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here which one misses in "documentary" or "naturalistic" reporting. The facts have become transformed by the imagination, personality, and understanding of the writer. A delightfully sly sense of humor plays over the pages. The "pictures and frescoes" have a design, despite the effortless and seemingly wayward manner in the Schweik tradition.

Kisch is a superb teller of tales, and it is characteristic that his "autobiography" should consist mainly of stories about other people. As a reporter for Czech and German newspapers he met all sorts of incredible people in all sorts of incredible situations. One day, for example, he called up the Prague Home for Wayward Girls and asked the Mother Superior if he could visit the institution for the purposes of an article that he planned. After much debate by the prayerful patrons of the institution, the representative of the press was granted permission to pay a visit. The atmosphere was stuffy. All the dignity and moral rectitude of the world was concentrated in the reception ceremonies. This was the first press interview on record. When the "wayward girls" greeted Egon, the police reporter who had got around, with kisses and embraces, he was deeply touched. As he recalls, and as we have no reason to disbelieve, the board of trustees was even more deeply touched. But if this story, as Kisch tells it, ties one into knots of laughter, that is not the whole of it. For in 1933 the Nazis voted a thousand-mark prize for the story "which would best express the native wit and humor of the North German Seaboard." The winner was the "humorist" of the Hamburger *Fremdenblatt*, Hanns ut Hamm. The story: Magdalene Home. The author: Egon Kisch (definitely not of the North Seaboard). When the *Schwarze Korps*, organ of the blackshirted Elite Guard, discovered the actual source, it boiled over, not at the idea of plagiarism as such, but at the "shameless smuggling of a typically foreign strain of thought into our National Socialist folkways." And, as Kisch puts it, "After such a pitiful end to their vaunted prize contest, all efforts to create a Nazi literature were abandoned."

Then there is the remarkable story of Colonel Redl, involving an internationally famous espionage case. How Kisch scooped the world through information unwittingly provided by the right end of his football team (the same team on which Eda Benes was halfback) makes a most delightful and revealing narrative. The story of Tony Gallow and how she got to heaven, the episode with the Siamese Twins, the famous altercation between grandmother Kisch and Egon in which it was incontrovertibly established that the capital of Salzburg is Salzburg, and scores of other anecdotes give *Sensation Fair* the character of an inexhaustible mine of significant anecdote. It is hardly any wonder that Kisch has been just about the most widely plagiarized writer in the world. He has strewn the path of his fellow authors with irresistible temptations.

But it is not only the stories as such that give the book its unique flavor. Kisch's wise observations on everything from Dante to modern theories of criminology are always fresh and stimulating. He is eternally curious about life. One feels in the presence of this book, as in the presence of the author himself, a richness and zest that cannot be defeated in the most difficult conditions of exile. His work radiates a deep love for humanity and a deep hatred for everything that seeks to crush humanity. In his sparkling diction, at once considered and colloquial, in his highly individual style, which Guy Endore's translation so beautifully communicates, one sees reflected the buoyancy and seriousness which are equally basic to his character. This unswerving enemy of fascism will one day soon—as soon as the united effort of mankind succeeds—return to Prague. And many of us Americans look forward to the day when we can come to Prague and listen to him, as he once listened to Methodius, reciting his "ballads of fact." We shall listen with the same awe and appreciation. And with even greater love.

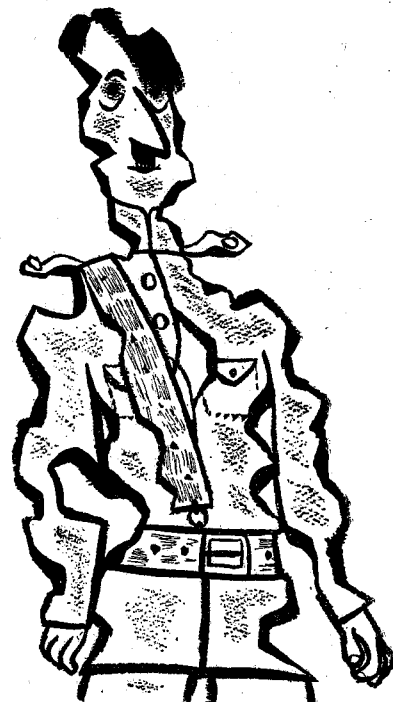
SAMUEL SILLEN.

Jawaharlal Nehru

TOWARD FREEDOM, The Autobiography of Jawaharlal Nehru. The John Day Co. \$4.

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU as an individual parallels the complexity of his country. He also reflects the strength and hope of his people. He has taken part in every major struggle for the political, social, and cultural advancement of India today. Prison is as familiar to him as his own home.

But Nehru's autobiography is much more than a record of Indian politics. It is a careful self-portrait of a man who knows that his character, weakness, and fortitude have more than a restricted personal importance. Neither vain nor falsely modest, Nehru speaks of his



January 6, 1942 NM

accomplishments and failings with candor because he sees them duplicated in the failures and successes of the liberation movement.

Nehru's description of his early home life and the conversion of his father to a radical point of view is at once charming and deeply serious. For the father, Motilal, a successful lawyer influenced by his son, became one of the many great Indian patriots imprisoned for their service to the people. A similar warmth and understanding appear in his relations with his wife, Kamala, who is now dead. In 1931 she was arrested following Nehru's own detention in connection with a "No Tax" campaign in the United Provinces. She managed to send him a message: "I am happy beyond measure to follow in the footsteps of my husband." Nehru remarks tenderly, "Probably she would not have said just that if she had thought over the matter, for she considered herself a champion of woman's rights against the tyranny of man!"

When Nehru returned from a trip to Europe in 1927 he brought with him the socialist ideas which were to guide him in his future political actions. He had attended the Brussels Congress of Oppressed Nationalities and had been influenced by the uncompromising stand of the Communists as contrasted with the vacillation of the Social Democrats.

While not a Communist, Nehru has gained tremendously from his contact with Communist theory. It has helped him to appraise correctly many puzzling features in Indian life and to combat reactionary forces working within the framework of the national movement. Nehru has been the most outspoken enemy of communalism, or religious separatism, which seeks to divide Moslem from Hindu India in the interests of imperialism and feudalism. His advanced stand has brought him into reluctant but inevitable opposition to Gandhi. His personal feeling for Gandhi and his recognition of the latter's qualities as a leader do not blind Nehru to Gandhi's inflexibly religious, petty bourgeois outlook. He has, however, not stood up against Gandhi as strongly as he might, possibly from an all-too-human affection.

Nehru's view of international developments has been nearly always right. He has often paid tribute to Soviet democracy, notably in his presidential address to the Lucknow National Congress in 1936. He was a consistent enemy of appeasement and spoke angrily against the Chamberlain betrayal of Europe to fascism. Though his narrative does not include the most recent events, one is left in no doubt as to what his stand would be today.

Nehru, who was arrested again in August 1940, has just been released from jail. His continued imprisonment at a time when the British people need the support of the democratic forces in India as never before, was a paradox which was not lost upon the masses of Britain. In a statement, insisting upon a more vigorous prosecution of the war against the common enemy, Hitlerism, the National Committee of the People's Convention urged

that the "just demands" of the people of India and the colonies be met and all political prisoners be released.

That demand has been answered in part by the freeing of Nehru.

CHARLES HUMBOLDT.

Outside Looking In

INSIDE LATIN AMERICA, by John Gunther. Harper & Bros. \$3.50.

LIKE its predecessors, *Inside Europe* and *Inside Asia*, this volume is a glib piece of history-through-personality. Anecdotes take first place; hasty personal observations are second; social and economic background run third. Inaccuracies and sloppy generalizations are plentiful; and one finds enough obvious errors to make Mr. Gunther's stories suspect unless confirmed by other sources. But once all this is said, it must also be admitted that the sketches about our neighbors to the south are very vivid and not usually unfair; at least the author is free from the wild prejudices of a man like Carleton Beals, and he pictures the immediate political patterns of the Latin American republics in greater detail than the other recent popular surveys. When Mr. Gunther is most seriously inaccurate, as, for example, in misrepresenting the circumstances of Luis Carlos Prestes' latest "trial," it seems to be less out of malice, and more because of a reluctance to spoil a picturesque story by inquiring too closely into the truth.

Most Latin Americans who have read this book have not taken to it very kindly. Negative reactions have appeared in the Latin American press and in the New York Spanish daily, *La Prensa*. One of the grievances of our Latin American friends concerns Mr. Gunther's method of work. He spent many years as a correspondent on the continent before writing *Inside Europe*; likewise with his volume on Asia; but he presumed to write *Inside Latin America* after only a few months of an airplane tour, hopping from capital to capital of the twenty republics. True enough, his visits were conscientious. He visited them all. And as he states in his preface, he covered 18,938 miles by air. He chatted with an imposing number of presidents and foreign ministers, and he seems certainly to have read a half dozen standard works in English about the hemisphere. One must credit his ability to compose such a volume, in many ways so much more informative than those of writers with a longer experience. Still, as one Bolivian journalist suggests, it should have been entitled *Outside Latin America*, or *Latin America From the Outside Looking In*.

On the other hand, many other comments from Latin America are less justified. It does no service to the Good Neighbor policy to pretend that all Latin American dignitaries are democrats and honest public servants. If the present government of Peru, for example, is furious with Gunther for his description of the way it keeps itself in

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