

after God's image, striving forever upward!"—we alone are to blame for the misconception regarding this world.

We have sung the praises of *Homo sapiens*, when we should have studied the facts about *Pithecanthropus erectus*.

These political shows are dreary and stupid performances.

Granted! But they are exactly what suits 99 per cent of our neighbors, and suits them down to the ground.

They admire the heights from the distance. They like to see others scale the dangerous rocks to experience

in the pictures. They like it, because there always is a chance that the fellow will slip and break his neck, and that is wonderfully exciting. As for themselves, they will stay right here where it is warm and pleasant and where the paying-teller treats them with that respect due to an honored investor.

Not a very elevated philosophy of life.

But safe and comfortable.

You think that I exaggerate!

Just wait until November!

The Clown Show

By H. L. MENCKEN

POLITICS survives as an art and mystery because *Homo sapiens*, despite the second half of his name, is almost as incapable of learning by experience as an amoeba. The lesson of the Cleveland obscenity was, in brief, that lessons are mainly in vain. Try to translate what was done there into terms of one of the more exact sciences. A patient, having swallowed by inadvertence a horse-doctor's dose of ground glass, lay upon his couch in a state of agony and collapse. What remedial measure suggested itself to his mind, still functioning powerfully? Did he send for a battery of stomach-pumps and a carboy of some puissant emetic? He did not. Instead, he reached for the keg of ground glass, poured out precisely the same dose, tried to gulp it down by main strength, and when it stuck in his throat gave it a shove with a dreadful chaser of neat hydrochloric acid.

A drunken man in a barroom, engaged publicly upon such imbecilities, would be rushed to the psychopathic ward on wings of fire. But when men and women in their political capacity indulge in them the spectacle somehow seems natural and normal. If the Cleveland clown show differed from others of its kind it was only because its machinery was more simple and its inner organization thus more obvious. It went on, so to speak, *in vitro*. All the usual gauds and disguises—of laborious reflection, of free and fair combat, of ebullient and irresistible emotion—were lacking. What was done was done in cold blood, as coal is mined and teeth are pulled. And yet what was done was completely and magnificently idiotic. If the aim of the delegates and alternates was to serve the republic, to improve the government, to safeguard liberty and democracy, then they missed it by a mile. And if it was to prosper the so-called Republican Party, then they missed it by two miles.

It is, indeed, hard to imagine any more incompetent handling of important public business, even in a democratic State. I name names at once, and confine myself to the very first flight: Prof. Dr. Burton and the Hon. Mr. Butler. Prof. Dr. Burton was chosen deliberately because, of all Americans willing to do what had to be done, he was plainly the most gifted. He was both a learned and high-toned man and an accomplished rabble-rouser. He was respected alike by the *Gelehrten* and by grand juries, by Poets Laureate and by the members of the Michigan Legislature. He could drive home a syllogism and he could plant and explode a sob. His job, in brief, was to launch good Cal with a whoop—to lift the delegates and alternates out of their natural coma and send them into the campaign with all the fiery enthusiasm of crusaders shinning up the walls of Jerusalem—to currycomb their medulla oblongatas with such

subtle and devastating art that they would go home with their heads swimming, their blood boiling, and their hearts bursting with a libido for Service. To this end the professor threw himself into his studio at Ann Arbor, consecrated himself for nine days and nine nights to the composition of a speech of 7,500 words, memorized it to the last wheeze and comma, put on his Kiwanis uniform, leaped into the volcanic glare of the spotlights, and so cut loose. And with what result? With the ghastly result that Cal fell flatter than any other candidate ever heard of in human history, that the demonstration planned to shake the hall at the mention of his Awful Name was dead in two minutes. I can find in my archives no record of a more painful scene. I am surely no humanitarian, but when that grisly silence fell, and the delegates and alternates began flopping into their pews, and a Y. M. C. A. song leader was rushed upon the glaxis, his arms waving and his glottis emitting encouraging yells—when the thing got that far there was a lump in my throat and my natural sneer faded into a pizzicato snicker.

So much for Aristotle, and his vain attempt upon the human heart. It seemed to me that Babbitt failed almost as dismally. He appeared in the form of the standard-model Christian business man: white hair, mustache somewhat darker, pink skin, gold-rimmed eye-glasses, comfortable paunch—in other words, in the form of the Hon. William M. Butler of Massachusetts. Whenever, in any righteous and well-barbered American community, large or small, there is a drive, crusade, or public hullabaloo of whatever sort, whether against the red menace or in favor of the American plan, against bootlegging or in favor of the Y. M. C. A.'s summer camp for diabetic bookkeepers, an exact duplicate of the Hon. Mr. Butler is sure to be its head and forefront. The type is perfectly standardized, like the parts of a Ford. Forty years ago it ran to white Burnsides, smooth lips and chins, and heavy watch chains: its perfect flower was Morris K. Jesup. Today it runs to toothbrush mustaches and Shriner badges, and its perfect flower is Butler. Such men, though they yearn for Service, are not romantic. Between hawks and handsaws they distinguish clearly. More, they have sharp eyes for correspondences as well as for differences. They know precisely how and to what extent bishops and bootleggers, detectives and labor leaders, members of Congress and shyster lawyers are brothers under their skins. In particular, they are privy to the character of politicians, great and small. They know which side a United States Senator's bread is buttered on, and how soft a whisper he can hear.

Unluckily, such knowledge is often too scientific to be

human. The expert, sorting out his politicians and hanging them upon their appropriate hooks, is only too apt to forget that they have feelings, that they are proud, that they are human. So it was with Butler. He was too new at his job to have acquired any tenderness, any delicacy, any diplomatic finesse. He simply grabbed his victims as if they were sardines and rammed them into their cans, the eminent with the obscure, the ancient with the newly hatched. Whole shoals of them went in without protest, even with loyal hosannahs—for example, the Southern jobholders, white and black. But now and then a Henry Cabot Lodge came along and there was a jet of stately tears, and now and then a Smoot came along and there was a challenging grunt, and now and then a Jim Watson came along and there was a yell to wring the heart. The cans, of course, were filled nevertheless. Not a sardine escaped. But two-thirds of them, I suspect, went in sore—and will come out sore. Do I betray a secret when I say that Dr. Lodge, when he rose to applaud the eloquence of Dr. Burton, showed under his pallid smile the vestiges of a diabolical leer? Do I babble too much when I report that Dr. Watson, leaping to the platform to second the nomination of the Hon. Hell and Maria Dawes, concealed his wounds so badly that even the galleries laughed? These men, and others like them, are not made of leather. Hit them today and they will remember it tomorrow. And tomorrow, I take it, they will be needed. It was far easier to put Cal over in Cleveland than it will be to put him over in November.

What I chiefly gathered from the whole foul and degrading spectacle, indeed, was a sense of oozing confidence. The delegates came in as if to a wedding, and they left as if from a meeting of creditors. What deflated them? Chiefly, I believe, the clumsy chamber-of-commerce technic of the

Hon. Mr. Butler—a technic perfectly adapted, no doubt, to dealing with labor leaders, newspaper editors, and the rev. clergy, but somehow ineffective with politicians. The delegates to a national convention, remember, are not exactly worms. They pay their own expenses, they have reserved seats, they wear elegant gold and scarlet badges, and their minutest doings, when not downright unprintable, are recorded by the correspondents of their local papers. It thus pains them greatly to be rammed into cans like sardines. It pains them and fills them with dismay. Such dismay gradually worked its way through the free and imperial city of Cleveland. The thing began with a blast of bugles and ended with a dismal roll of drums.

Was there something else? I have a notion that there was. It took visible substance in the gaunt, archaic, almost spookish form of the Hon. Henry Cooper of Wisconsin. It would need a better psychologist than I am to work out just what happened, in all detail, on the night that Dr. Cooper rose up to read the manifesto of the rebels from the cow States. I do not recall clearly what that manifesto advocated, but the matter is of no importance, for the combat was not between ideas but between dignities. Representing Cal and the True Revelation was the Hon. Mr. Warren of Michigan—a brisk, cocky, shiny little attorney, with the manner of a butler lately elected to his master's club. Representing the contumacious husbandmen was that superb ancient, that heroic silurian, two heads taller than Warren and a thousand times the man—a wanderer in from Valhalla, somehow majestic and monumental. Was the spectacle lost on the delegates? I don't believe it was. When, in the end, they voted with Warren they had the decency to look ashamed. And looking ashamed, they also began to look uncertain.

The New Education

By AGNES DE LIMA

II. In the Ethical Culture, Horace Mann, and Lincoln Schools

EDUCATIONAL reformers are of three kinds: those who accept the established body of knowledge as necessary for the child to learn, but who admit that the methods of presenting it are at fault and must be changed; those who advocate changes in the curriculum so as to prepare children more adequately for a modern world; and those who view education as an organic process which changes and develops as the child himself changes and grows. None of these three groups works entirely independently. The difference in emphasis, however, profoundly affects what each is doing, and the future of education will be largely shaped by the degree to which one group or the other succeeds in dominating educational thought and policy.

Just now the technicians are very much in vogue; the measurement of intelligence, of classroom achievement, and improvement in method occupying the major efforts of schools of education and professional schoolmen everywhere. The second group is also much in evidence, demanding modern schools to fit children to play a worthy part in a modern world. The third group is only beginning to attract attention outside of advanced circles, and is still dismissed by the majority of educators as visionary.

There are in New York City three schools which, although private, are known as pace setters for the country in the first two types of reform. All three also have experimented in their lower grades with the principles held by the third group. The institutions are the Horace Mann and Lincoln schools, both officially connected with Teachers College, and the Ethical Culture School. Both the Horace Mann and Ethical Culture schools are frankly conservative as regards curriculum, save for the work of Miss Patty Hill in the kindergarten and first grade of Horace Mann and the primary grades in the Ethical Culture School. The Lincoln School, on the other hand, is frankly experimenting with the curriculum, seeking to adapt it to the changed demands of modern society.

The Ethical Culture School, established in 1878, is the oldest of the three. It was founded by Dr. Felix Adler as a free kindergarten for the children of working people, but it grew rapidly into a full graded school to which children were admitted from all social strata. Children are not excluded because of race, religion, or color—a rare policy in a private school—and scholarships, affording either full or partial tuition extended to over two-fifths of the enrolment, cut down economic barriers. In admitting children, however, preference is usually given to those with a high record of scholarship and a high intelligence rating—at least 115—and once admitted, pupils are expected to meet the