

THE URGE

irresistible —
the URGE to write!

HAVE you ever asked yourself why you feel that persistent urge to write — why you can't escape it? Is it desire for glory? Or money? Or is it fundamentally something else.

Have you ever thought that it might be an instinctive yearning to find a sympathetic audience — an understanding brother with whom you may share your inmost thoughts? Too often the men and women with whom you are thrown into closest contact fail to give you this sympathetic comprehension — they are busy with their own concerns and ambitions. And you find yourself longing to turn from their indifference to a warmer, friendlier world.

Whatever you do, don't try to stifle this urge. Don't let a discouraging sense of inferiority hold you back. You don't know — and no one else knows — what your possibilities are until you have given them a fair chance to express themselves. *You owe it to yourself to make a real effort to complete that story or article.* If you do not, you will go through life feeling frustrated — disappointed — embittered.

Mr. F. J. Wade, Box 505, Sullivan, Mo., is but one of many men and women trained by the Newspaper Institute of America to make their gift for writing pay prompt dividends. He writes:



"After only a few months of training, I am in receipt of two checks so far this month. One was for an article for the American Machinist; the other was for a humorous story in the American Merchant Magazine."

Another of our student-members who tried is Mrs. Drusilla Crankshaw, 28 Irving St., Cambridge, Mass. She writes: *"You can imagine how thrilled your over-fifty-year-old cub was when she opened her mail early this week to find a fifty dollar check for a description of a trip she took last August. I am very much pleased with the training your copy desk has given me."*

**Perhaps this is what you
have been looking for**

HUNDREDS of men and women who feel that they have something to say have come to the Newspaper Institute of America to learn how to say it. About half of these people are considering journalism as a career. The others see in journalism the ideal training for other types of commercial writing.

"The feature of N. I. A. instruction that has been of the greatest value to me," one student writes, "is the discipline. I needed to have my vague literary ambitions focused on a definite objective. I needed one outside influence which would make me stick at it — which would keep my interest at the boiling point. Your specific assignments mailed to me each week solved both these difficulties. I enjoyed covering those assignments — they made me feel as if I were the star reporter on an important newspaper. Finally, the knowledge that every word I wrote was going to come under the critical eyes of the editors at your copy desk made me exert myself to the utmost. After one month of writing under their supervision, I felt that I had learned more than in an entire year of Advanced English Composition at college."

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make up your mind**

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Books

the golden chains which bind half the earth to Wall Street. In nearly every department America has conquered Britain. The reader's brain becomes numb at the impact of Mr. Denny's avalanche of facts. Billions of dollars piled on other billions. Chemical trusts, oil trusts, electrical trusts! And somehow, the wires being ever magically concentrated in the dingy barrack opposite the White House or in the narrow lane leading down from Trinity. Whether by political or by financial power, it is America which has the final word.

This all sounds very melodramatic. But no writer has yet made it melodramatic enough — not even Mr. Denny, whose swift, journalistic style leaves the reader breathless. For the world transformation that is going on under our own sleepy eyes has hardly a parallel in history.

And what of old England? After reading this book, one admires the more the silent courage, the placid flexibility of mind with which she has endeavored to adjust herself to the new era. Farewell to memories of world dominion! Her future lies only in friendly co-operation with the United States. War with America is not, as Mr. Denny eloquently demonstrates, "unthinkable." But it would be disastrous. A truce, then, to the Anglo-American struggle — a naval, industrial, commercial truce. Perhaps it can be done. Great Britain, for the most part, understands the absolute necessity of it.

Does America?

America and Russia

Two FRONTIERS, by John Gould Fletcher;
Coward, McCann, \$3.00.

Reviewed by WILLIAM C. WHITE

MR. FLETCHER holds that certain factors in America and Russia — two lands alike in many physical characteristics, often paralleling each other in their development — have none the less produced a "democratic and egalitarian land" on one side of Europe and "an autocratic and despotic land" on the other side. The author compares their history down to the rise of the new American religion of "prosperity" with Ford as its model and the rise of the religion of the Proletariat with Lenin as its teacher. He strongly dislikes both of them.

To illuminate the picture of the lands behind the two frontiers the author calls on all he has ever read or heard of — Osiris, Isis, and Horus, the Babylonian ziggurat, Savonarola, the Virginia tobacco monopoly, *Typee* and *Omoo* to serve as allusions; he includes Russian and American art and literature; he attempts to sum up the religiousness of the well known Russian soul — ever pressing the comparison or contrast (sometimes a bit too

close) as he seeks similar or dissimilar shades of the two cultures which he believes are doomed to clash. Thus a good magazine article becomes a long book.

In all this impersonal and serious study the author is urging "every intelligent American and intelligent Russian" to find a solution for his problem. It is based on swallowing one axiom — that Europe, from which America and Russia have drawn much, has now passed its maximum, can no longer create anything, and is headed for the decline; and he sees America at one end of the pole and Bolshevik Russia at the other end, headed eventually for war and "leading the world rapidly back to a state of sheer anarchy." This is one aspect of his problem. The other is deeper; he must feel, with so many liberal intelligentsia in all lands, the repellent force of much of our American civilization and then, facing the other way, the equally repellent force of so many features of the Communist civilization. If the author's axiom is true, and if these two are to emerge as the two remaining civilizations, then where shall the liberal intelligentsia stand?

Mr. Fletcher demands support of "the values of an ideal and superphysical unity of spirit . . . and of a world outlook that reconciles both man's desire to achieve the good life for himself and his overwhelming sense of awe and wonder at the superhuman processes of the universe." To which the good American replies, "Aw, whatcher gettin' at?" and the Communist sneers, "Bourgeois ideology." The author should have added a method of appealing to "the intelligent Russian" over the present Soviet censorship.

In surveying such a wide field Mr. Fletcher has discovered nothing new. That the Communist system and the American system are irreconcilable and may some day clash, has been stated before. At the same time the book suffers in accuracy from the constant necessity to talk in generalization. What is needed is more concise writing on both lands — "truth lies in fine distinctions." *Middletown* has helped for America — someone should do a "Stalinsk" for Russia.

Although the author's comments and comparisons on the two literatures are most valuable, his understanding of present-day Russia seems drawn from reading rather than from observation. Ever hunting for symbols and generalizations he says, "The specific symbol of present-day Russia is probably the samovar," meaning it as the great inducement to endless talking. In the cities to-day the samovar is seldom used except at parties and in restaurants; in the village it must be used to boil the water. Better would be the symbol of the "Primus" kerosene stove — the sign of a busy, nervous people, crowded together, lacking ease and permanence. Or, better still, the symbol of the ash trays, full of nervously chewed cigarette butts that are left in meeting halls after every discussion of

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Buddha



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