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definitely became an American dance cult, has sailed for India, where he is establishing an Indian school of art. Jooss will not return to New York till 1940; Shan-Kar will be gone for at least five years. The Indian dancer is distinctly the greater loss.

Kurt Jooss, since his 1933 presentation of *The Green Table*, satire on double-crossing imperialist diplomacy, has been in a steady decline. There was the Bible story of the return of the prodigal, with all the defeatist overtones inherent in the script, then *The Mirror*, asking for social-democratic class collaboration, and finally a fairy tale, *The Seven Heroes*, in which a man is reduced to the level of the lumpen proletariat. Right now, Jooss is pretty much in a tailspin, with no bottom in sight. His exile from Germany has only served to develop the cynicism which was evident even in *The Green Table*. The changing picture in Europe, however, the intensification of the fascist drive against democracy, should change the temper and the nature of his work. If it doesn't, nothing will.

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"Thomas Jefferson." The life of the American revolutionary leader will be dramatized, Sat., Apr. 9, 9:30 p.m., N.B.C. red.

Artur Rodzinski. Mr. Rodzinski will conduct the N.B.C. Symphony Orchestra, Sat., Apr. 9, 10 p.m., N.B.C. red.

China. Pattie Field, first American woman sent abroad as Vice-Consul, will contrast pre-war and present diplomatic life in China, Sun., Apr. 10, 11:30 a.m., N.B.C. red.

Austro-German Election. A summary of the results of the Austrian plebiscite will be presented in an international broadcast from Vienna, Sun., Apr. 10, 6 p.m., N.B.C. blue.

Questions Before Congress. A representative will discuss current problems before the House, Tues., Apr. 12, and a senator those before the Senate, Thurs., Apr. 14, 4:45 p.m., C.B.S.

Health Education. A talk by Dr. W. W. Bauer, Wed., Apr. 13, 2 p.m., N.B.C. red.

James A. Farley. The Postmaster will talk on "Jefferson and Roosevelt," Wed., Apr. 13, 9:30 p.m., C.B.S.

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Literary Section

EDITORS: MICHAEL GOLD, HORACE GREGORY, GRANVILLE HICKS, JOSHUA KUNITZ

NEW MASSES, APRIL 12, 1938, VOL. XXVII, NO. 3, NEW YORK, N. Y., IN TWO SECTIONS, OF WHICH THIS IS SECTION T

Edmund Wilson's Globe of Glass

By Joseph Freeman

"Where is the world?" cries Young, at *eighty*—"Where
The world in which a man was born?" Alas!
Where is the world of *eight* years past? 'Twas there—
I look for it—'tis gone, a globe of glass!

—Byron.

READING Edmund Wilson's current book * you will be tempted to think of *Axel's Castle*, his first collection of literary essays, published in 1931. That was the most impressive appreciation by an American critic of Yeats, Valery, Eliot, Proust, Joyce, and Gertrude Stein, and it raised basic issues. The Symbolists had withdrawn from the life of their times and Wilson knew the reason why. In the utilitarian society produced by the industrial revolution and the rise of the bourgeoisie the poet seemed to have no place. Already for Gautier's generation the bourgeois had become the enemy, and one took a lively satisfaction in fighting him. By the end of the century, the bourgeois world was going so strong that, from the viewpoint of the poet, it had come to seem hopeless to oppose it, so the poet retired to Axel's dream castle, seductively described by Villiers de l'Isle Adam, or fled to Africa like Rimbaud.

Through the leading figures of the Symbolist school, Wilson managed, almost wholly in literary terms, to state the dilemma of the modern bourgeois writer. He argued that the writer who is unable to interest himself in contemporary society either by studying it, scientifically, by attempting to reform it, or by satirizing it has only two alternative courses to follow—Axel's or Rimbaud's. If you choose Axel's way, you shut yourself up in your private world, cultivate your private fantasies, encourage your private manias, and ultimately mistake your chimeras for realities. If you choose Rimbaud's way, you try to leave the twentieth century behind to find the good life in some country where modern manufacturing methods and modern democratic institutions do not present any problems to the artist because they have not yet arrived.

* THE TRIPLE THINKERS: Ten Essays on Literature: by Edmund Wilson. Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$2.75.

Wilson's own choice was to reject both Axel and Rimbaud. He was convinced that the writers who had largely dominated the literary world of the decade 1920-30, "though we shall continue to admire them as masters," will no longer serve us as guides. He saw the effects of the war upon Europe and saw, too, that American complacency was giving way to a sudden disquiet, and that both Europeans and Americans were becoming "more and more conscious of Russia, a country where a central social-political idealism had been able to use and to inspire the artist as well as the engineer." Wilson's studies in Symbolist literature thus led him to raise the old question "as to whether it is possible to make a practical success of human society, and whether, if we continue to fail, a few masterpieces, however profound or noble, will be able to make life worth living even for the few people in a position to enjoy them."

This attitude was very much in the American air when Wilson's first book of essays appeared. The economic crisis had predisposed our writers to revalue everything; old beliefs had collapsed with prosperity, and among the debris you could find fragments of the ivory tower, Axel's castle, and maps to far-off exotic countries. The Marxists also applauded Wilson's book; they appreciated his belated performance and were glad that after his own fashion he had arrived at some of their own cherished beliefs.

At the same time they observed that in discussing the Romantics and the Symbolists Wilson had taken into account neither the French Revolution, nor the class struggles following it, nor the Socialist movement they produced, nor the literature inspired by Socialism. Long before the war and the Russian Revolution, Marxian writers of every country, including America, had repudiated the Symbolists and their exotic dreams. For them Shaw, Wells, Sinclair, London, and Gorky had long ago demolished the ivory tower and Axel's castle. Their guides in society were neither Valery nor Proust, but Marx and Lenin. They supported the October Revolution from the start because they believed in its aspirations, and did not have to wait for the collapse of capitalist economy and the success