

COMMON GROUND

panded by a top-ranking social scientist whose concern is that America move forward from a stage of barbarism in its race relations.

Most of the World, edited by Ralph Linton (Columbia University Press. \$5.50), brings together a distinguished group of anthropologists, sociologists, and a social geographer to provide brief but systematic treatment of the peoples, their culture and history, relations between races, the climate, topography, natural resources, agriculture and industry—in short the geopolitics—of Latin America with a special chapter on Brazil, Africa, the Near East, India and Pakistan, Southeast Asia and Indonesia, China and Japan. These areas of the world and their

peoples, until recently under European domination or hegemony, are today attached neither to western civilization nor to communism. In the introductory article, Linton writes, "Whether we like it or not, one world is today a functional reality, and the unification has gone far enough so that the peoples of the world must stand or fall together. . . . The purpose of this book is to give an accurate picture of conditions which exist in most of the world today in the hope that this may assist in the formation of public opinion and may provide a basis of sound knowledge for future planning." Popularly written, this volume is an excellent general reference with ample citation of source material for the specialist.

PUSHING BEHIND THE STEREOTYPES

REVIEWS BY HELEN PAPASHVILY

Most Californians are extremely fond of haciendas and patios, tamales, carved combs, mantillas, embroidered shawls, and fiestas. Unhappily this affection does not extend to the originators of these attractive items, the Mexican Americans themselves. They are too often only the poor relation in their very rich uncle's house. In *American Me* (Houghton Mifflin Literary Fellowship Book. \$3.50) Beatrice Griffith has written a beautiful, moving, and challenging study of the younger generation of this minority group in a hostile world. Some of the material appeared earlier in *COMMON GROUND*. Now expanded and developed in three sections, Smoke, Fire, and Phoenix, she tells the story of the unrest in Southern California preceding the so-called zoot-suit riots, the riots, and then the ways and means too few people took to help

change the situation. Her chapters discuss factually the real problems that confront the young teen-agers of Mexican American families in relation to their church, their schools, their jobs, their neighbors, their families, and the law. Then to each chapter she adds a story from her rich store of experience to illustrate her point. This sounds as if it would be an awkward technique. In less skilled hands it might have been. But touched with Miss Griffith's artistry, the half fact, half fiction combine to make a whole and complete and shocking truth. This is the American tragedy: the tragedy of young people with a great capacity for happiness, who need so little to achieve it, yet are denied even that little. Loyalty tests are greatly in fashion these days. Here is a simple one. Read *American Me*. If you are overcome with shame at

what has been done to these young charges of ours—if you are filled with a burning desire to see they have a better chance in the future, then you are a true believer in democracy.

No doubt the first sailor of Christopher Columbus' Pinta was ready to give the last man off the *Santa Maria* some pointers on how to walk, talk, and conduct himself in the new world; and Americanizing the newcomer has gone on ever since. As Number 545 of the Studies in History, Economics, and Public Law edited by the Faculty of Political Science of Columbia University, *The Movement to Americanize the Immigrant* (Columbia University Press. \$3.25), by Edward George Hartmann, is a scholarly, well documented study of the Americanization program in the second decade of this century. Beginning with the work of the North American Civic League, Mr. Hartmann traces the movement down to the period after the first World War, when federal and state institutions took over most of the work of individuals and private groups. He gives his reasons for the rise, growth, and decline of the movement; and his clear and objective summation of the results of the program cannot fail to interest and perhaps surprise any thoughtful reader. An excellent bibliography of almost 1,500 sources is included, with the material divided into two sections—favorable and unfavorable to the plan.

In twenty-eight charming essays, Dr. Lee M. Friedman tells little-known or long-forgotten stories of Jews in relation to their non-Jewish neighbors in the United States. His whole book, *Pilgrims in a New Land* (Jewish Publication Society of America and Farrar, Straus. \$4) is a delight from the first story that tells of Cotton Mather's attempt to write a post-biblical Jewish history to the last

page of notes and bibliography. There's an account of the building of Touro Synagogue in Newport (the state of Rhode Island helps pay the Rabbi); a fascinating study of the Jewish peddler in history; a fine chapter on Ernestine Rose, one of the first workers for women's rights; plus twenty-five more pieces selected and arranged to show the Jew in American history, in the process of adjustment, as part of the American spirit, and as a participant in American economic life. Dr. Friedman has the talent to recognize a story and the ability to tell it with clarity, drama, and humor. While this book is primarily intended for adults, the simplicity of the style would make it an ideal text for supplementary reading for students in American history.

The most surprising thing about *The Affairs of Dame Rumor*, by David J. Jacobson (Rinehart. \$5), is that someone didn't write it before. It's a book that's been long needed. Mr. Jacobson tells the history of the rumor—as a joke, as a symbol of fear, as a weapon. He shows how rumors start and grow and die only to reappear all over again in a new and better version. There is a section on tracing, controlling, and stopping (or trying to stop) rumor, and also a good bibliography. It's a fascinating book without a dull page in it.

There is a great amount written every day on anti-Semitism—why it exists, what it does, how it can be stopped. Jean-Paul Sartre's *Anti-Semite and Jew* (Schocken Books. \$2.75) is unusual because it offers some new ideas on the old theme. Mr. Sartre believes (and this may suffer from over-simplification) that no external factor can induce anti-Semitism in the anti-Semite. Anti-Semitism is the refuge (and the strength) of the limited and frightened man who wants the safety of mediocrity yet must have some kind of

aristocracy no matter how false to keep his pride. The anti-Semite therefore creates the Jew. Mr. Sartre does not offer a solution to the problem, but he states the conditions under which a solution might be found. That is in "concrete liberalism," a system where all who contribute toward a country have full rights as citizens—as Jews, Arabs, Negroes—as concrete persons, not as, or dependent upon their changing to, potential members of the desired group. To attain "concrete liberalism" Mr. Sartre believes we need education, propaganda, basic laws, and an integrated society whose members feel bonds of solidarity and where the instruments of labor are owned collectively. Only a careful reading of the whole book can do justice to the author's

ideas. It is a thoughtful and a thought-provoking volume.

The Community Chest in the minds of many has but one problem—to get sufficient contributions each year to reach the announced goal. This achieved, no one has to worry, and everything is taken care of until the next campaign. Clarence King's *Organizing for Community Action* (Harper, \$3) dispels any such illusion and takes the reader behind the scenes to show that spending the Community Chest funds wisely is more difficult than raising them. In a series of typical problems faced by the average board and enlivened by actual case histories, Mr. King has done a handbook that should be read by every civic-minded citizen.

CURRENT FICTION

REVIEWS BY EDDIE SHIMANO

In her description of a Connecticut town, Bianca Bradbury, author of *The Curious Wine* (Beechhurst Press, \$2.75), is at her best. She writes with much sympathy of the New England natives, of their admirable traits and their contrasting narrowness. The theme of this book, a first novel, is anti-Semitism—and this is where the author is left with only her good intentions. The story is about Marty Townsend who marries Luke Beloff, a Jew, and returns to her home town where her husband plans to practice medicine. Her mother, the town arbiter of social standards and conduct, is the leading figure in the anti-Semitic attacks against her own son-in-law. It is easy to hate her; there was nothing likable about her even before the problem of anti-Semitism ever came up—and it is in this convenient stereotyping that Miss

Bradbury fails to write a worth-while book. Discrimination exists in all its evil and widespread ramifications not because only bores, the ignorant, or otherwise disagreeable people practice it. In *The Curious Wine* the mother moves to another town, virtue triumphs, and no one has been really changed in any way.

In another part of the world, the color problem exists with all its violence unchecked. Peter Abrahams writes of this with great feeling in *The Path of Thunder* (Harper, \$2.75), and the story of a white girl and a colored (mixed blood) man in South Africa will strike a familiar note to Americans.

While not essentially a story of intermarriage, Alice Tisdale Hobart's *The Cleft Rock* (Bobbs-Merrill, \$3) touches on the conflict between a father who believed in Anglo-Saxon superiority and