

## Our Most Expensive Luxury

THE PROBLEM OF UNEMPLOYMENT. By PAUL H. DOUGLAS and AARON DIRECTOR. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1931. \$3.50.

Reviewed by W. J. COUPER  
Yale University

UNEMPLOYMENT has scared us into the study of unemployment. This book is a clear, comprehensive, generally sound analysis of the problem here and abroad; and while we are still hungry and frightened we had best consider it.

The authors begin with the measurement of the amount of unemployment and its cost. In January 1931 there were approximately 5,400,000 unemployed in the United States; now there are more. For thirty years, without any apparent trend, unemployment has fluctuated between six and twenty-three per cent and averaged ten. Seasonal and miscellaneous causes are responsible for six-tenths, cyclical fluctuations for four-tenths of this total. The average annual wage loss of over four billion dollars, the consequent loss of a domestic market as great as our total export trade, the costs of idle capital equipment and decreased efficiency of labor make unemployment our most expensive American luxury.

We normally have more unemployment (that is, a larger total of persons unemployed) than any other industrial country. A challenging but unfortunately brief chapter is devoted to the explanation of this fact in contrast with the different rates in Great Britain, France, and Russia. While drawing no hasty conclusions, the authors suggest that Russia's decreasing unemployment in the face of a deepening international depression "should raise in the minds of open-minded men the possibility at least . . . of extending to the industrial system as a whole some of those methods of setting standards, of planning, and of co-ordinating which have been so effective within establishments." These methods are thoroughly canvassed, especially in the section dealing with seasonal fluctuations. Difficulties and limitations are not minimized but we are shown that the possibilities of profitable stabilization have not yet been exhausted.

Turning next to technological unemployment, the authors contend, in the spirit of Bastiat and other orthodox optimists, that in the long run technical change does not decrease the opportunities for employment. Improved technique may temporarily displace labor but it will either lower prices or increase profits. If the lower price of a commodity does not increase the demand sufficient to reabsorb the displaced labor (as in printing), it will release purchasing power (as in bottle making) to stimulate increased consumption of and more employment in the production of other goods. Higher profits likewise will cause industrial expansion. Since this line of reasoning, if carried to a rigorous conclusion, would also prove that, except for institutional friction, there could never be any unemployment at all, our authors' findings are not wholly persuasive. Temporary displacement is, however, adequately stressed and several proposals are suggested for alleviating the hardship.

The discussion of the limited market is the only place in which the book is at all disappointing. Nowhere is there any attempt to answer the immediately pressing question: Should wages now be reduced? Only incidentally is this aspect of the problem mentioned and one is led hesitatingly to infer that wage-cuts, however undesirable from the point of view of long run policy, would increase employment.

There follows an excellent analysis of the business cycle in the course of which the authors prophesy increased unemployment as a result of the continued decline in the price level during the next decade, discount the remedial effects of public works, and recommend a managed currency and credit system. A detailed discussion of the problems of private and public unemployment bureaus leads to a vigorous endorsement of the proposal (Wagner Bill, vetoed) for a federal-state system in the United States.

This last measure is necessary for the orderly marketing of labor. It is also necessary as a preliminary to the adoption of the concluding and major recommendation—compulsory public unemployment insurance for the United States. A full account of experience with every form of unemployment insurance here and abroad disposes of current misconceptions and opposition arguments. Unemployment cannot be wholly prevented. Wages don't permit adequate savings. Charity, the American dole, is insufficient and demoralizing. Insurance would

provide for the laborers the same protection that dividend reserves give investors and might also have important preventive effects. The initiative of individual employers will not suffice—witness the fact that in the United States there are fewer workers covered by company insurance than in England where such schemes supplement the state system which is imagined to undermine private initiative. Some safeguard must be found against the next depression. Thus the authors build up an unanswerable case for compulsory insurance. Its inevitable acceptance cannot be long delayed.

## Tolstoyana

TOLSTOY. Literary Fragments, Letters and Reminiscences Not Previously Published. Edited by RENÉ FÜLÖP-MILLER. New York: The Dial Press. 1931. \$5.

Reviewed by ALEXANDER KAUN  
University of California

THE legacy of Tolstoy seems inexhaustible. While there is nothing startlingly new or unexpected in recent Tolstoyana, one is ever stirred afresh by the revealed features of that lonely and contradictory man. In his life even repetition and sameness have something of "*la grande monotonie de la mer*." To be sure, in the case of Tolstoy, as in that of Katherine Mansfield and other writers, over-zealous heirs occasionally exhume and publish the deceased's puerilities. Almost two thirds of the present volume are given over to dispensable fragments and draughts of Tolstoy's compositions and to two comedies which he prepared for home theatricals at Yasnaya Polyana. These are of interest only to the student of Tolstoy's literary development (and most of the material has already been published). Much more striking and illuminating is the portion of the book which contains correspondence and reminiscences.

At the age of thirty, in his letters to Botkin, Tolstoy is still the exuberant young pagan, even if he shows the symptoms of corroding introspection now and then. He has recently won fame on the battlefield and in letters, has been fêted and flattered in both capitals, and is now going abroad—another Peter the Great intent on borrowing knowledge from the West for the benefit of the natives. Russia is in the midst of epochal reforms, on the eve of the Emancipation. The air is filled with ideas and slogans, and Tolstoy is also engulfed. But the young blade is sensuous, and eager, and not a little bewildered. He discusses politics, but is apparently disgusted with it, and suggests that Botkin, Turgenev, Fet, and himself "band together" to "prove the truth" of the view "that art is self-sufficient and eternal," "and to set art free, by word and act, from the power of haphazard, narrow-minded, sordid political influences of today." An equivocal adumbration of "What Is Art?"

Introspective from childhood, and preoccupied with moral self-perfection, young Tolstoy tosses about between sinning and repenting. He tells Botkin how bored he is with the "well-informed" persons in society salons, and that dancing is his only refuge," but this he immediately amends: "I need hardly tell you, dear friend, that all this is far from right." At Lausanne the call of the flesh prompts Leo to go to a certain place with Botkin's brother, but he is disgusted with the "thoroughly French, not to say corrupt, manners and customs of the place," and so the two "came back as innocent as when they went." In a postscript to his brother, Botkin adds a suggestive bit to that episode: "Tolstoy is always complaining of headaches; the simple truth is that he is a young man, and—il faut jeter sa gourme. But his bashfulness and stupidity ruined everything. . . ." The details are deleted.

The pagan and the christian coexist. He gambles and pays his "usual penalty," is "left practically stranded" in Moscow. He then proceeds to take a "self-imposed penalty," in the form of promising to finish his "Cossacks" within a year for Katkov, the publisher. Sin and repentance. May is outdoors, and Leo's blood is bent on mischief. In a deleted letter he tells Botkin about a certain Miss that "she can go to the devil! Just now the air is filled with the air of lilacs," and he ends: "In the spring one feels it is hardly worth while to get married. Life is so sweet, and we feel sure it will always be so!" Quite an ordinary moon-calf youth, were these passages not interspersed with unmistakably Tolstoyan sentiments that bring out the perpetual tragedy of conflict seething within him.

In his later years Tolstoy was besieged by callers and correspondents who sought his guidance. He nearly always replied, his answers gradually acquiring standardization. Be good, forbear, do not live in sin, forgive your enemy, endure your husband (or wife) but avoid marital relations, serve God, read good books—inclosed such and such books, "books to suit all occasions." His old passionate and quick-tempered self must have on more than one occasion burst through the benign surface, and he showed irritability with his questioners. Peace and happiness would have been Tolstoy's lot, had he actually embraced his faith wholly. His irascibility was a sure sign of the incompleteness of his conviction.

And yet, and yet there is a loveliness about the man Tolstoy, with all his frailties. Perhaps because these are so transparent, and we have before us his entire life, some eight decades, illumined by a merciless searchlight. In his fiction and essays, in his diaries and letters, in recorded conversations and reminiscences, we obtain detail upon detail of that complex, contradictory, human-all-too-human entity that is Tolstoy.

The book is translated from the German. The result of this third-hand version is often ludicrous. Russian names and terms have been so mutilated as to recall the worst German atrocities ever concocted in the imagination of the Allied press agents. The text is in sore need of notes for the uninitiated reader, but the editor has confined himself to a ponderous and not quite germane introduction. The value of the book remains inestimable despite its technical shortcomings.

## An Anatomy of Graft

WHEN THE WICKED MAN . . . By FORD MADOX FORD. New York: Horace Liveright. 1931. \$2.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE DANGERFIELD

THIS is a very striking and a very minor work. It is both these things because at the heart of it there lies a story more suited to a writer like Vicki Baum than a writer like Ford Madox Ford; it is a novel with a weak heart. Inevitably too much emphasis is laid upon manner, upon the "by-paths and indirect crook'd ways" through which the characters are brought face to face with each situation; and the situations themselves are given an unreal, a preposterous stature. As a triumph of manner over matter the novel is a *tour de force*, but *tour de force* in relation to literature has often enough an unkind meaning somewhere about it; and it would hardly be unfair to Mr. Ford to say that this sort of triumph is a very barren affair.

His "wicked man" is an Englishman called Notterdam who has spent the better part of his life adventuring in America, and has become a partner in one of the oldest publishing houses in New York. He is beguiled into signing a contract with an author whose work does not meet with his partner's approval, and is then persuaded into repudiating the contract. The author commits suicide, and Notterdam, suddenly realizing not only the nasty dishonesty behind this particular transaction, but also the precise amount of bribery and thieving which has made him into a successful publisher, is then to learn that his wife has been deceiving him with his partner who happens also to be his lifelong friend. He becomes the victim of hallucinations, in the course of which he is importuned by the suicide's widow to take her with him on a business trip to Europe. There he shoots the lady's paramour—a very minor gangster—in the belief that he is shooting himself. He returns to an applauding America.

Mr. Ford's attempt to probe the nervous system of American business—his *Anatomy of Graft*—begins apprehensively, develops hysterically, and ends with caricature. To the alien melodrama at the heart of it (alien that is to Mr. Ford) both the indeterminate behavior of his characters and the indirection of his prose are purely a work of super-erogation. There are rare and sober moments in the book when we are permitted to see the real Ford, but for the most part he seems, through a process of overstatement and possibly of self-defense, to be standing his people in front of some kind of distorting mirror. I admit at once that this is more terrifying than ridiculous; but it is not truthful and it is not valuable. As a piece of cleverness which is not without sincerity "When The Wicked Man . . ." may command our admiration for whatever our admiration is worth. But not our assent.





## Orion

By ALDOUS HUXLEY

**T**HREE-TANGLED still, autumn Orion  
Climbs up, climbs up from among the north  
wind's shuddering emblems

Into the torrent void  
And dark abstraction of invisible power,  
Climbs up into the naked midnight, slowly climbs  
Up into the black heart of the wind.

Pleione flees before him, and behind,  
Still sunken, but prophetically near,  
Death in the Scorpion hunts him up the sky  
And round the vault of time, round the slow-curving  
year  
Follows unescapably,  
Follows, follows, for of all the gods  
Death only cannot die.

The rest are mortal, of whom how many and how  
many,  
Dust already with their creatures' dust,  
Die even in us who live. But do we live,  
We of whose hearts impiety  
Makes, not tombs indeed  
(For they with everlasting Death's  
Mysterious being live),  
But curious shops and learned lumber rooms  
Where Death his sacred, his undying sting  
Forgets, forgets (amid the to and fro,  
Amid the irrelevant to and fro of feet  
That come and idly go, how studiously forgotten!)  
And where, by all the hurrying, all the peeping,  
All the loud oblivion seemingly slain,  
He lies with all the rest—and yet we know  
Death is not dead, not dead but only sleeping,  
And soon will rise again.

Not so the rest. Only Death the Scorpion,  
And Death the Scorpion only now and then,  
Burns in our unpeopled heaven of names  
And insubstantial echoes; only Death  
Still claims our prayers and still to those who pray  
Returns his own dark blood, his own divinely  
Quickening flesh, returns his mystery  
And sacrament of fear.

Anger, laughter, those other mysteries,  
Those more joyous, those more divine than Death's,  
All the gods of dancing and desire—  
Oh, where are they?  
Only ghosts between the shuddering elm-trees,  
Only echoes, only names and numbers climb;  
And where the gods pursued and fled,  
Only a certain time, a certain place  
Attend on other ghostly times and places.  
Fierce Orion and the rest are dead.

And yet to-night, because the wind exults,  
Because the world is all one quenchless laughter,  
Hunter, hunted, shine as with living eyes,  
Eyes of recognition, beckoning, beckoning  
Over gulfs that separate no more,  
But like the sea whose desolate dividing  
Yet brings safely home,  
Brings safely home our voyaging desires,  
Join with a living touch, unbrokenly,  
Life to far life, the Hunter's to my own.

To-night he lives; yet I who know him living,  
Elsewhere and otherwise  
Know him for dead—dead beyond all hope.  
For 'tis the infertile death, the unquicken  
Death of measured places and recorded times  
The hopeless death of names and numbers that he  
dies.  
Only a thought, only a phantom climbs.  
Put out the eyes, put out the living eyes;  
Look elsewhere.  
Yes, look elsewhere and think and have your being  
Elsewhere and otherwise.

But also here and thus are in their right,  
Are in their right divine to send this wind of laughter  
Rushing through the cloudless dark.  
They too, they too, by right divine  
And imprescriptible, reveal

Starry gods and make me feel,  
As now I do, as even now I do,  
The presence in the night,  
The real and living presence of their power.

Lit from this side and from that, the spirit of man  
Throws either way its images, either way  
Throws vast across the world, and on the tender  
Quick within how burning small!  
Throws, shall it be the living body of love?  
Or, rotting, shall it be,  
Rotting or parcht, picked to the bleaching bone  
Shapes of sad knowledge and defiling hate?

'Lighten our darkness, Lord.' With what pure faith,  
What too confident hope our fathers once  
Prayed to the Light for lightening!  
Loathsome bountiful, the shitten Lord of Flies  
Fulfils on us their prayers. They prayed for light,  
And now through windows at their supplication  
Scoured of the sacred blazons (but instead  
How obscenely bedaubed!) all living eyes  
Look dead, look merely dead;  
While on the sky our guttering candle throws,  
Not the Wild Huntsman, not the singing Hosts of  
Heaven,  
But shapes of death and patterned nothing,  
Names and measured times and places,  
Numbers, ghosts.

And yet, for all the learned Lord of Dung,  
The choice is ours, the choice is always ours  
To see or not to see the living powers  
Moving through the ghostly sky.  
What though the Fly King rules? The choice re-  
mains

Always with us, and we are free, are free  
To love our fate or loathe it; to rejoice  
Or weep or wearily accept; are free,  
For all the scouring of our souls, for all  
The miring of their crystal, free to give  
Even to a desert sky, to vacant names,  
Or not to give, our worship; free to turn,  
O God! within, without, to what transcends  
The squalor of our personal ends and aims,  
Or not to turn—yes, free to die or live;  
Free to be thus and passionately here,  
Or otherwise and elsewhere;  
Free to learn, or not to learn,  
The art to think and musically do  
And feel and be, the never more than now  
Difficult art harmoniously to live  
All poetry—the midnight of Macbeth,  
And ripe Odysseus, and the undying light  
Of Gemma's star, and Cleopatra's death,  
And Falstaff in his cups; the art to live  
That discipline of flowers, that solemn dance  
Of sliding weights and harnessed powers,  
Which is a picture; or to live the grave  
And stoical recession, row on row,  
Of equal columns, live the upward leaping,  
The mutual yearning, meeting, marrying,  
And then the flame-still rapture of the arch,  
The fierce and sleepless trance of consummation  
Poised everlastingly above the abyss.

The choice is always ours. Then let me choose  
The longest art, the hard Promethean way  
Cherishingly to tend and feed and fan  
That inward fire, whose small precarious flame,  
Kindled or quenched, creates  
The noble or the ignoble men we are,  
The worlds we live in and the very fates,  
Our bright or muddy star.

Up from among the shuddering emblems of the wind,  
Into its heart of abstract power,  
Orion climbs, and all his living stars  
Are bright, are bright, and all his stars are mine.

The Italian National Book Fair was held this  
year at the old market of Trajan, among the ruins  
which have been recently uncovered and restored.  
Several books placed within stalls on the three levels  
of the old market were devoted to Englishmen and  
Americans. Edgar Wallace, Jack London, S. S.  
Van Dine proved to be most popular with Italian  
readers. Italian publishing firms brought some au-  
thors to the Fair to autograph their editions, while  
well known actresses conducted a lottery of popular  
editions.

Bernard Shaw recently declared that the English  
language was made up of 500,000 words and 208  
noises. A Somerset farmer, he added, could get  
along with 300 words and a few expletives!

## Pegasus

## Perplexing



### NUMBER V

Dear friend, as soon as you have crossed the sea  
'Twill be a comfort if you haply-cable  
My first about yourself to anxious me  
(Of course in words the fewest applicable).

My second and my third—to it the swain  
The unappeasably enamored-lout,  
Commits the verses which his feeble brain  
Hot head and heavy hand have hammered-out.

### My Whole Speaks

For me our forest acres are denuded;  
In me are blended truth and brazen fiction;  
By me are men instructed or deluded;  
On me are lavished praise and malediction.

### NUMBER VI

The throat of Sir Toby grew thicker and thicker,  
Reduced to a fierce, inarticulate thirst,  
Till he rolled on the floor like a hog'shead of liquor,  
Still waving my first.

If you're parting for long with the people you know-  
well,  
And wish an informal and intimate word,  
*Adieu* and *farewell* are too stilted to go-well:  
Try my second and third.

I am offering now a perplexing enigma:  
If musical mummery poisons the soul,  
Why do sanctified people with never a stigma  
Take part in my whole?

### RULES

Throughout the summer months *The Saturday Review*  
will publish two charades in each issue of the magazine,  
the last charade to appear in the issue of August twenty-  
ninth.

It is our hope that readers of the paper will be interested  
in solving these puzzles and will submit answers at the  
conclusion of the contest. Prizes will consist of copies of  
the book from which the charades are taken, "Pegasus  
Perplexing," by Le Baron Russell Briggs, to be published  
by The Viking Press at the conclusion of the contest.

Contestants must solve correctly at least ten of the  
twenty-four charades in order to qualify. A prize will be  
awarded for each of the 100 highest scores obtained by  
those who qualify.

The highest score will win a copy of the book specially  
bound in leather.

In case of ties each tying competitor will receive the  
award.

Solve the charades each week as they appear, but do  
not send in your answers until the last charade is published  
on August twenty-ninth.

In submitting answers merely number them to correspond  
with the number of the charade to which they apply and  
mail the list to Contest Editor, *The Saturday Review*, 25  
West 45th Street, New York City.

All answers must be mailed not later than midnight of  
September tenth, 1931.

It is not required that competitors subscribe to *The  
Saturday Review*; copies of the magazine are available for  
free examination at public libraries or at the office of pub-  
lication. The contest is open to everyone except employees  
of *The Saturday Review* and The Viking Press.

The accuracy of the answers will be verified by the  
editors of *The Saturday Review*.

A unique institute has been founded in Vienna  
(says a correspondent to the *London Observer*) a  
collection of the brains of famous persons, artists,  
scientists, writers, composers, etc., which are to be  
shown under glass at the new museum managed by  
Professor Economo. There will be sufficient space  
for exhibiting the brains of 1,000 persons, who are  
to leave them to the institute by will for the sake  
of research work. Professor Economo is sending  
an appeal to leading men of intellectual ability to  
enrich his collection.

The measurement of weight will form an im-  
portant part of the Museum's task. The average  
brain of the Caucasian race weighs 1,367 grammes  
(man), 1,206 grammes (woman). Persons of ex-  
traordinary gifts have heavier brains: Kant's weighed  
1,650 grammes, Byron's 1,807, and Turgenev's  
2,012. However, the process is not quite reliable,  
for the record was made by an epileptic idiot, whose  
brains weighed as much as 2,850 grammes.

The shapes of both brains and skulls of geniuses  
and specialists, such as great mathematicians, chess-  
players, musicians, and others, are to be made the  
object of thorough study. Incidentally, a Berlin  
correspondent has recently reported the brain of Her-  
mann Sudermann, the playwright and novelist, which  
he left in his will to the Director of the Kaiser  
Wilhelm Institute, has now been examined micro-  
scopically, and a full analytical description of Suder-  
mann's qualities as a writer is now published.