

Levellers, Cromwell's hatred of them was still boiling, and in a speech to Parliament he revealed his bias:

A nobleman, a gentleman, a yeoman; "the distinction of these": that is a good interest of the nation, and a great one! The "natural" magistracy of the nation, was it not almost trampled under foot, under despite and contempt, by men of Levelling principles? I beseech you, for the orders of men and the ranks of men, did not that Levelling principle tend to reducing all to an equality? Did "consciously" think to do so; or did it "only unconsciously" practice towards it for property and interest? "At all events," what was the purport of it but to make the tenant as liberal a fortune as the landlord? Which, I think, if obtained, would not have lasted long! The men of that principle, after they had served their own turns, would have cried up interest and property *then* fast enough! This instance is instead of many. And that this thing did "and might well" extend far, is manifest; because it was a pleasing voice to all Poor Men, and truly not unwelcome to all Bad Men.

This quotation is from the Lomas edition of Carlyle, who after the last sentence had added a parenthesis: "Far-extended classes, these two both!"

We have Cromwell's attitude revealed in his own words; and Lindsay's story essentially is that of the struggle between this attitude and that of the "men of Levelling principles." But to tell this story, Lindsay tells many others relating to it; he is aware of it not as a simple, isolated thing, but as part of the social complex. The people in the book have a living interest which serves to illuminate the historical events from within, and humanize them. The character to appear most consistently is Ralph Lydcot, a veteran of the Roundhead army who had become a Leveller. Before the year is out he becomes an example of the *trahison des clercs*: he is, after all, the son of the grasping merchant Isaac Lydcot, and upon making an opportunistic marriage he abandons Lilburne and his cause, though he still guiltily insists he is a sympathizer. But Ralph's friends—Roger Cotton, the bookseller's apprentice, and Will Scamler, the yeoman's son (who never meet during the course of the story)—are of different stuff, and at the end they are still left fighting. They have the proletarian heritage, and once they have been awakened they know there is no other way out of their enforced predicament than fighting for solidarity. Roger, wrapped in religion at first and uninterested in political occurrences, comes to share the experiences of the Diggers, or "True Levellers," the literal and peace-loving offshoot of the movement, who are driven cruelly out of their collective farm in Surrey.

It perhaps does Lindsay an injustice to use today's terminology in making a rapid summary of a few of the problems dealt with in his book, which merely narrates what happens and avoids generalizations and the catchwords we use in speaking of these matters. Occasionally, however, the way he narrates things has a flavor of today, and the secret meetings sometimes sound a bit too much like underground cells in the Berlin of the present. But writing at this remove, with our accumulated knowl-



Ruben Perez

edge, it is almost impossible to avoid pointing up some of the material. It must be said in Lindsay's favor that he avoids this more than most historical novelists, and seems to get very close to the feeling of the period. As in *Sue Verney*, the atmosphere is excellently contrived. The jail scenes are not easily forgotten, the prisoners of the Commonwealth writhing in filth and being beaten with a bull's pizzle by a cruel keeper—you had to buy your food from the jailer in those days, and you had to give him a tip even for news of your release. (The jail scenes in *Sue Verney* form an interesting contrast in that they show a landowner's comparatively easy plight—the prisons in 1649 reveal the lot of the common people in captivity.) The description of the London streets and the countryside are unusually good, with true poetic touches, and the properties are unobtrusively arranged.

Will Scamler is the most admirable of the characters who walk through this skillful reconstruction of the daily life of that year. He usually lacks party contacts and has to carry on most of his work as an individualist, practically as a nihilist, yet he is eventually able to do his part as a member of a community, when he organizes the Yarmouth fishermen to fight for their rights. The actual historical personages who appear are mostly the Leveller leaders, such as Lilburne, Overton, and Walwyn. These three are brought sparsely to life, but the soldiers Thompson and Lockyer seem too barely characterized for such interesting men, for men who had so great an influence among their fellow-soldiers. Of course it is one of the drawbacks of the collective novel that it often prevents character and psychological development—the people have to fit a pattern, their exits and entrances are governed by outer necessity, and their behavior has to be controlled accordingly. Fortunately Cromwell never appears directly—

and here the advantages of the method become apparent, because Cromwell can be an offstage character or can be seen occasionally at the edge of the action (as when he and Fairfax are glimpsed for a moment as the mutiny is being put down at the Black Bull in Bishopsgate) and yet be predominant as a social influence. Cromwell as a principal character would steal the stage from these representatives of the common people whose lives Lindsay wants to probe, and the method he uses can keep his own characters in the front of the reader's attention, while Cromwell's power is all the more strongly emphasized by the social pattern of the novel, which shows that power at work at all different levels. Cromwell, it must be remembered, was not a fascist, despite the present glorification of him in fascist countries, and Lindsay does not attempt to make him one. His Cromwell is rather conceived in the spirit of the title of one of the latest books on Cromwell, Maurice Ashley's *The Conservative Dictator*. But it cannot be denied that Cromwell used tactics similar to those of the fascists when he stamped out the Levellers.

Jack Lindsay is now writing a 200,000-word *People's History of Culture*, and is planning a novel of the days of John Wilkes, the eccentric eighteenth-century champion of liberty and reform who became Lord Mayor of London. It is indisputable that Jack Lindsay is a novelist worth watching, and it is time some American publisher seriously took him up. An admirable book to begin with would be *1649: A Story of a Year*, for it demonstrates how vivid and forceful the historical novel can be when skillfully built along social lines.

HARRY THORNTON MOORE.

Nazi Mythology

THE WAR AGAINST THE WEST, by Aurel Kolnai. Viking Press. \$4.

WHEN the counter-revolution of 1933 ravaged Germany like a beast of prey, liberal thinkers of all countries were at a loss to explain its peculiar character. Those who were horrified by its ferocity ignored its economic and political meaning, its relation to Italian fascism, to the general crisis of monopoly capitalism. For them, Nazism was defined in terms of the personality of Hitler, the sadistic lust of Germans, anti-Semitism, the ambitions of "radical, patriotic" under-officers in the army, or the desperate honor of a humiliated people, smarting under Versailles.

Others, seeing its reactionary basis, tried to equate Berlin with Rome, as though Hitler were a German Mussolini, whose ideology was so much posturing to fool his disciples and terrify the Social Democrats. After power was secured, the trusts safe for Thyssen and the land for the Junkers, capital would resume its normal course of exploitation.

Marxists alone saw in the Nazi triumph neither a temporary derangement of the Ger-



A Modern Camp for Adults

- Log Cabin Club-House
each room with private bath
- Private Golf Course on the Premises
- Championship Tennis Courts
- All other sports facilities

ATTRACTIVE SEPTEMBER RATES

Main Camp Bungalows . . . \$27.50
Clubhouse . . . \$32.50

Full Schedule of Rates on Request

Lena Barish : Sam Garlen
Directors

New York City Office: 11 W. 42 St.
Telephone BRyant 9-1738

Dive In

to a whirl of fun and activity. It's vacation time! Time to get out where the skies are blue and nights are cool and starry!

SWIMMING. BOATING, TENNIS, RIDING. ALL SPORT ACTIVITIES. NEW BUNGALOWS. \$17—\$19 per week.

CAMP UNITY

Wingdale, N. Y. (On Lake Ellis)
City Telephone: ALgonquin 4-1148

NEW THEATRE SCHOOL

A NON-PROFIT NEW THEATRE LEAGUE DEPT.

Register now for October 3rd
Graduates appearing on Broadway and in
Progressive Theatres nationally
Complete Acting, Production, Directing and Playwriting
Courses. Special Courses for the Social Theatre.
132 W. 43rd St., N. Y. C. Request Catalog F CHick. 4-8198

TOWN HALL — 3 SUN. AFTS., OCT. 2, 9, & 16
at 5:30 SONATA RECITAL SERIES

DAVID JULIUS
SACKSON * CHAJES
VIOLINIST PIANIST
Subscriptions \$3.30, \$2.50, \$1.65, 75c. inc. tax. now at Box
Office. Mgt. Guild for Musicians (Baldwin)

MUSIC LOVERS

100,000 of the finest records in the world, playable on any phonograph, on sale at 50c & 75c per record (value \$1.50 & \$2). The Symphonies, Chamber Music, Operas, etc. of Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, Mozart, Wagner, etc. Mail Orders. Catalogue.

The Gramophone Shop, Inc., 18 East 48th St., N. Y. C.

FOR SPORTS — IT'S HUDSON

"Hudson has it for less"

Windbreakers—Mackinaws—Lumber Jackets
Hiking Outfits — Sweaters — Breeches
Shoes — Blankets — Camp Supplies

HUDSON ARMY & NAVY STORE

105 Third Avenue Corner 13th Street New York
Call GRamercy 5-9073 for further information

Please mention NEW MASSES when patronizing advertisers

man mind nor a simple, abstract episode of the class struggle, masked by slogans of race and blood. They warned that while German fascism exhibited the forms which reaction would take in any country—suppression of trade unions and freedom of expression, self-justification by a theory of "elites," i.e., natural superiors, arrogant imperialism, and permanent organization for war—it had developed special features which threatened not only the peace of the USSR, France, and England, but the foundations of the civilized world.

Masks are called "false faces." But Nazi ideology is no false face. It is so perfect a mask because most people dare not think how well it fits the face that wears it. The old face of German counter-revolution, of agrarian feudalism, hardened by hundreds of years of struggle against its own people, its "subjects," equipped with the material weapons of modern capitalism, confronts the democratic nations today. Those who say, "The beast of prey is the highest form of human life" (Spengler), and "Happiness, liberty, equality, the rights of man, these are the phantoms soaked with chaos" (Erich Jung) now offer their supreme contribution to the West—war which "elevates the landscape," class war "from above, waged by the masters against the insurgent mob," and foreign war which "provides the ground on which the human soul may manifest itself at its fullest height, in richer forms, and surging from more profound wells than it might in any scientific or artistic exploit as such" (Prof. E. Banse). Let it be understood that the bombs falling on Spanish women and children, the poison gas ready for Czechoslovakia, are not a regrettable necessity of foreign conflict but rather the highest expression of the Aryan spirit.

Kolnai studies the roots and flowering of the Nazi genius from the standpoint of a liberal Catholic. He attempts to show that this genius expresses itself in a revival of tribal mind and society, in which identity and personality are submerged in the group, and the chief and leaders have absolute power as incarnations of the "spirit of the people" rather than of the wishes of single or even a majority of individuals. Kolnai's anthropology may be called into question here; the analogy insults primitive society, of which fascist social theory is an anachronistic parody. (Another, minor objection may be made to some rather naive quotations from Kipling and Noyes, supposed to illustrate that British imperialism at least found morality an asset instead of a hindrance to its aims.)

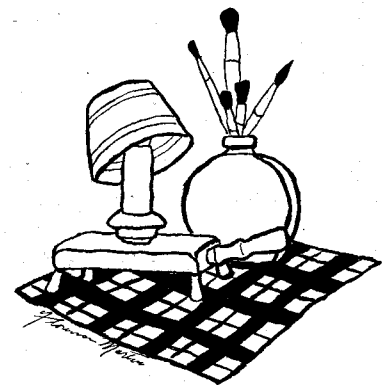
He is concerned more with the ethical implications than with the historical bases for the mystical philosophy of the absolute, hierarchal state held in common by thinkers of the stature of Hegel and snobs like the flunkey Othmar Spann. ("The great mass of people are merely united in the pool of sensual and vital life. The fabric of urges, vegetative life, are predominant with those whose processes of association develop in public houses, at vulgar home parties, at popular

amusements, in cinemas, in varieties with Negro dances and the like.")

Kolnai's purpose is to show that fascism, particularly National Socialism, constitutes a complete negation of the rights of man, of humanity, of the entire moral structure of the West, of liberal Christianity, and of every spiritual assertion of Western culture. Thus he observes that the anti-Communist crusade is not pursued against the Soviet Union or the party alone, but against these mainly, because they carry to their historical conclusion the French and Russian Revolutions which, according to the Nazi ideologist, H. A. Grunsky, "have placed so much degenerated will and energy in the service of unnatural ideas and brutal instincts" and "are landmarks of liberalistic education in actual politics." This fantastic "transvaluation of values" is the essence of what Kolnai calls the war against the West.

Indeed, the fantastic occupies a unique place in German history. Its chief representative is the Hero, actually the useless, outdated landlord turned brigand or Nordic Don Quixote of whom Friedrich Hebbel long ago wittily remarked that his slogan was "A piece of bread I'll not give you, but my life, with pleasure!" The myth figure of the Hero is the highest product of a class which, in order to justify its existence, had to reverse all human values, to preach violence for its own sake, to create an art of tyranny, to invent artificial hierarchies of races and types, and to renounce science and society for the sake of a Kultur in which military caste organization assumes the place of the fine arts. The job of equating myth with reality was turned over to numbers of idealist philosophers and poets to whom lying was simply "intuition, the life of the soul," hijacking was true Socialism, and homosexuality a branch of politics.

Goebbels once said that National Socialism was the "true survival and continuation of Prussindom," i.e., of East Elbian feudal autocracy. He might have been a little more grateful to those Aryan capitalists who elevated him to be one of themselves. The wedding of feudal romance and modern imperialism is celebrated by many noble sentiments in Nazi apologetics (a word which should not be thought to imply modesty). Here are a few examples: An injunction to German bankers—"Financiers of Teutonic race, repose your power in Vikings, not in freedmen!"



Florence Martin

A German Christian discovery—"The Blessed Virgin is a vital and ethnical sex deity." The philosophy of mathematics—"Two-times-two-equal-four is somehow differently tinged in the minds of a German, a Frenchman, and a Negro." A lesson in ethics—"A wild people despises a tame one, the latter taking its revenge by morals."

These are not the ravings of cranks but the considered utterances of respectable professors of philosophy and law. It is to such depths that a ruling class descends when, starting with an assumption of almost biological inferiority in the working class, it erects a hierarchy of "aristocrats" whose lower orders compensate for their debasement by being privileged to degrade others. The lowest members of the nation are given the gloomy satisfaction of despising other races and citizens of nations about to be attacked. This is how the "ancient order of slavery" is supposed to be "biologically founded and preservable."

Time and time again, as one reads, one remembers—and one is certain that millions of German workers will also remember—the great words of Lenin: "... striving for Socialism, we are convinced that it will develop further into Communism, and, side by side with this, there will vanish all need for force, for the subjection of one man to another, of one section of society to another, since people will grow accustomed to observing the elementary conditions of social existence without force and without subjection."

CLARENCE WEINSTOCK.

Savage Aristocrat

BLOODY BARON, by Vladimir Pozner. Translated by Warre Bradley Wells. Random House. \$2.50.

Vladimir Pozner's story of the bloody baron, Roman von Ungern-Sternberg, a Baltic landowner who became a White Russian commander in Mongolia, is a romantic tale of border warfare and the intrigues of Japanese imperialism. Baron Ungern was one of those called by Richard Harding Davis "the d'Artagnans of history," and in temperament, in fact, resembled the American William Walker, who became President of Nicaragua; not a hothead, though, but a fanatic of social hierarchies, a man of savage, solitary, and austere temper who carried to the point of mysticism the idea that the aristocrats were born under God to rule and the masses to work. The bloody baron, reproved for his brutality in Urga, capital of Mongolia, is able to write to the Chinese general, Lu-Chang-Ku:

It is not without commiseration that I think of the Chinese blood that has been shed and which, no doubt, will be attributed to my cruelty; on the other hand, I am positive that every soldier should consider it his duty to root out every revolutionist, whatever his nationality, for they are no less than evil spirits in human shape...

The only available material for this bit of Far Eastern history was in Chinese news-



MARTHA GRAHAM

And Dance Group

LOUIS HORST, MUSICAL DIRECTOR

IN

AMERICAN DOCUMENT

*which NEW MASSES will sponsor
in its first New York performance*

CARNEGIE HALL

Seventh Avenue and 57th Street, New York City

SUNDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 9

at 8:30

Tickets and Reservations: New Masses, 31 East 27th Street, New York City, CA ledonia 5-3076;
Frances Hawkins, 11 West 42nd Street, PE nnsylvania 6-1283; and Carnegie Hall

\$2.20, \$1.65, \$1.10. 83 cents and 55 cents (tax included)