

## Presidential Policies

LOOKING FORWARD. By FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT. New York: The John Day Co. 1933.

Reviewed by ROYAL J. DAVIS

ODDLY enough, the one policy advocated by President Roosevelt in this collection of speeches and articles which, to some extent, was embodied in legislation between the time of his inauguration and the appearance of this volume is one of which he says little—the reduction of expenditure. That little, moreover, concerns economies to be effected by the reorganization of governmental departments and contains not the slightest hint of the chief cut which was actually made, that in veterans' pensions. Such are the paradoxes of politics. Another of the policies discussed had immediate Presidential recognition in the invitation to the Governors who were present at the inauguration to give the new President the opportunity of meeting them in a body. This invitation was in line with Mr. Roosevelt's declaration, made in his argument for State planning regarding the utilization of land: "The national government can and should act as a clearing house for all the Governors to work through."

Two other policies were the subjects of Presidential messages which were sent as soon as the banking crisis was out of the way—the restoration of agricultural prosperity and the relief of unemployment. The farm relief bill went through the House of Representatives in perfunctory fashion, but this speed meant that the real fight over the measure was staged for the Senate. The first unemployment relief bill dealt with the reforestation project which aroused sharp controversy during the campaign. Both of these policies are discussed in this book with greater definiteness than is accorded to some others. Farm relief in particular is considered in some detail, the plan outlined including a "tariff benefit" and a "differential benefit" of a kind which will not stimulate production. Unemployment relief is discussed in the main as a State rather than a Federal problem, old-age and unemployment insurance being favored, but treated as State undertakings.

Half a dozen other policies—all domestic—which receive space in this volume have had to await their turn for official recommendation from the White House. President Roosevelt has been compelled to adopt a priority program in order to prevent some of his policies from running afoul of others and entangling the whole lot. The six which have been held back relate to governmental reorganization, revision of taxation, control of electric utilities, railroad rehabilitation, tariff reduction, and financial reform.

What Mr. Roosevelt thinks of the importance of governmental reorganization may be judged from his statement that by it he hopes "to reduce the cost of the regular operations of the Federal Government by no less than twenty-five percent." Revision of taxation, in his view, means not only lower taxes but also a better adjustment of taxes between nation and State, and State and local units. Control of electric utilities is the subject of an eight-point program ranging from publicity to regulation. Railroad rehabilitation is conditioned upon governmental co-operation in reforming the financial structure of the roads and reducing competition among them. Tariff reduction is presented as having for its object the putting of the rates "as low as the preservation of American industry will permit," while financial reform, mentioned also in the inaugural address, is defined as including the separation of investment and commercial banking, the regulation of holding companies, and the prevention of the use of bank deposits for speculation.

Foreign policy, like these half dozen domestic policies, has had to wait upon more pressing matters. Yet it is with reference to this policy that there comes nearest to being a contradiction between pre-inauguration utterance and post-inauguration action. For the utterance bears heavily upon the duty of debt payment, while the action implies debt reduction by means of negotiations carried on by the

President in accordance with the advice of Congress. On limitation of armaments, however, utterance and action are consistent, Norman Davis having been sent back to Europe to continue his efforts for that purpose. A third item is suggested in the statement that the United States "could well afford to take the lead" in calling a world financial conference.

It is a bit of historical irony that no one of the steps definitely sponsored by Mr. Roosevelt before his inauguration was the one which circumstances forced him to make his first recommendation to a Congress summoned in "extra" session. He had spoken of financial reform—he found himself faced with the necessity of temporary financial stoppage. But it cannot be doubted that piece by piece the dozen policies discussed in the chapters of this volume will be officially offered for translation into action.

## America and the World

THE UNITED STATES IN WORLD AFFAIRS. By WALTER LIPPMANN and WILLIAM O. SCROGGS. Vol. II. New York: Harper & Bros. 1933. \$3.

Reviewed by S. K. RATCLIFFE.

WALTER LIPPMANN is an American institution of a character and range such as no other country could produce. In England at any rate we have not his like. No British publicist could make for himself a corresponding position. The smallness of our country, the dominance of the metropolitan press, and the control of the great circulations by half a dozen rich newspaper owners make for the journalist of fine powers (such, for example, as J. A. Spender, A. G. Gardiner, J. L. Garvin), ambitious of reaching a nationwide audience in Britain, a situation altogether different from that which Mr. Lippmann, since the demise of the New York World, has so brilliantly exploited. With his *Herald Tribune* article appearing four times a week in more than a hundred papers throughout the country, he is the most influential journalist writing in English today, and this of course means the most influential journalist in the world.

Moreover, the resources of America enable Mr. Lippmann to transcend even the opportunities provided by his vast daily field. Through the Council of Foreign Relations he is afforded the means of making a permanent chronicle of the United States in world affairs. The assistance of expert juniors is at his disposal, and "thousands at his bidding speed." In the annual survey of which this summary of 1932 is the latest example we have an enterprise which is no doubt to be regarded as a public service outside the perils of publishing. It was needed, and the job is being beautifully done.

I am not the best possible reviewer for a record and interpretation of events and policies such as this, in which, by the bye, the work of Mr. Scroggs and Mr. Merz is not easily to be separated from that of Mr. Lippmann, whose directing brain and hand are everywhere in evidence. A strictly objective account of the American year in foreign affairs should, perhaps, be handled by a ferocious partisan—by, say, an evangelist of Fascism or of Communism, or some other writer convinced that there is no more validity or hope in the post-war European system, if system it can be called, than there was in the grotesque structure of imperial states which collapsed in 1917-18. I am no such partisan or doctrinaire. By temperament and training I belong to Mr. Lippmann's camp. In 1919-20 I was convinced that the European world was salvageable; and when the supreme opportunities of that hour had been missed, there seemed to me good grounds for believing that the five years between 1924 and 1929 furnished a second great chance for making a settlement of tolerance, reason, and justice. That was the interval during which the spirit of Clemenceau was fading, when Stresemann and MacDonald appeared to be names of power. To me, as to all others of our way of thinking, this spring of 1933 is no season of cheer, since the governing mind of France is unaltered, Germany is over the abyss, and the England for which Arthur Henderson stood at Geneva, while Ram-

say MacDonald was still unfettered, cannot speak through the mouth of Henderson's successor in any tones that the continental governments are compelled to heed. It is the crucial year of intervening crisis that Mr. Lippmann and his colleagues have condensed and brought into focus for us.

As we should expect they have not been bound by the strict limits of the calendar. Their starting-point is the second half of 1931, marked especially by the Hoover moratorium, the fall of the British Labor Government, the abandonment of the gold standard by London, and the beginning of the Japanese aggression in Manchuria at virtually the same moment. The European chapters seem to me not less valuable than those dealing specifically with American action and international policy. In no book that I know is there to be found a better



"CUT DOWN ON THOSE THINGS AND WE'LL TALK BUSINESS." A cartoon by Rollin Kirby, published originally in the New York World-Telegram.

statement of the essentials of the war-debts problem, the motives and determining facts of British foreign policy since the retreat from gold and free trade, and the situation in Germany which precluded the coming of Hitler into office. For American readers, needless to say, the special value of the volume lies in the chapters expounding the significance of the Hoover moratorium and the Stimson doctrine of non-recognition of results obtained by the violation of pledges and treaties, the doctrine to which Mr. Stimson gave decisive form twelve months ago in relation to the Far East.

The authors bring out in the most definite fashion one other matter of the first importance: namely, that by the series of decisions and proposals from Washington after June, 1931, the American Government relinquished the view that the war debts owing to America could be kept separate from the problem of European indebtedness which has from the beginning been bedevilled by reparations. One's feeling now is that if Europe can work through the multiple crisis of the present year, it may hope to survive almost any possible experience. In any case, our citizens ought to know something of what it is all about, and here is the guide for them. The knowledge, the clarity, the balanced intelligence by which Mr. Lippmann is known and for which he is so deservedly admired were never more conspicuously displayed than in this volume. It is a model of what such a survey should be.

S. K. Ratcliffe, who was the representative in America of the Manchester Guardian from 1920-21, and who is a frequent lecturer here, is one of the best known of British journalists.

## A People's Course

INDIVIDUALISM, AN AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE. By HORACE M. KALLEN. New York: Horace Liveright. 1933. \$2.

Reviewed by GUSTAVUS MYERS

IN prescribing a people's course the sensible method is that of basing it upon clearly defined national traditions, characteristics, aspirations, and conditions. Obvious as this truth seems it has been widely overlooked by our social theorists. A realist, Mr. Kallen is one of the few writers to see its application. To him the right of individuality to self-fulfilment has been the impelling

force in the historic development of American society. However obscured this force has appeared at times it has, he declares, ever been an underlying fundamental of American life. It is to this widespread sensing of the need of conserving individuality that Mr. Kallen ascribes resistance to movements seeking to engraft "isms."

Mr. Kallen does not confuse individuality with the slogan "rugged individualism." Industrialism, which has exploited this phrase, has, he says, depersonalized all human relations. It has reduced them to the formulæ of absentee ownership, calculating management, and profit-mongering.

This kind of individualism has nothing in common with the individualism that Mr. Kallen sees as an inherent influence and a main objective in American life. Perhaps individuality would be a more fitting word, for this is what he means when he credits the "typical American," born or naturalized, with a definite personality. The American cannot be decreed into a mould of life; he may be legislated into an undesired position in restraint of his ideas, habits, and propensities but he will manifest evasion or defiance. This reluctance to be coerced, Mr. Kallen says, is positive. Only so long as constituted authority does not try to compel acceptance of objectionable ways is respect given to official power.

Transplanted from Europe by German immigrants, socialism is viewed by Mr. Kallen as an assemblage of dogmas. It was foisted bodily here without any attempt to learn America's background or understand the psychology and temperament of its people. In its aim to liberate the worker from the wage system it uses various instrumentalities one of which is enlarging upon class consciousness as an opposition to the sense of personality. Progressivism is regarded by Mr. Kallen as an effort to bring socialism and populism in line with the actualities of American life by trying to achieve the immediate and feasible.

Communism is described by Mr. Kallen as a nullification of the individual; it discards him as an entity while at the same time absorbing him into a regimented mass. Where Communism pursues this policy from concern for the unprivileged, Fascism, Mr. Kallen says, uses much the same arbitrary method in behalf of the privileged; both ruling philosophies maintain that the governing power is sovereign, with the individual obliged to yield it all loyalty, obedience, and service. The only difference between the two is in communism ordaining that, in relation to the whole, all individuals are on the same footing.

These exotic systems, Mr. Kallen holds, cannot be made to harmonize with the virile American tradition of liberty and equality. He views socialist notions of economic classes and of the class struggle as a creed which inevitably will turn out to be inadequate. As for Communism and Fascism their scheme is one in which organization is all and the individual nothing. They require obedience in place of responsibility, and exact submission instead of allowing conscience. The established tradition of America calls for a different attitude. Here, says Mr. Kallen, the individual comes first; establishments of society are secondary.

## The Saturday Review of Literature

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Published weekly by The Saturday Review Co., Inc., 25 W. 45th St., New York, N. Y. Noble A. Cathcart, President and Treasurer; Henry Seidel Canby, Vice-President and Chairman; Amy Loveman, Secretary. Subscription rates per year, postpaid in the U. S. and Pan-American Postal Union, \$3.50; in Canada, \$5; in Great Britain, 18 shillings; elsewhere \$4.50. Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 1, 1879. Vol. 9, No. 37.

THE SATURDAY REVIEW is indexed in the "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature."

THE SATURDAY REVIEW cannot assume responsibility for the return of unsolicited manuscripts submitted without an addressed envelope and the necessary postage.

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## Brilliant Satire

**COLD COMFORT FARM.** By STELLA GIBBONS. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1933. \$2.

Reviewed by GEORGE DANGERFIELD

**V**ERY deep beneath the surface of English country life there lurks a strange, medieval creature—a creature whose existence has been rendered successively more precarious by the Reformation, the Industrial Revolution, the railway, and the radio. You might call him the peasant. Some trace of him can still be found in the ordinary English yokel, but only after a careful search and a long acquaintance; and since his grim appearance in Langland's verse, literature has not treated him very realistically. But suddenly—no more than a few years ago—pastoral fiction rediscovered him—an unwilling Caliban—into the light of day; pricked him until he roared in the purest Doric; and set him to playing antics which, though they may have gratified readers of "The Golden Bough" and students of primitive Greek drama, struck the uninstructed reader as being a little far fetched.

At first it was rather exciting—after all, it is the business of fiction to see other people as they do not see themselves: but in the course of time we began to wish for a more familiar England, where milkmaids were sometimes honest and not every ploughboy was a sexual hercules; where if you turned a stone you did not always start a witch; where madness, magic, and cruelty were more the exception than the rule.

It is against these pastoral excesses that Miss Gibbons does combat. Nor is this all. For her brilliant malice assails some of the devices which, in this imperfect world, even the best writers have been known to use. The Powyses, D. H. Lawrence, Hugh Walpole are not spared, nor Brontë biographers; and I think our author did not care for all those Emily Dickinson lives, which was very wrong of her. But let me say at once that "Cold Comfort Farm" is a masterpiece, the sort of thing which happens about once in ten years. It has the four ingredients of good satire—it is outrageously funny; it is angry; it is clever; and it is necessary.

It is the story of Flora Poste, a sensible and attractive young lady who, rendered penniless by her father's death, decides to live with her distant relatives, the Starkadders of Cold Comfort Farm, Howling, Sussex. Having read her current fiction, she is pretty sure that they are a doomed family on a decaying farm.

Nor is she wrong. Cold Comfort Farm is both doomed and decaying; the cows are barren there and the sows are barren; the King's Evil and the Queen's Bane blight its crops; and its numerous inhabitants—forced to stay there at the command of a Dominant Grandmother—spend a good deal of time pushing one another down the well. Under a dead sky, the house crouches like a beast about to spring; its fields are fanged with white flint; dog's body riots in its neglected garden. "Upidee, Travail! Ho, there, Arsenic! Jug-jug!" is the ploughman's cry, as he scranlets his furrows in the early morning: at evening there is a distinct suggestion of corpse lights and railway station waiting rooms about the lighted windows. . . .

Following a precedent set by Baedeker, Miss Gibbons stars her best passages, so that neither reader nor reviewer shall fail to realize when a piece of fine prose is toward. It was through such a night as

this that Flora Poste drove to Cold Comfort Farm: \*\*\*—

. . . The country for miles, under the blanket of the dark which brought no peace, was in its annual tortured ferment of spring growth; worm jarred with worm and seed with seed. Frond leapt on root and hare on hare. Beetle and finch-fly were not spared. The trout-sperm in the muddy hollow under Nettle Flitch weir were agitated, and well they might be. The long screams of the hunting owls tore across the night, scarlet lines on black. In the pauses, every ten minutes, they mated.

The Starkadders themselves are no less given to extremes. Old Aunt Ada Doom, the family tyrant, sits all day long in her bedroom—she saw something nasty in the woodshed when she was no bigger than a titty wren, and has been mad ever since. Amos preaches hell fire every Friday to the Quivering Brethren. Reuben has a bad case of earth-lust—(Q. What is earth-lust?) Seth is the primitive Male; his neck rises from his unbuttoned shirt "round and proud as the male organ of a flower." Elfine, the child of nature, roams the Downs by day dressed in the wrong shade of green, and seems doomed in middle age to go all arty-and-crafty at the feet and waist. And so on.

What the amiable Flora Poste does to this family, in the short space of four months, is best left to the reader—with this assurance, that the plot is ingenious and exciting (a rare event in satire), and that laughs come on the average of half

## The Art of Thespis

**ACTING.** By RICHARD BOLES LAVSKY. New York: Theatre Arts Inc. 1933.

Reviewed by LORA BAXTER

**I**N a series of humane and humorous dialogues between himself and a mythical aspirant to the stage, Mr. Boleslavsky has written an expert analysis of the technique of acting which should interest the patron as well as the student of the theatre. Avoiding the ambiguities of generalization, he traces with admirable lucidity the slow but sure progress of his pupil, whom he calls "The Creature," an eighteen-year-old girl, with, at the outset, no more qualifications for her chosen profession than a mere blind love of it.

After having learned the six lessons contained in this book, the pupil emerges enviably enriched by Mr. Boleslavsky's store of knowledge; a competent and skilled performer. For the rest Mr. Boleslavsky will not vouch. In his own words

Art cannot be taught. To possess an art means to possess talent. That is something one has or has not. You can develop it by hard work, but to create a talent is impossible.

Art cannot be taught; but technique can, as he demonstrates thoroughly and divertingly.

Concentration, memory of emotion, dramatic action, characterization, observation, and rhythm, comprise his pupil's



ENGLISH FARM.  
From "Artist's Country" (The Studio).

a dozen to the page. Common sense, which we have so often sighed for in our reading of pastoral fiction, dispels the curse; by the end of the book Cold Comfort Farm is clean and shining, and all the Starkadders except Reuben have been persuaded to leave it for more useful occupations in the world outside. No longer are its cows barren; the morning porridge leers no longer in the kitchen snood; no longer are the pictures wreathed in sukebind—that distressing flower which works such havoc upon village females. All is peaceful. In the quiet evening old Adam wanders to his byre, singing a bawdy song which he learned for the marriage of George I.

And there is nothing more to say—except to beg the discerning reader to buy this book and keep it: we shall not see its like for many years to come.

education. A famous tragedian of the past generation once defined acting in the single word "concentration." This is fundamentally true, as none of the other qualities named above could be achieved without it, and Mr. Boleslavsky rightly impresses it upon his charge in the first lesson. "It's the actor's own fault," he warns her, "if he allows the public to interfere with his creation. If all actors possessed the concentration and knowledge of which I speak, this would never happen."

He prescribes an intensive course of self-training; gymnastics, fencing, breathing exercises, pantomime, and dancing, an hour and a half of which daily for two years will make the pupil "pleasing to look at." As for cultural education, he expects a thorough knowledge of dramatists who have made theatrical history, beside a clear idea of psychology, painting, sculpture, and the anatomy of the human body. Fortified by these, The Creature pursues her career, returning to him periodically with specific problems, all of which are solved by the author with a felicitous blend of wit and erudition.

In the chapter entitled "Dramatic Action" Mr. Boleslavsky defends motion-picture acting against the onslaughts of the legitimate player. When The Creature complains that it is impossible for her to act "mechanically" when scenes are reduced to three or four speeches at a time, with no chronological sequence except by happy accident, her tutor upholds the artistic integrity of such a method, saying,

"Your scene, or part, is a long string of beads, beads of action. You play with them as you play with a rosary. You can start anywhere, any time, and go as far as you wish if you have a good hold on the beads themselves."

Needless to say, this is an invaluable textbook for the actor, but the sympathetic layman, also, will be amazed by the revelation of study, application, imagination, and resource underlying the apparent spontaneity of a finished player. Mr. Boleslavsky has, for example, performed the miracle of defining that misunderstood term, "natural acting," which is not so much a gift as it is the result of mechanical and technical perfection. Young actors and devotees of the theatre alike err in persistent misquotation of Hamlet's address to the players, insisting that he tells them to "hold the mirror up to nature," omitting the very key to that cogent instruction: "to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature." Mr. Boleslavsky's treatise, with its unmistakable emphasis on method, might well be entitled, "As 'Twere," since by practical instruction in technique he prepares the actress for that sublimation of her art, the ability to create the illusion of reality, rather than to imitate reality itself.

Lora Baxter, who has herself collaborated in the writing of and has directed a play, took one of the leading roles last year in the popular "The Animal Kingdom."

## But You Can't

**LOSE WITH A SMILE.** By RING LARDNER. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1933. \$2.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

**T**HE best story that Ring Lardner ever wrote in letters between man and girl was "Some Like Them Cold." But the present one, "Lose with a Smile," has all the Lardnerian virtues. It is about a baseball player named Danny—until he got himself called Rudy (Rudy Valet) for his "grooning." It is also about his girl, Jessie, in Centralia, Ill. Danny (Rudy) trains at Clearwater (Clearwater fla) for the Brooklyn Club. And in fla, incidentally, he meets a girl, the telephone girl at the hotel, Vivian Duane, who complicates things. There is also a lot about baseball in Danny's letters to Jessie. So if you don't care about baseball you should sign off right now. Baseball, as you know, is Lardner's long suit.

This romance, told in letters, reveals two simple and bucolic souls. Danny is true to Jessie, but he manages to get into jams. He has only occasional doubts about himself. His correspondence is full of his wide-eyed innocence, and of his ambition. When he decides to become a song-writer his achievements are phenomenal. The song "Life is just a game of base ball" is a gem, but it is almost topped by his second or Dad song. We cannot resist quoting that one:

My dad I love him.  
My mom she loves him.  
My sister Edna she loves him my dad.  
He is a wonder  
Will live to be a hundred  
And never made a blunder my dad.  
When I was a lad  
If I act it bad mom would scold me.  
Then I would go to him  
And on his lower limbs he would hold me.  
Theys no one greater  
Then my old pater.  
He is my alma mater my pop.

"Alma mater and pater," explains Danny, "are greek and means the same thing." Jessie's own account of the "holocaust" in Centralia, Ill., however, almost measures up to this, if prose can ever be said quite to equal poetry.

This "busher" is one of Lardner's inimitable creations. There used to be a man named Witwer also writing short stories about baseball; but in his palmist days he could never equal Lardner. This latest opus in the Ring cycle is almost all pure comedy. It is not one of the Master's more saturnine efforts—which, as you know, put him way up in G as one of the greatest ironic writers in these states.

But buy "Lose with a Smile," and you can't lose.

## The Saturday Review Recommends

### This Group of Current Books:

**COLD COMFORT FARM.** By STELLA GIBBONS. Longmans, Green.  
A satire on English country life.

**MARIE ANTOINETTE.** By STEFAN ZWEIG. Viking.  
A vivid and vivacious biography of the Queen and her period.

**GIVE YOUR HEART TO THE HAWKS.** By ROBINSON JEFFERS. Live-right.  
A powerful and grim narrative poem and some shorter ones.

### This Less Recent Book:

**LETTERS FROM SPAIN.** By KAREL CAPEK. Putnam.  
A charming travel diary.