

3. I consider the relevance of my art (?) to these conditions one of comment and observation and whenever it is possible to strike a blow at the folly and greed which has prevailed for so long in America. I do so, not however at the expense of what I consider the eternal qualities of a piece of writing. A tract is a tract and a novel is a novel, and nothing can ever mix the two. I am not a Marxist and while I believe that the pen of any writer can and should be used for reform, and for revolution when necessary, I do not believe that art should be a function of any economic or social system.

I trust this note will reach you in time to be useful. As you can see I am rather a Jeffersonian than a Marxist. I do not believe that any system of government has much power to alter human character.

James Branch Cabell:

Heartily as I disapprove of symposiums, I none the less find the only conceivable answers to your questions far too simple to be begrudged. They are:

1. No.
2. Yes.

Peter Freuchen:

1. As an individual, I see all over in the world conditions growing worse and worse. Everybody suffers, but every country closes its doors and keeps foreigners and foreign goods away. In the great war sixteen million people were in the trenches. Everybody wanted to go home, yet they stayed. We all look back on the dear old times, yet who will take the first step? I am not sure that it is of any help to try and repair the old wreck. We must change our minds and the conditions entirely.

2. As an author I have to study the new times as closely as possible. No new movement has ever started that hasn't first been born in the brains of an artist. We are not allowed to disregard anything in the world, especially not now, where people need teachers, and who is better fit than the artists?

3. Things look to me so terrible, that every change must be to the better. It cannot grow worse. Therefore I am looking forward for progress and happiness and peace more and more. (Original in English.)

Hans Fallada:

1. No.
2. No.
3. Change it!

Andreas Latzko:

I think the first and second questions are insulting to every artist as well as to every human being. It was the hard work of centuries to vanquish the brute in men. Surgeons struggled against epidemics, aided by scientific inquiry, in order to save the

lives of people affected by the malicious attacks of nature, in order to retain the gains and advances of all humanity, the genius of all. Cultivated nations work to overcome the mastery of the arbitrary.

Millions of human beings are born dumb, unable to complain if they suffer, working like stokers in the hold of a ship, while only a few privileged ones are able to raise their voice as they stand on the bridge and control the course of the vessel.

With a knife at their throats, writers have lost their right to existence, unable to lend their assistance to the dumb, they are traitors to their own avowed mission and to humanity. But a ship navigated from the hold will eventually founder. In this age of broadcasting, flying, television, diminishing the communicable outposts of the globe, piracy will not endure for long. (Original in English.)

Ludwig Lewisohn:

To a sensitive conscience the state of things in this world and especially in one's country has never in any age been "in its totality humanly tolerable." Never.

This state of things few serious artists

have ever disregarded or can disregard. I have myself been accused of disregarding too little.

But the eternal and unchanging relation of the serious artist to the evils that are under the sun must mainly and upon the whole consist of his hope that from his works men will gain an impulse toward *reason*, so that they will manage their mundane affairs more wisely and, above all, toward *goodness*, so that they shall less and less conceive it to be possible that any good can be a true good that involves any inhumanity to any other fellowmen.

If from anything I have written or shall write either of these impulses is communicated I shall be satisfied that the necessary moral function of my art has been fulfilled

Robert Nathan:

1. In a world in which men hate and torment one another, the state of things is not humanly tolerable. (Nevertheless, one lives; because death is perhaps even less tolerable?)

2. No artist can wholly avoid such thoughts.

3. I ask of my work that it help men to be less hateful to one another.

A Marxist on War

THE COMING WORLD WAR, by T. H. Wintringham. Thomas Seltzer. \$2.50.

GENERAL SMEDLEY BUTLER ("old Gimlet-eye" to the thousands of veterans in the Marine Corps) takes a long, peevish look at war, draws a deep breath, squares off and delivers his verdict, as explosive as one of his own guns in the old days: "A Racket!" he says—and follows it up with a smashing barrage of scandal and corruption in the military services of his country: not forgetting the bankers and profiteers.

General Butler has the right idea: the only thing wrong with it is that the same word, "racket" also covers just about everything that goes on in peace-time. In other words, if you really want to know what war is, and why it keeps ripping human lives to pieces, you have seriously to ask, and answer, the deeper question, "Who profits most from 'peace'—and at whose expense?" Having got that far you take another step and ask yourself, "Who actually supplies the enormously complicated war-machine of modern times? who operates its thousands of parts? who gives and receives its horror of slow agony and sudden death?" If—and when—you have correctly answered these two questions, you will know, with complete certainty, what must be done and can be done, to STOP WAR!

It is these last questions which make up the theme of this book by the brilliant young Englishman who has been hailed by John Strachey in his introduction as "the leading

Marxist expert on military affairs now writing in English." T. H. Wintringham, solidly grounded in the dialectics of the class struggle, turns the tables on the elaborate "military science" of the bourgeois state by showing how, in the words of Friedrich Engels, "the triumph of force is based on the production of arms and this in turn on production in general—therefore, on 'economic power,' on the 'economic order,' on the material means which force has at its disposal." "Machines," he begins by saying, "make war." Then, in a series of lucidly written and remarkably well documented chapters, he demonstrates how all these intricate and costly machines—automatic rifles, grenades, bombs, chemical weapons, aeroplanes, optical goods and their thousands of auxiliary parts to say nothing of the munitions required to serve them—how the whole field of war technology is hopelessly (from the viewpoint of the capitalist war-makers) involved not only in the general productive scheme of industry and agriculture, but also in the production relationships. "The scale of warfare made possible by the almost illimitable productive capacity of the modern world," he writes, "has led to a position in which the fighting forces are dependent not on a few arsenals but on all the industry of a country at war. . . . Governments need to think first of the discipline and productive efficiency of the working classes, not the armies." (Emphasis mine.)

The full force of this fatal contradiction (which the more class-conscious workers in munitions plants all over the world actively

... today) is brought out in Wintringham's accounts of Germany's feverish rearmament program and in the desperate militarization of entire populations in Japan, Great Britain, Italy (note how the breaking of a single supply thread—that of oil—can utterly destroy Italy's cumbersome war machine in Ethiopia). Along with the amazing development of war industries we get an increasingly abject dependence upon the two groups by whom and against whom, they are directed. First the workers who, in thousands of factories, fields, workshops and warehouses *make* the products needed for war; second, the millions of people who, in uniform or out of it, must "do and die" in a war of whose appalling destructiveness and utter savagery there can no longer be any question.

Mutinies in the military forces: Strikes behind the lines in any one of numerous strategic plants: Organized resistance by non-

combatants before and during hostilities: Constant attrition of the war-machine through exhaustion of supplies and men. Above all, the growing strength of a united People's Front against the entire capitalist system which breeds war and fascism: these are the constructive points which Wintringham brings out very clearly in his analysis of the material problems of "the coming world war." His examples of how such organized popular action in a number of countries (especially Great Britain) put an immediate stop to the interventionist attacks on the struggling Soviet revolution in Russia make inspiring reading for us today—and his discussion of the tactical problems of Japan's proposed invasion of Soviet territory deserves the most careful attention.

If you want to know *why* the Marxists are so astonishingly right about things in general, read this brilliant Marxist study of war.
HAROLD WARD.

A Queer Business

THIS BUSINESS OF EXPLORING, by Roy Chapman Andrews. G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1935. \$3.50.

IF THE unexpressed premises of the author be accepted, particularly the assumption that "advanced" nations are entrusted with the duty of uncovering the prehistoric treasures of "backward" areas, it must be admitted that he successfully popularizes the achievements of the Mongolian explorations conducted under the auspices of the American Museum of Natural History. The Central Asiatic Expeditions, directed by Roy Chapman Andrews, are associated in the public mind with the discovery of the "dinosaur eggs" during the earlier explorations of 1922-1925, described in *On the Trail of Ancient Man*. This story is brought up to date in the present volume, which enlivens a cursory outline of the scientific results of the 1928-1930 expeditions by a continuous narrative of hair-raising adventure. Destructive sand-storms and howling blizzards, interspersed with bits of local Mongolian color, constitute the background of these narrative sections. But the *piece de resistance* is formed by the continual encounters with Chinese "bandits." The superior arms and expert marksmanship of the members of the expedition proved their worth many times. So effective were they, in fact, that the casualties were entirely on the Chinese side. As the author remarks, "They don't like to stand up to rifle fire and if one or two of them are killed in the first volley the rest run like stags. About twenty Chinese bandits to one well-armed foreigner is proper odds, as we have found by experience." Under such circumstances, the expedition was able to cut a swath through the unlucky Mongolian bandits, whenever they ventured to interfere with these civilized Americans.

The hardships of desert exploration have their remunerations—a winter in Peking, for example. Mr. Andrews writes: "I lived in a beautiful old Manchu palace; had a staff of eighteen efficient servants; a stable of polo ponies and hunters; and a host of friends. Peking is the one place left in the world where one can live an Arabian Nights' existence. One rubs the lamp and things happen. Don't inquire *how* they happen; just rub the lamp!" How many of the Chinese people can rub this lamp? Might the contrast in material well-being explain their "banditry" and his "orderliness"? Mr. Andrews does not stop to ask these questions, but glibly philosophizes that "you can have a lot of fun at housekeeping in China if you don't let it get on your nerves. 'Squeeze' drives foreigners mad at first until they come to realize that it is a custom of the country and that all you can do is to keep it within reasonable limits."

Thorough and efficient cooperation was the rule in the relations between the American Legation at Peking, the American military and naval services in the Far East and the Central Asiatic Expeditions. Corporal McKenzie Young, expert motor mechanic of the U.S. Marine Corps in Peking, was "assigned on detached duty to the Expedition." By courtesy of the Secretary of Navy at Washington, Lieutenant G. A. Perez, U.S.N., was "detailed to the Expedition" as surgeon. Captain W. P. T. Hill, U.S.M.C., went along as topographer; later he was replaced by Lieutenant Wyman. Colonel N. E. Margetts, military attaché of the American legation, came up from Peking to visit the campsite in Mongolia. Code messages from the American legation, carrying the news of political developments in China, were picked up by the expedition's radio out on the Mongolian deserts. Time signals were despatched

each night on short wave from Cavite, in the Philippine Islands, by the U.S. Navy. In April, 1928, when the expedition entered Mongolia, the American Minister, Mr. J. V. A. MacMurray, went up to Kalgan from Peking. Mr. Andrews notes: "The Minister's presence was of much help to us in Kalgan. Not only did the [Chinese] officials hurry through the final passports, but we were relieved from paying the road tax which for our eight cars would have been a considerable amount."

Although the 1928-1930 explorations uncovered valuable prehistoric mammals, they were no more successful than the earlier trips in their primary quest—the discovery of the remains of ancestral man. Mr. Andrews speculates on the possibility that such remains may exist "somewhere in southern Siberia . . . logically the next place for us to explore. I would love to do it if we could. But unfortunately politics and palaeontology do not seem to get on well together. Hunting fossils, which involves geological studies and messing about in the earth, is too easily confused with oil and mineral research by suspicious and ignorant politicians."

It is surely most unfortunate, but the chances are that Mr. Andrews must continue to forego the pleasures of Siberian exploration. The "politicians" of the Soviet Union may be "suspicious and ignorant," but they know enough to keep these harmless expeditions from "messing about" in Siberia.

What is even more disconcerting, the Chinese authorities also seem to have developed a "suspicious" concern about the expedition's activities. A Commission for the Preservation of Ancient Objects, set up by the Chinese, even went so far as to confiscate the specimens of the Central Asiatic Expedition

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Mussolini out-bluff Europe?*

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