

... 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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HARPERS

in 1928. "Eventually," says Mr. Andrews, "our specimens were released but bitter feeling was engendered on both sides. . . . In the last analysis anti-foreignism underlay all the trouble; that, accompanied by the increasing nationalistic spirit throughout China. Any agitation of whatever character that

was directed against foreigners found immediate popularity with the masses." Just so. And how unnatural of this people not to recognize that these high-minded foreigners, engaged in purely scientific research, deserved the thanks of all right-thinking Chinese.

DONALD HEMSLEY.

Old Roguery

MY COUNTRY AND MY PEOPLE, by Lin Yutang. Reynal and Hitchcock. \$3.

THIS book has become one of the smart books of the year; some reviewers who first ignored or dismissed it have had cautious second thoughts about it and have expressed them; it has become a best seller and is being read as the last word about China.

The reasons for its success are plain. In a field where solemnity is the rule it uses a nonchalant and even, at times, a slapstick style. It gives approving tolerance to popular vices, to laziness, indifference and good living. Some of its chapters, especially those on Chinese literature, are valuable and from the samples given I would welcome a volume of his translations of poetry, especially poetry from the Chinese drama.

Nevertheless the book is useless and even misleading for an understanding of political or economic China or almost any aspect of China that is of more than passing interest. There is not a paragraph in the whole book on the Soviet districts of China. A vague epilogue dealing with conditions in China is prefaced with this cautious note "the following must not be taken as reflecting on the National (Nanking) Government, but rather on the immensity of the task which the government is faced with in its gigantic work of evolving order out of chaos." In the light of this respectful obeisance to Nanking the following might have been expected as a corollary "... the Communist idealist, with a volume of Marx under his arm and unkempt hair on his head and smoking a Russian cigarette and perpetually fulminating against somebody will not bring China into salvation."

It is not merely this smart-aleck attitude that one finds offensive. The gist of Lin Yutang's book is that China has survived invasion, social disorder and economic misery in the past, that China "can take it." Yutang quotes from a paper by Dr. J. S. Lee "The Periodic Recurrence of Internecine Wars in China," which divides Chinese history into eight hundred year cycles each beginning with military unification, a period of wars, secession, subjection to foreign rule, to be followed by a renewal of the cycle. This seems to comfort Yutang who conveniently overlooks the fact that colonial status and its special type of exploitation, which China is facing at the hands of Japan, is very different from a change to a foreign dynasty and that in her present crisis China's civilization and

not the conqueror's is threatened with absorption.

Resignation to the inevitable is fine for a man comfortably situated for the enjoyment of leisure and the arts and unexposed to the miseries that have to be undergone. The Chinese masses who die in the floods and droughts, who are kidnaped into the armies, who sicken and starve at a rate unknown to any other civilized country must feel differently. They do the enduring and they may not feel as philosophic about it as Yutang.

They may even feel different about the , ures of discomfort, for Mr. Yutang roguis. tells us that discomforts are good for the health and the material comforts of Western civilization are signs of decadence. As a matter of fact, far from enduring in silence the Chinese masses are in open revolt. They established a commune in Canton. They captured Shanghai for Chiang Kai-shek, though later he betrayed them. They have established Soviets in China over a vast territory and are the only hope of China to escape Japan. To leave this unmentioned is to paint a portrait without a face. The reason is obvious. The face would not be pleasing to Nanking. Yutang, who is so cutely provocative and challenging to other intellectuals, has a great disinclination to offend the Nanking government which, by general consent, is one of the most, if not the most corrupt regime acting as a government in contemporary world affairs.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

Housing for the Landlords

HOUSING UNDER CAPITALISM, by Sidney Hill. Published by International Pamphlets. 10c.

I GREET this housing pamphlet for two reasons. First, because it is a pamphlet, whose forty succinct pages cost only ten cents, so that everybody can buy it and has time to read it through. Second, because housing literature generally has not yet caught up with the New Deal, and no one has yet made such a well-rounded job of analyzing and interrelating the activities of the various Washington agencies, showing their ineffectuality in dealing with public housing as contrasted with their effectiveness in respect to private construction, whether by way of insuring new and momentarily sweet mortgages or salvaging the banks' old curdled mortgages.

While the pamphlet contains useful analyses of similar failure of housing in other capitalist countries and the quite different approach in Soviet Russia, and includes the author's positive recommendations, it is his presentation of the recent American situation that I am anxious to comment upon.

When Mr. Hill's pamphlet appeared some months ago, the only agency supposed to do public low rental housing was the P.W.A., with its urban housing and its subsistence homesteads. He shows how it blundered and delayed its urban projects, and how the few completed projects with their \$11 room rentals came nowhere near meeting the problem for people of low income or on relief. He shows how the rural subsistence homesteads tie people to a meager subsistence level while they try to pay for homes on installments, with little prospect of cash income with which to make payments. I regret that he did not mention the forty-seven additional

urban projects that P.W.A. has under way to house some 25,000 families at \$7 or \$8 per room if and when finished. It would have added accuracy without weakening his argument, for the 25,000 families thus housed constitute only one percent of the people who need it!

He shows how at the same time the Home Owners Loan Corporation and Federal Farm Mortgage Corporation lent over six billions (sixty times as much as P.W.A. has been allotted) under the guise of helping farmers and home "owners," but with the actual effect of bailing out the banks. It speaks volumes for the muddled sentimentality of these people that they accepted this new burden of a government mortgage. I know a few hardboiled home "owners" who permitted the mortgages to foreclose and then rented the homes back again at a great saving.

Having released the frozen funds of banks insurance companies and building and loan associations, the administration passed the National Housing (sic) Act establishing the F.H.A. to insure private loans for renovation and for new houses, so the same institutions could lend all over again for the same middle class and not low cost houses whose mortgages it had had to salvage. That is, in effect, it lent its own funds, except that instead of controlling the new construction directly, it permitted its funds to go into sour mortgages on old houses, and the exchanged funds of private institutions into the new houses. And then private interests have the temerity to criticize the government for "piling up debt" for public housing, relief, social security, in contrast with permitting private initiative to do the financing for new construction. What do they want for their bad money?