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as pure "legend" while the Civil War itself appears to have been precipitated by the wild course of the nefarious Abolitionists. Professor Harlow's heroes are of the caliber of Gen. John Cocke or Thomas Gantt, who denounced both the pro- and anti-slavery forces and attempted to maintain an impossible neutrality as concerns two diametrically opposed forces, one of which had to triumph. Such men were "sane, temperate . . . true philosophers." Such men were and are, willy-nilly, allies of reaction.

The Abolitionists had their failings, made mistakes, wandered off at times into sectarian morasses, but, taken as a whole, those men and women, white and Negro, were consistent and courageous fighters against the most shameful blot that has ever marred our nation.

HERBERT APTHEKER.

## Brief Reviews

"Mr. Emmanuel," Louis Golding's novel about Nazi inhumanity.

LOUIS GOLDING's *Mr. Emmanuel* (Viking, \$2.50) takes the patriarch of Magnolia Street on an eventful mission to Nazi Germany. The lonely old clerk, lovable when he is not somewhat improbable, becomes attached to Bruno Rosenheim, a young refugee. Bruno's Jewish father has been murdered by the Nazis. His Gentile mother is still alive in Germany. Bruno grows despondent and falls ill when he fails to hear from his mother. Mr. Emmanuel goes to Berlin to find out what has happened to her. Arriving at about the same time that a Nazi official is shot by a Jew in Switzerland, he is accused by the Gestapo of complicity in the affair, thrown into a concentration camp, and brutally tortured. Mr. Emmanuel is finally released through the good offices of Elsie Silver, formerly of Magnolia Street and now the mistress of Willi Brockenburg, Nazi ringleader.

There is much in the plot to strain the reader's credibility, but the fundamental truth about Nazi barbarism is told here rather effectively. The contrast between the gentle, sympathetic, self-sacrificing character of Mr. Emmanuel and the stupid, depraved character of his Nazi tormentors is underscored throughout the novel. *Mr. Emmanuel* suffers from some of the faults of *Magnolia Street*: it goes overboard a little on the sentimental side, and its character analysis is a bit thin. But it does succeed in pointing up Nazi inhumanity, and it is comforting to note that this anti-fascist novel is reaching such a wide audience.

R. N.

A one-volume edition of "Main Currents of Human Thought."

IN THE ten years since the death of Prof. Vernon L. Parrington, his three-volume *Main Currents in American Thought* has become one of the great classics in American criticism and history. Every student of American life is deeply indebted to this monumental work of progressive scholarship. It is good news, therefore, that Harcourt, Brace & Co. has just issued a one-volume edition which sells for \$3.45, about a third of the price for the separate volumes. This attractive edition corresponds in every detail to the original issues.

E. F.

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## S I G H T S A N D S O U N D S

## Stix Nix Fink Pix

Bob Burns brings Hollywood to Van Buren and his hometown yawns . . . Stunt premiere of Paramount's anti-labor film gets hometown labor protest.

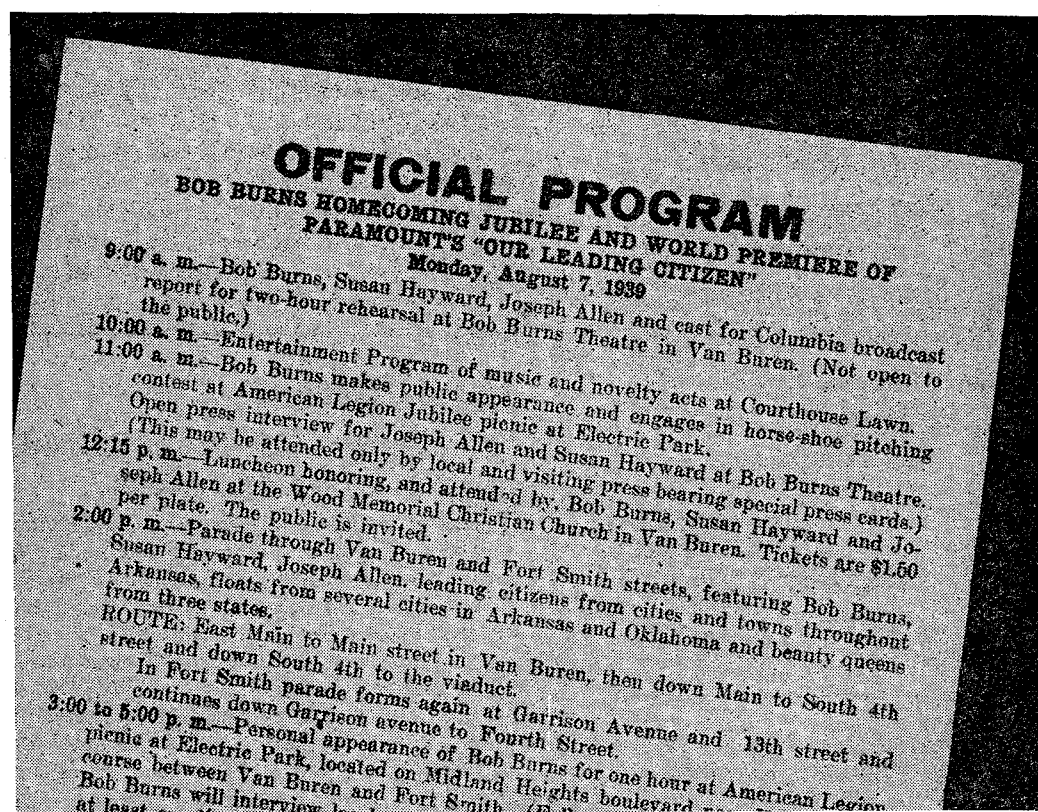
Van Buren, Ark.

**B**ARNUM doesn't live here any more. This quiet little Ozark town was chosen by Paramount Pictures for the world premiere of the anti-labor film *Our Leading Citizen* because the star, Bob Burns, used to live here. Hollywood rolled into Van Buren replete with flawlessly tailored and exquisitely coiffured juveniles, klieg lights, portable sound systems, motorized police from two states with sirens open, ballyhoo artists, and the star himself, muttering drolleries. The local reactionary press, the American Legion, the state militia, the Chamber of Commerce, and the mayor were ready for them. The people were, too, but not in the frame of mind Paramount expected.

When Bob Burns went on the air after the premiere he pulled his funniest crack of the day, "There are a hundred thousand people in little old Van Buren tonight, yes sir." There weren't more than ten thousand, and half of them live here. Across the river in Fort Smith, which was also being honored with the first sniff at Paramount's stinkbomb, the indifference was maddening. There the film was shown in four theaters simultaneously and the straggling audiences could hear the managers quietly weeping on their ledgers in the midst of Burns' big scenes. In an area where four years ago vigilantes flogged and jailed relief strike leaders, this change may seem surprising.

The biggest reason for the vast ho-hum of the good people of Sebastian and Crawford counties in the face of Hollywood's dazzling union-busting cortege is the fact that Grandpa Snazzy, Aunt Boo, and Bob Burns' sundry first, second, third, and fourth cousins have joined the United Furniture Workers local or other CIO affiliates. They have learned to read the *Labor Journal* published by the Fort Smith Labor Council instead of confining themselves to the tory *Van Buren Press Argus*, often mentioned in Burns' broadcasts. Three days before the movie invasion the *Labor Journal* ripped away the Paramount hokum with a front page streamer, "BOB BURNS' LATEST PICTURE IS ANTI-LABOR." By the time the cinema safari hit Van Buren, copies of the union paper were worn to tatters from being passed around in furniture factories, smelting plants, coal mines, glass works, canneries, garment shops, laundries, restaurants, scissors factories, railroad terminals, farm-processing and woodworking plants. Most of the unions in these industries are now CIO. The Ozark people were ready.

The day before Van Buren became immortal Burns arrived in a maroon car the size of a firetruck, accompanied by a hired motorcade with leaden hands on the sirens. They toolled down traffic-less streets amidst a colos-



WHAT MADE VAN BUREN YAWN. The non-union-label handbill announcing the events of the Bob Burns Homecoming Jubilee where "Our Leading Citizen" was unveiled.

sal crowd of fifteen hundred sunbeaten people. The producers announced in advance that only SPECIAL PARAMOUNT PRESS CARDS would admit legitimate newspapermen (hand-picked stooges) to radio auditions, broadcasts, and personal interviews, of which there were at least fifty such on the day's bill. Surrounded by a great school of studio flacks, Burns and the love leads, Susan Hayward and Joseph Allen, made themselves ready for the press. Reporters stayed away in large numbers and the players became so flustered they were handing out prepared copy to high school sophomores who had sidled up to play twenty questions. NEW MASSES' intrepid correspondent forced the admissions that Miss Hayward adores Helen Hayes, Mr. Allen likes fried chicken, and Mr. Burns isn't sure where he was born. By late afternoon interviews were a dime a dozen with no takers.

By five o'clock the Bob Burns Homecoming Jubilee had progressed through a horseshoe pitching contest between Burns and Gov. Carl E. Bailey (Democratic backslider) which the star won, a \$1.50 a plate luncheon at the Wood Memorial Christian Church, and a parade through Van Buren and Fort Smith, described in the non-union-printed handbill as, featuring the stars, "leading citizens from cities and towns throughout Arkansas, floats

from several cities in Arkansas and Oklahoma, and beauty queens from three states." There had also been two press interviews, a radio rehearsal, and an invitation reception to the stars at the Hardscrabble Country Club. At five o'clock two thousand people had witnessed the parade, the *Times Record* had panted off the presses with the news that Mr. Allen loved Miss Hayward, and a cheerful Arkansas drunk named Gabe had sworn at an Oklahoma patrolman. (Nolle prossed.)

The stars, the Burns scriptwriter Duke Atterbury, Mayor and Mrs. Tom English, and a covey of studio people arrived at this point at Doc Meier's drugstore, in the maroon sedan with its new white tires sucking softly on the street. A crowd of six hundred shuffled from one foot to another. Fifty state police and a company of militia from the local armory fell over each other trying to keep the crowd in order. Duke Atterbury, an *Esquire* fashion plate, tweaked his yellow mustache and fingered his special green ground sun glasses. More police cars swooped down the street until there were almost as many guardians of order as there were onlookers. A baby started to squall. A cameraman dropped a flashlight bulb and cursed aloud. Uncle Gus Rucks, a town character mentioned frequently in Burns' Ozark arcana, appeared. He is