "The Bookman". Her latest novel is "Devil's Due".

ther. A stir in the outer room of the shop, a movement of the air such as precedes an avalanche, and Frank Harris was with us. In his hand he brandished the June number of *Rhythm*. "Good God, Murry!" he roared. "What have you done here?"

"What is it, Frank? What have I . . . ?" Murry rose to his feet, very pale.

"Listen to this!" Harris laid the paper on the table and turned the leaves over with rapid, scornful jerks. "Listen, all of you! 'James Stephens is the greatest poet of our day. With this book he has stepped at once into the company of those whom we consider the greatest poets the world has ever known. Henceforward, listen to this, the lot of you!—henceforward James Stephens stands with Sappho, Catullus, Shakespeare . . . ? Pahl!'"

"But, Frankie. . . ."

"You wrote this, eh?"

"Yes . . . but. . . ."

Harris placed his finger on a passage, quoted by Murry as better than Milton, in which God tells how he—

"threw down the sky
And stamped upon it, buffeted a star
With my great fist, and flung the sun afar."

"God's great fist!" Harris roared. "And you call this better than Milton! You, Murry, put this drivel above *Paradise Lost*!"

Most of those present knew that the next number of *Rhythm* contained Murry's comparison of Harris and Shakespeare. His terrible situation moved our pity, we were conscious of Katherine Mansfield's sharp brown eyes staring at Harris, but none of us ventured to intervene except Kenneth Hare, who could be heard through the thunder of Harris's scorn supporting Murry's faltering plea for this and that quotation.

On the table lay the contents bill of the July number of *Rhythm*, headed by the article on Harris: "Who is the Man?" Harris picked it up and read out the first three items:

"Who is the Man?"

"Drawing."

"The Shirt."

"The Shirt!" he repeated, and threw the bill down with a laugh. "Drawing of a man in a shirt, eh? By God, Murry, this paper of yours is going to make a stir," and he was beginning to improvise in Rabelaisian vein on the man in the shirt when Murry burst into tears and ran out of the shop.

"Good God!" Harris stared round in amazement.

"Oh, he'll kill himself!" Katherine Mansfield cried, and rushed after Murry.

"What the . . . ?" Harris gasped.

"That's Katherine Mansfield," I said.

"Katherine Mansfield!" He struck his brow with his hand. "Katherine Mansfield!" He turned to Harold Weston: "I thought she was a girl of yours."

Weston shook his head modestly.

"Why didn't any of you tell me?"

There was a long silence, and my next memory is of Harris and myself outside the shop.

"Go and bring them back, Kingsmill," he was saying. "Tell them I am infinitely sorry. I would not have had this happen for

worlds." His hand went to his waistcoat pocket. "Take a taxi both ways." He pressed two coins into my hand—pennies, but the moment was too tense for trivial adjustments. "Both ways, Kingsmill," he repeated, and went back into Dan's.

Katherine Mansfield and Murry were sitting opposite one another on either side of the fireplace in their Gray's Inn Road flat. They had been crying, but were now composed.

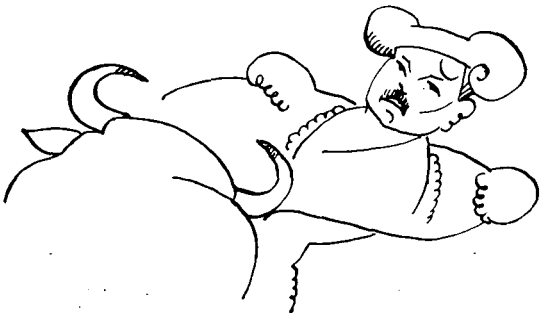
"Harris is awfully sorry," I said. "It was just his . . . you know. He wants you to come back. He sent me in a taxi."

They shook their heads. "He's wonderful, wonderful!" Murry sighed. "But . . . No, not just yet. Not to-day."

"Not to-day," Katherine Mansfield echoed.

"He'll be awfully worried if you don't. He was frightfully upset. It was just his . . . he didn't mean it. You know how carried away he gets. I've never seen him so upset. . . ."

Finally they were persuaded to return, and the evening ended quietly. In the next issue of *Rhythm* Murry duly published his article on Harris, but added at the end that Harris was "a man whose word of praise can change the whole of life for me for months, and a word of condemnation make me cry till I think my heart would break. Even if *Rhythm* achieves nothing else that is ultimately permanent, it shall be rescued from oblivion by this alone, that it told the truth about Frank Harris".



ERNEST HEMINGWAY

in hunting costume. His book on bull-fighting, "Death in the Afternoon", is reviewed in this issue. Below, a caricature of Hemingway as a bull-fighter by the Spanish painter, Luis Quintanilla.

The Appleton Biographies

THE new series of Appleton Biographies is a daring venture in publishing. It is based on three perfectly ridiculous assumptions: that people really want to read good writing; that the great men of the past are still great; that to view any human life steadily and as a whole is desirable or even possible. The courage of the Appleton editors has produced a shelf of—so far—eight urbanely written volumes, of less than two hundred pages each, and there will be more in the spring. The authors are men of well-matured interest in the fields in which their subjects move. They have not crammed for the occasion like Strassburg geese, nor on the other hand have they buried their heads like the ostrich in the archaeology of one human being.