

the foundations of the first really independent united labor front in Mexico. That this move coincides with the emergence of an invigorated Communist Party from its underground position is significant. Professor Clark has unfortunately failed to appreciate the intrinsic importance of the Communist Party and of the C. S. U. M. (Mexican Unitarian Syndicalist Federation) though in 1933 they were undeniably feeble.

Moreover, Mrs. King's whole approach to the class struggle is at best progressive-reformist, even though the entire mass of data which fills her book indicates with overwhelming certitude that the only true solution to the problems of the Mexican workers is a revolutionary one.

A united front of industrial labor will not, in the end, be effective unless it includes the landless agricultural laborers, by far the most numerous body of Mexican workers. This is not only the most pressing but the most difficult task that faces the working class.

It must be said Professor Clark on the whole recognizes this fact, but she devotes too little space to the history of organized agrarian labor. In particular, she completely neglects the largest and most militant labor movement that Mexico has ever known—the armed peons whom Zapata led for nine years in a revolutionary struggle for “Land and Liberty.” Certainly the “Plan de Ayala,” historic document setting forth the aims of the Zapata movement, should have had ample discussion in this book commensurate with its importance.

There are other criticisms that can be made of “Organized Labor in Mexico,” both of a specific and general nature; of the latter, the most serious would be the failure to appreciate (1) the significance of the contradictions between the legal and actual status of labor; (2) the complex role of foreign imperialism in the Mexican class struggle. Nevertheless, the shortcomings of this book do not prevent it from taking its place as a timely and worthy contribution to Mexican history.

*Tempest Over Mexico* could almost be dismissed as the story of the Mexican Revolution seen from a tea-room, if it were not for the fact that Mrs. King, the proprietor of the tea-room and later of a hotel in Cuernavaca, is a woman with human sympathies and truly generous impulses. Hampered by aristocratic class affiliations (her prose smacks of an insipid female gentility) and an almost complete ignorance of the realities of Mexican history, she was nevertheless able to discover, by induction, as it were, the meaning of the events she witnessed and finally to approve of the aspirations of the oppressed Mexican masses. Still, considering the crop of *Mexicana* this year, *Tempest Over Mexico* ranks high and deserves to be read.

CHARLES WEDGER.

## Lewis Carroll

*THE RUSSIAN JOURNAL and other selections from the works of Lewis Carroll. Edited and with an Introduction by John Francis McDermott. E. P. Dutton & Co. \$3.00.*

WHEN asked whether “The Hunting of the Snark” was a political satire, Carroll had but one answer “I don’t know.” As for the genesis of writing, in an essay “Alice on the Stage” (1887), he distinguished between times when the Muse had to say something and times when she had something to say. Of the genesis of *Alice* and the *Looking-Glass*, he said they “were made up almost wholly of bits and scraps, single ideas which came of themselves,” and he desired no higher praise to be written of him than “He gave the people of his best; the worst he kept.”

The dream world of Carroll’s *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass* has never offended predatory interests because they are ever too callous or too stupid to notice that the guilelessness of his nonsense exists on a tangent departing at some point on the periphery of sense. Carroll ultimately refused to commit himself as to whether his nonsense had any overt meaning. But the nonsense recorded its own testimony.

When the insistence of the Queen of Hearts that the sentence be given before the verdict makes Alice’s dream too terrible to go on, the entire fantastic court—a pack of cards—rises into the air and Alice as defendant—not witness—wakes. The Hatter who kept hats to sell, but had none of his own—“what with the bread-and-butter getting so thin”—is also remembered.

And in this excellent collection of Carrolliana, till now inaccessible, are to be found:

“... Plato makes his characters display at once their blind acquiescence in their instructor’s opinions, and their utter inability to express themselves grammatically. But the writer . . . proceeds from questions to demands, ‘give me (of) the bread’; and here the conversation abruptly ceases, but the moral of the whole is pointed in the narrative: ‘she gave him a box on the ear’.” This is not the philosophy of one individual or nation, the sentiment is, if I may so say, European; and I am borne out in *this* theory by the fact that the book has evidently been printed in three parallel columns, English, French and German.” (*A Broken Spell*, 1856).

“Next we went to the Treasury and saw thrones, crowns and jewels—until one began to think that those three articles were rather more common than blackberries. On some of the thrones, &c. the pearls were literally showered like rain.”

“... Königsberg. On our way to the station, we came across the grandest instance of the “Majesty of Justice” that I have ever witnessed—A little boy was being taken to the magistrate, or to prison (probably for picking a pocket). The achievement of this feat had been entrusted to two soldiers in full uniform, who were solemnly marching, one in front of the poor little creature, and one behind; with bayonets fixed of course, to be ready to charge in case he should attempt an escape. . . .”

“Ten and one-half P.M. Hearing a squeaking noise in the street, I have just looked out, and observed a policeman (or a being of that kind) on his beat.” (The last three quotations from *Journal of a Tour in Russia in 1867*.)

And so on, for pages.

LOUIS ZUKOFSKY.

## Texas Chain Gang and Finnish Prison

*A FOOL OF FAITH*, by Jarl Hemmer. Liveright Publishing Corp. \$2.

*SEVENTY TIMES SEVEN*, by Carl Christian Jensen. Lothrop, Lee and Shepherd. \$2.50.

BROADLY speaking, *A Fool of Faith* by Jarl Hemmer and *Seventy Times Seven* by Carl Christian Jensen invite comparison. Both books are based on “diaries,” the writers of which still muddle in the morass of theology and the Christian-Hebraic tradition. Furthermore both authors are of Scandinavian stock, though Jensen migrated at an early age to the United States.

*A Fool of Faith* is the life story of one Johan Samuel Strang, of Finnish and Swedish ancestry, who leaves the farm of his father for a drunken career in the university and a lecherous, blasphemous life as a priest. A chauvinistic hatred of the Russians blurs

the image of his god. He hated “the red rabble” and was astounded to find so many of his own countrymen fighting for Communism. In fact, there were so many Finnish Reds that they took over the country. And Strang prayed for intervention, victory for the whites. It was “the great day” when the Germans came, mowing down the insufficiently equipped workers’ and peasants’ army with silent, murderous efficiency. But even the drunken priest, Strang, was forced to admit that, although he hated the Red Army, “their contempt for death was remarkable, although they had the most experienced troops in the world against them. . . . Men who can fight like that are not bandits pure and simple. Can man show such self-sacrificing courage without a great belief in his cause?” he asks.

After the victory of the intervention, the whites regained power and the workers

the revolution were thrown into concentration camps, where Strang was sent as prison chaplain. Months on end he was forced to watch the starvation and torture and execution of Communists—both men and women. And when he came to them with a nationalistic Finnish Jesus upon his lips, they spat in his face. This depressed Strang. Commandant Palsta had told him “how to treat the swine.” It was Strang’s job to make the condemned prisoners stand up to death “as submissively as children.” But the revolutionary workers of Finland merely spat in his face.

“The most important thing, the most lamentable thing is that the whole of our teaching has lost its vital strength,” Strang says. And so he concluded that a great deed was needed. And he disguised himself to escape into the concentration camp as a prisoner, as a condemned revolutionist, to spread sweet light. He came to them as little Jesus and they no longer spat upon his words, but unmoved they remained to the end, an end in which Strang was shot in place of an escaped convict.

This is the story of *A Fool of Faith*. And Strang is a fool, though lusty and inquiring in the practice of his deceptions. But there is no evidence to make one believe that Hemmer intended to pass such judgment upon Strang, nor does Strang himself arrive at

any social conclusion that will bear even the weight of his own narrative.

*A Fool of Faith* is an ambitious piece of work, well written and largely conceived, but because the premises of an outworn theology and a rotten nationalistic bourgeoisie are its postulates, the whole structure of the novel cracks and totters.

*Seventy Times Seven*, on the other hand, although conceived and written on a smaller scale is a more authentic piece of work. Jensen has taken a prisoner in one of the Texas Chain Gangs as the protagonist of his plot. He is called Duke for want of a better name. Since he is troubled with amnesia, his “diary” is necessarily confused. Jensen employs the stream of consciousness technique and attempts to delineate Duke’s struggle for recognition of his own soul. Therefore, though the most shocking prison conditions are described and the social system which made them possible condemned by implication, still the perspective and concentration is upon the individual problem, the single life.

*Seventy Times Seven* is a good, an honest book—in spite of the fact that some of the random memories of the protagonist seem artificially created—and even though the attempt was not as ambitious as that of *A Fool of Faith*, Jensen’s is the more convincing achievement. NORMAN MACLEOD.

## Science at the Crossroads

*GENETICS AND THE SOCIAL ORDER*, by Mark Graubard. Tomorrow Publishers, New York, 75 cents.

*EVOLUTION IN SCIENCE AND RELIGION*, by Robert Andrews Millikan. Yale University Press, New Haven. \$1.

*OUR ARYAN ANCESTORS*, by Fleming Howell, M.D. Meador Publishing Co., Boston. \$2.

IT IS pertinent to consider these volumes together, for the author in each case is a person trained in some field of the natural sciences and is here dealing with social phenomena; and, moreover, while Dr. Millikan, the well-known winner of the Nobel Prize in Physics, and Dr. Howell are what we would call bourgeois apologists, Dr. Graubard is a Marxist, a dialectical materialist. We are thus afforded an opportunity to compare Marxist and non-Marxist scientists in attempts to carry over scientific method into their analyses of some phases of social organization. The result of the comparison is striking. The bourgeois ideologues prove themselves to be confused (Dr. Millikan admits he is “groping” for an answer to his problem), unscientific in that they neglect relevant facts staring them in the face and smug in the unquestionable righteousness of their conclusions. Dr. Graubard, on the other hand, maintains throughout his volume a presentation that is clear, realistic and stimulating.

*Our Aryan Ancestors* is a recrudescence of the myth of Nordic supremacy, but on a broader scale the whole “Aryan race” and not merely the Nordics, being shown to be “more or less disposed to . . . the better feelings of humanity, accordingly as their blood has remained more or less pure.”

Dr. Howell finds evidence for this conclusion in the historical development of the various Aryan groups. The treatment of his material is throughout the book naïve, vague and dull; the above quotation is typical. Such questions for instance, as the definition of “race” (the word is used to designate not only the Aryans, but subdivisions of the Aryans), the effect of climatic, geographic and technological levels on the character of an ethnic group, the present collapse of a predominantly Aryan-controlled world and the attendant crushing by war and fascism of all “the better feelings of humanity”—such questions do not concern him. He continues:

Those who may read what I have written and who get a fairly accurate conception [sic!] of the Aryan race, as compared with all other races, will certainly acquire a comfortable sense of self-respect, and be inspired to a more earnest and loyal love for the great race to which they belong.

And, he may have added, Aryan imperialists should feel no compunctions in sucking super-profits out of non-Aryan subject races.

Dr. Millikan’s book is the seventh printing of the Terry Lectures he originally de-

livered at Yale University in 1927. In these lectures, suave but colorless and properly sprinkled with Biblical quotations, he presents the thesis that religion is subject to an evolution determined by the changing level of man’s scientific knowledge of the world. So it would seem. But a careful reading of the book shows that what Dr. Millikan believes is that science has been a useful handmaiden serving religion by revealing new characteristics of God in its discoveries of the workings of the natural world.

Thus Galileo’s work resulted in demonstrating “a God who works through law,” while Darwin’s researches in evolution ushered in “a new revelation of God to man . . . a conception of progress has entered the thought of man.” The cat is definitely let out of the bag in the last sentence of the book: “Modern science, of the real sort, is slowly learning to walk humbly with its God and in learning that lesson it is contributing something to religion.”

We, of course, have no quarrel with Dr. Millikan when he contends that religion has evolved. The evolutionary character of the history of Dr. Millikan’s own subject of investigation, physics and the facts of radioactive transformation, which he admits have “forced us, for the first time [in 1927] to begin to think in terms of a universe which is changing, living, growing, even in its elements—a dynamic instead of a static universe” are for us more corroborative evidence again proving the universal correctness of Marx’s penetrating wisdom. But we cannot agree with Dr. Millikan’s belief that the never ceasing growth of scientific knowledge continuously reveals new attributes of God. Quite the contrary. Religion arose from primitive man’s animistic attempts to explain the world. Today, as an institutionalized weapon of the bourgeoisie, it is being used to maintain an illusory happiness in the great masses of the people. Science is the very opposite of this. Every scientific development, by helping to correlate and explain natural phenomena, removes some of the animistic foundations of religion. While the unrestrained application of science to the control of the conditions of human existence can and in the Soviet Union does, bring real happiness to the masses of mankind and results in the withering of religion.

Dr. Millikan is far from scientific in marshalling evidence to prove his thesis. Two examples will suffice. He interprets Darwinism as meaning “progress” and in developing this notion states that “nature is at bottom benevolent.” This is not Darwinism. This is advocacy of progressive evolution which in the biological world is a theory known as Orthogenesis, unpropounded by Darwin, unaccepted by the contemporary heirs of Darwin, the genetical evolutionists such as T. H. Morgan and unsupported by any factual basis. Darwin himself in the *Origin of Species* stresses the absence of benevolence in nature and the existence instead of a bitter struggle for existence as