

The Saturday Review

of LITERATURE

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY



VOLUME X

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1933

NUMBER 15

Bonfils, Tammen, and their Merry Men

TIMBER LINE. By Gene Fowler. New York: Covici-Friede. 1933. \$3.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE

THIS is an adventure story of the journalism that battens on the "dark, unfathomed caverns" of the moron mind. The startling and terrible thing about this story is that it is true. The synopsis of the story is this:

A generation ago, at the close of the old century, Harry Tammen, a bar-keeper in Denver, met Fred Bonfils of Kansas City, who had been running a "policy shop" or local lottery. He did not use the mails. A "policy shop" was a gambling device designed to mulct the poor. Bonfils had made some money, perhaps a million dollars, perhaps less, out of his gambling device; Tammen, living in Denver, had some experience with the underworld and a rough, working knowledge of the Colorado plutocracy. The two formed a partnership, bought a dying newspaper in Denver called *The Evening Post*, and started out to amass fame and fortune. Their valuable idea was that they could break down the sales resistance of advertisers by high pressure methods which gave them perhaps an unmerited reputation as blackmailers, a reputation which they themselves cherished rather than deserved. It added to their power in selling advertising. They accumulated subscribers to their newspaper by applying the showman's methods. The broad ethical principle upon which they worked was that a sucker is born every minute. With big headlines they exploited sensational news. They appealed directly to the moron mind, being vendors of local stories of sex and violence. Because Denver and Colorado were filled and still are filled with men who have got rich quick, who have the vast power that comes with riches with no great sense of social responsibility, and with a seven devils lust for cheap notoriety, the *Denver Post*, tapping obvious sources of quick and easy money, became a financial success. Later it became a political power in the wide

(Continued on page 215)

The Lens

By GRACE STRICKLER DAWSON

NEVER completely whole,
Oh, never clearly
Do I discern these passing by.
Even the soul
Of him most dearly
Close to me
Remains a stranger. For I cannot see
The world around me save
Through this intrinsic I,
A strange, translucent thing,
Convex, concave,
Fused in my suffering,
Marred by fine flaws
That blur the colors, flex the sight
And let me never quite
See clear, see true,
Perceive the intimate cause.
And there is nothing I can do.
For I must gaze
"Through a glass darkly" all my days.
Never shall I behold the clean
Exquisite outline of the truth until
Nothing is left between
And I can look my fill,
When the last word is spoken
And the lens—the lens lies broken.



"THE GREEN TABLE" OF INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMACY
Final scene of a Geneva Conference, satirically presented by The Jooss Ballet in "The Green Table." The ballet opens in New York October 31, after successful seasons in London and Paris.

Making of a Demagogue*

BY MATTHEW JOSEPHSON

ADOLF HITLER'S impresarios would seem to have done him a disservice on the whole in pruning down his eight-hundred-page "autobiography" to the skeleton form in which it is now offered to an American audience. In its original dimensions this work had the abandon, the histrionic frenzy of one of Dostoevsky's garrulous sinners; it had, despite its turgid and atrocious German, literary qualities which were unconscious and all its own. These have been lost, and also such logical organization as existed in the original, which was never much. At the same time it has plainly been impossible to "tone down" the book, to amend all the things which would presumably be incomprehensible, alarming, or offensive to Americans. To do this it would have been necessary to amend all.

One's first impression of Hitler's memoirs—approximately nine-tenths propaganda—is apt to be of marked disappointment and incredulity. The author tells us little enough about himself; his tracts on Pan-Germanism are neither new nor apt to be favorably seen on this side of the Atlantic; his anti-Semitism, too, seems scarcely up-to-date, since he and his cohorts seem to have taken the upper hand over the Israelites so decisively that there is no more sporting excitement in the affair. Is this all, one asks? Is this the Word of the great captain of the Nazis, the bible of the party which has effected the most important political upheaval in Europe since 1919? One reads here scraps of world history intermingled with fairy tales, invocations to humanitarianism and to sadism, pæans to chivalry and to bullying, shots of international politics, modern publicity, and medieval superstition. Here shrewd, worldly observations are mingled with colossal nonsense, daring notions with beetling-browed ignorance and incitements to riot. When was there ever such a wonderful crazy-quilt of ideas gotten up by the "actual head of a great European State?" The writings and memoirs of a Churchill, a Clemenceau, a Lenin, and a Trotsky make Hitler's resemble

nothing so much as the drivellings of an intoxicated schoolboy.

I have no wish to speak with impropriety; the new political dotage may gain over us here too. But before we become unhinged by the present state of the world and lose once for all our sense of proportion, let me record that in the period between 1919 and 1933, a modern dictator rose to triumph by choosing the mental age of ten or twelve as his frame of reference, the age at which "bogeys" and devils can be conjured up to terrify and enrage. Other German leaders thought that Hitler had pitched his key too low; but he has shown by his great lesson in politics that they were wrong.

The dogmas, the arguments in Hitler's book do not teach us anything about the social question or even the Nazi revolution—whose historic causes and implications have been widely discussed. They do tempt us to reflect specifically upon the nature and mechanism of a Fascist demagogue. By his confession of faith, world history to this successful demagogue is the affair of a few brilliant autocrats, Cæsar, Frederick the Great, and Bismarck. Behind the great autocrat is the great race from which he stems, and which he leads to glory: the Germans, for instance, "the highest culture-race." "But all the wisdom of this earth is as nothing unless served, covered, and protected by force." Hence Germany was at its apex under Bismarck and the rule of the Prussian army. The finest education for a man is German army life, and "the greatest and most unforgettable period" of Hitler's life was that of the World War. As compared with the "pure" Germans, the French are a race chiefly given to "bastardizing" the colored races which are under their dominion. The treaty of Brest-Litovsk forced upon the Russians by the victorious German army was a work of Christian mercy, "truly immense and humane," and in no way justified the harsh terms of Versailles. What caused the Germans finally to lose the war was not Allied and American power, or naval blockade and hunger, but the conspiracy of Jewish Marxists. Democracy and all representa-

(Continued on following page)

The Collapse of Internationalism

THE INTELLIGENT MAN'S REVIEW OF EUROPE TODAY. By G. D. H. Cole and Margaret Cole. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1933. \$3.

Reviewed by EDGAR ANSEL MOWRER

THIS is an ambitious title, but the book justifies it. For these English authors have produced the best existing handbook of contemporary Europe. One so good that it caused this reader to overlook an inveterate prejudice against handbooks. Just now we are undergoing an epidemic of Baedeker for the inner life. Mr. Wells with his trilogy, Mr. Shaw with his clues leading the "intelligent woman" to an understanding of socialism and the "black girl" straight to God, Mr. Cole himself with his charts through contemporary economic chaos and the mysteries of money—all have taken a shot at supplying a world presumably gasping for information with appropriate manna. It is probably a mistake to believe that what this age needs is more information; more wisdom and more honesty would perhaps be closer to the point. None the less this latest invitation to the "intelligent man" to read through over six hundred pages of closely packed information and discussion without any anecdotes, witticisms, or lollypops for additional enticement is worthy of acceptance. This book deserves readers and many of them.

The Coles' encyclopædia of information concerning contemporary Europe in the bewildering present consists of six parts, with a brief foreword (why not preface?) The first consisting of two chapters describes the Balkanized Europe that emerged from the war—none the less, "the area where slowly the new ideas of peaceful and constructive internationalism are taking root"—emphasizing the fact that numerically speaking the Europeans are still primarily engaged in agriculture rather than in industry and trade. Furthermore Europe, judged by an American or even an English standard of wealth, is poor. As a result of economic depression

(Continued on page 218)

This Week

SLANTING LINES OF STEEL

By E. ALEXANDER POWELL
Reviewed by John Palmer Gavitt

THE AMERICAN PROCESSION

By AGNES ROGERS and FREDERICK LEWIS ALLEN
Reviewed by William Rose Benét

WINNER TAKE NOTHING

By ERNEST HEMINGWAY
Reviewed by Henry Seidel Canby

AH, WILDERNESS!

By EUGENE O'NEILL
Reviewed by John Corbin

RADETZKY MARCH

By JOSEPH ROTH
Reviewed by Fred J. Ringel

BORIS GODUNOV

By STEPHEN GRAHAM
Reviewed by Grand Duchess Marie

TRANSLATIONS FROM THE CHINESE
By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

Next Week or Later

THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES

By VINCENT STARRETT
Reviewed by Elmer Davis

*MY BATTLE. By Adolf Hitler. Abridged and translated by E. T. S. Dugdale. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1933. \$3.

Making of a Demagogue

(Continued from first page)

tive forms of government are the inventions of international Jewish conspirators. Jews are possessed of superhuman cunning, and are devils who have long been plotting "the breakdown of human culture and the devastation of the world." To those who believe in socialism, lying is a daily necessity. If your enemies don't agree with you, or oppose you in print, wipe out their publications with a thirty centimeter grenade. Karl Marx was really working in the interests of international capitalism and stock exchanges. Trade-unionists who strike are also working for international capitalism. Further:

On the one hand he (the Jew) is making use of his capitalist methods for exploiting humanity to the very full, and on the other he is getting ready to sacrifice his sway and very soon will come out as their leader in the fight against himself. "Against himself" is of course only a figurative expression, for the great master of lies knows very well how to emerge with apparently clean hands and burden others with the blame.

We now see that Marxism is the enunciated form of the Jewish attempt to abolish the importance of personality in all departments of human life and to set the mass of numbers in its place. In politics the parliamentary form of government is its expression. . . .

In other words, the Jew is both exploiting and protecting humanity, and the Jew, to whom Hitler accords so much exceptional personal power, seeks to abolish the "importance of personality" and by having a majority rule relegate himself to a helpless minority!

Can such reasoning be answered? Hitler represents a revolt against reason. He himself urges an "intolerant fanaticism" as the answer to opposition. Does Adolf Hitler believe all this weird farrago? One would think not, judging by his successful . . .

as well as resourcefulness. No, all this extravagance is purely propaganda after Hitler's fashion, the only propaganda he knows. For aside from his political strategy, he has won his chief fame as a platform demagogue, and is reputed to be one of the greatest natural orators of his kind. The unfortunate thing is that his genius is largely limited to the field of extemporaneous speech, before vast throngs, under torchlight and in the atmosphere of a revival camp; the hypnosis of those hours he cannot translate to the measured terms of the printed page. Where in a meeting he might shout down an opponent with an effect of thunderous magnificence, his "autobiography" expends itself in infantile abuse, in profanity, and in baseless calumny.

Those who doubt Hitler's cleverness, his capacity to be rational in the most worldly manner should note the passage where he explains his notion of propaganda:

All propaganda . . . should adapt its intellectual level to the receptive ability of the least intellectual of those whom it is desired to address. Thus it must sink its mental elevation deeper in proportion to the numbers of the mass whom it has to grip. If . . . the object is to gather a whole nation within its circle of influence, there cannot be enough attention paid to avoidance of too high a level of intellectuality.

With this clue, we may understand better the expediency of his rantings, of his self-contradictions, of his diversified appeal to crowd passions, including those of blood-thirstiness or sadism. But for himself he holds other views, other beliefs in which he has been superbly consistent, however shifting his day-to-day tactics may have been.

We are familiar with the aspirations of Nazi as well as non-Nazi patriots to restore Germany's national self-respect, to render her self-sufficient and arm her against surrounding enemies, while unifying her people after years of internal dissension or class struggle. In these views, the officer caste, the Junkers, the Hugenberg industrialists as well as the Centrists of Brüning saw eye to eye with Hitler. But Hitler, from the very beginning, over a decade ago, as one of his

German biographers relates, had more to offer than all the other parties.

What have you to give to the people in the way of Faith? he says to the other parties of the Right in 1923. "Nothing. For you no longer believe in your own formulas. That is the all powerful thing that our movement should create: for these vast, questring and bewildered masses a new, firm Faith, so that they may find at least one place that gives their hearts repose. And that we will bring about!"

This ruling idea of Hitler's—to conjure up faith in Race, or arms, or Wotan, or anything that might serve—drew the attention of the officer caste, the old-fashioned bureaucrats, police officials, and royalists who sheltered and nourished him in his early Munich days. Perhaps he seemed mad to them; but certainly "this unknown soldier who never died" seemed abler than all the Ludendorffs, Kapps, and even Hohenzollerns to rally the masses around himself by his evangelistic, and, indeed, "convulsive" tactics.

This man exudes hate and passion, fascinates the crowd like the priest of some sinister cult. Look at him, speak to him in person, and he seems mediocre; but bring together a mob of ten thousand or a hundred thousand and he seems to magnify himself in proportion to the multitude he



he jumps up and down, his gestures grow more and more extraordinary. A German observer of his great days of agitation relates:

The man on the platform no longer debates, but gives battle. The crowd does not see the enemy; this fighter has the enemy, the devil in himself. He fights against the disintegration of the nation, against the inertia of the people, the guilt of present and past rulers—against the very Marxist in himself, the bad student, the blunderer of 1922, 1923, and 1930, and 1932. He fights his own fear, his own devil, like an old anchorite—it is no longer agitation . . . but exorcism, revival. He can say whatever he wishes. . . . The walls shake. . . . The State trembles.

But Hitler, as his own autobiography reveals, was always one of those evangelists and dervishes, who immediately upon returning from trance or transport, inquired after the effect of the show upon the customers, the receipts in the box office. A born demagogue on the one side, on the other he was a shrewd hunter of political fortune, keeping his accounts, drawing money from all sides, utilizing his followers and lieutenants to the full as well as the chances presented by the times or by the mistakes of enemies. He himself was capable of growing and learning from misfortune. Around him the legend of an *instinktmensch* was created, yet his impromptu appearances have often been fiascos. He is more likely, as it is claimed in certain quarters, a neurasthenic who in sleepless nights prepares his scenes. Thus he atoned for grievous blunders again and again. The march of the Brown Fascists of Germany has been a long one, so long that many experienced observers held that they had missed their hour of destiny by 1932. Hitler's successful bid for power in 1933 was the last of six desperate strokes during the course of eleven years.

Invested with power, Hitler will tend more and more to be a pure politician whose measures, under the surface at least, will appear to be dictated by the logic of events rather than by his nightmares. Yet the accidents of his personal orientation, as they have left their stamp upon his

counter-revolutionary movement, are of the utmost significance for the Third Reich.

There are two signal facts about his early life which may be drawn from his own account. Adolf Hitler was born in 1889, a South German, in a small village of Upper Austria, at the Bavarian frontier. In this region, the Germans on both sides of the border express their religious emotion still in the most primitive manner. If we are to accept anything of Hitler's doctrine of race heritage, the mystical or fanatical force in the man may be attributed, in part, at least, to his "hill-billy" environment.

The second significant fact that emerges from his autobiography is that Hitler was a member of the middle class, the petite bourgeoisie, who was *déclassé*, but who refused all his life to become a proletarian.

Hitler's father was a petty customs official, nationalistic and pious, who died when he was young and left his son in poverty. The family name had been Schicklgruber, according to reliable accounts, and had been changed by his parents. (In Germany it is: *Heil Hitler*; but in the United States we may say "Hail Schicklgruber" if we wish.) A "wayward son," as he confesses, a poor student who never matriculated as an architect, Hitler's studies were

imposing upon them no self-denying, educational process such as the Communists attempted. Instead he professed to appeal to all their immediate, clashing interests. The class that wanted more dividends, the class that wanted higher farm prices or simply jobs, the elements that wanted action, or strengthening of the foreign policy—all those who wished their special interests served "without leaving the table"—he appealed to. And in the end, after the virtual break-down of the parliamentary system, he canalized the unrest which had gained over all Germany into his huge organization. The satisfactions and the dangers of futurity are now his. In the meantime, to effect union among fatally conflicting classes, Fascism must proceed with mounting violence.

In recent years our philosophers have often warned us of the dangers of exporting modern technical knowledge, with its telephones and machine guns to the more savage races. Hitler, in his crusade against civilization, we must note, has used every modern instrument with daring: airplane, radio, press, the methods of American advertising, and those of Chicago gangsterism. He epitomizes our modern dilemma. Adolf Hitler's autobiography, written in 1924, is already obsolete to him. What effect will it have upon American readers? Are they men of reason, or will the instigations, the monotonously repeated propaganda take sway over them? The test should be instructive to us, and the American version—even with its attacks on the church and on foreign powers "toned down"—was in my opinion worth publishing here. It is better for us to know soon whether Hitler's direct propaganda against the type of democratic political institutions we own here, and his incitements to riot will reach their mark, so that we may determine what part we must take.

In the terms of Adolf Hitler's unique dialectics, this review is only too patently "a shameful Jewish trick."

service or free-lance corps which periodically disturbed the early years of the Republic with their clamor and their repeated insurrections, Hitler's band became a spearhead of terror and Hooliganism. These ex-soldiers, and also the high army officers who secretly or openly encouraged them, had appetite only for conquering the streets, for the beating now of Jews, now of Reds. Recruits, such as the émigré Russian-German, Alfred von Rosenberg, brought the tactics of the Black Hundreds, or the notions of the rising Italian Fascism. At no time were the reactionary Guards or free-lance corps effectively put out of business in Bavaria. They were "murder organizations," it was protested; but nothing was done.

The day came when these ex-soldiers, ex-officers wanted a political movement, a party to represent the actual or potential force of arms they possessed. The leader, Hitler, emerged at first from a world of *franc-tireurs* and Hooligans. As his stage was broadened by making alliances with other elements of discontent, peasants and "Christian Socialists," his tactics changed; he became something of a politician as well as a Hooligan. There were fewer of the deliberate exhortations to murder or massacre or riot—though they were never missing. Gottfried Feder, Röhm, Gregor Strasser, and Goebbels, men of superior education, brought him new devices and ideas, and an improved dialectic for his credo, as they brought him recruits and money. There follow, then, all the picturesque and daring maneuvers, circus-meetings, provocations, street fighting, mass agitation, and press propaganda which were tolerated in Germany for a decade.

The Nazi movement made strange alliances as it groped toward power. Hitler took money from foreigners as well as from generals and capitalists. He promised much; to his followers, constantly trained for spectacular action, always secretly

imposing upon them no self-denying, educational process such as the Communists attempted. Instead he professed to appeal to all their immediate, clashing interests. The class that wanted more dividends, the class that wanted higher farm prices or simply jobs, the elements that wanted action, or strengthening of the foreign policy—all those who wished their special interests served "without leaving the table"—he appealed to. And in the end, after the virtual break-down of the parliamentary system, he canalized the unrest which had gained over all Germany into his huge organization. The satisfactions and the dangers of futurity are now his. In the meantime, to effect union among fatally conflicting classes, Fascism must proceed with mounting violence.

In recent years our philosophers have often warned us of the dangers of exporting modern technical knowledge, with its telephones and machine guns to the more savage races. Hitler, in his crusade against civilization, we must note, has used every modern instrument with daring: airplane, radio, press, the methods of American advertising, and those of Chicago gangsterism. He epitomizes our modern dilemma.

Adolf Hitler's autobiography, written in 1924, is already obsolete to him. What effect will it have upon American readers? Are they men of reason, or will the instigations, the monotonously repeated propaganda take sway over them? The test should be instructive to us, and the American version—even with its attacks on the church and on foreign powers "toned down"—was in my opinion worth publishing here. It is better for us to know soon whether Hitler's direct propaganda against the type of democratic political institutions we own here, and his incitements to riot will reach their mark, so that we may determine what part we must take.

In the terms of Adolf Hitler's unique dialectics, this review is only too patently "a shameful Jewish trick."

Matthew Josephson, who was at one time both literary and finance editor of the Newark Ledger, has written books on Zola and Rousseau. He recently published a pamphlet on Hitler.

The Thick of Battle

SLANTING LINES OF STEEL. By E. Alexander Powell. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1933. \$2.50.

Reviewed by JOHN PALMER GAVITT

BYONETS, of course. And the Great War, about which Powell already had written much and brilliantly. This book covers episodes of the whole "duration," but includes the finale of his own actual war service, as no longer a newspaper and magazine correspondent but an officer in the American army. I happen to have read it side-by-side with that of Frederick Palmer, his colleague and rival in the field of war correspondence, and was tempted to put them together; but that would have been unfair to both. Palmer's is an autobiography, covering forty-odd years of adventure, including wars, and comes in a different category. Each is first-class work. Nevertheless one senses a curious, almost indescribable contrast of personalities in the two men. Each has traveled widely and observed alertly; each is a master-craftsman at this trade. Each narrates in the first person. But Palmer is somehow merged in his story; Powell never allows himself out of his own sight. I was continually reminded of the little girl who said, "I don't see why people call me conceited, just because I am always right!" But the deuce of it is that Powell—if you believe what he says, and I have no disposition otherwise—generally was right, and when he was wrong he doesn't fail to tell you about it with a grin. No man is unpardonably conceited who can enjoy laughing at himself. Moreover, his conceit is spotted with honest, spontaneous modesty and careful credit where it belongs. Indeed, he acknowledges uncommon good luck at crucial points, whereas in most of the instances it is clear that the "luck" was his own foresight and enterprise. In other words, he fully appreciates himself, with a naive self-satisfaction that is sometimes irritating; but recognizes the qualities of the other members of the cast, and is conscientious against stealing the other fellow's thunder. In the end one hardly can fail to discern an extraordinarily lovable, candid, democratic chap, enjoying his job and exceedingly competent at it.

Powell has, in contrast with Palmer, much more of the professionally military point of view; much more was he cut out to be an army officer—a regular, I mean—and of the finest type. But however much he accustomed himself to horrors he never took them lightly. And he never condoned the brutalities, the senseless cruelties, inseparable from war. On that subject he certainly told General von Boehm, under whose command and consent occurred the butcheries at Aerschot and Louvain, to his face, his real name in words of one syllable. And as for war itself: out of a heart profoundly informed by personal observation and experience and charged with sound humanity he indicts it:

... it cost the Germans upward of three hundred thousand dollars [in ammunition alone] to wound ten French soldiers. No other business could be run with such extravagance and succeed.

But war, as anyone who has seen it will admit, is the most senseless business on earth.

I have read scores of war stories, but none, including Palmer's, better than this, and at the moment I can recall none (unless perhaps Stephen Crane's "The Red Badge of Courage," which was fiction) anything like so good. The description of the bombardment of Antwerp, of the tramp-tramp of the German avalanche into Belgium, of the French artillery tornado in the Champagne, of the Italian-Austrian battle line "on the roof of Europe," where men froze on the snow-clad mountain-peaks and fried in the sun within sight of each other. . . . You will look far and fare worse in search of anything finer, if as fine. There is something French in the color of it—Dumas, Zola, Daudet, Maupassant, might have written and need not have been ashamed of some of this stuff.

When the United States entered the war Powell instantly quit his reporting and returned to offer himself in the service of his own country. The story of that service is a revelation—not new, of course—of the priceless blundering and waste of personnel and capacity with which we performed our part. None of it more characteristic or absurd than the punishment the Washington bureaucracy was able to inflict upon Powell for having, in Antwerp, run up in the face of the invading German horde, the American flag upon the American consulate whence the entire personnel, including the consul-general himself, had fled.

At the last he was put out of action by the falling of his horse upon him, and was invalided home, on the voyage hearing, two days out, the news of the Armistice. There are more than plenty of men to be army officers, but only a few Powell's equals in seeing and recounting, with consummate skill and artistry.

Our Family Album

THE AMERICAN PROCESSION. Assembled by Agnes Rogers, with Explanatory Captions by Frederick Lewis Allen. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1933. \$2.75.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

THIS is about as instructive a social history of America, and as easy of assimilation, as one could purchase for the price the publishers wish for it. The "latest" thing in books seems to be the book of pictures, the history of something conveyed through the photograph. Whether this indicates that the desire to read is decreasing in America—but usually when one conjures up some dire trend and then resorts to statistics it is found that the habits of the average person actually remain just about what they were. So despite Mr. Stallings's book of photographs of the late Great War, and now Mr. and Mrs. Allen's book of photographs of just about everything in America in the past seven decades, we need not, from a literary point of view, take fright. Indeed, when one adds up what Mr. Allen has written about the pictures in "The American Procession" we find that it runs



AT THE CHICAGO WORLD'S FAIR, 1893

to some twenty thousand words of informative and witty comment on the stream of events. His text no less than the choice of photographs creates atmosphere.

What a colossal job was here—to select from the enormous files of news photographers and collectors of all sorts the most significant and revealing panoramic presentment of our American past—and yet how well it has been done! The editors speak in their preface of the toil and the sudden unexpectedly gorgeous compensations of this work. They tell us of the remarkable results obtained in the face of enormous obstacles by those early photographers, Brady and Gardner, who photographed during the Civil War. They refer to the obstacles they themselves surmounted in identifying certain interesting pictures. And in their book they give us in proper sequence and proportion war, architecture, costume, the stock market, the "Empire Builders," the first inventions, the Indians, sport, the stage, the mansions of the rich, the hovels of the poor, the fandangoes of high society, a sequence of Presidents, the changes brought about by the industrial era, and a medley of fantastic American characters.

This book is of documentary importance and, at the same time, a whole evening's entertainment. Some of the pictures are "joys forever!" "The American Procession" will doubtless stimulate reminiscent anecdote all over the country. It should be infinitely suggestive to the writers of fiction, indicative of a wealth of native material still hardly touched. All those who read Mr. Allen's "Only Yesterday" need not be reminded of his keen intelligence and clear exposition as an historian. The compilers of this book pay a tribute, incidentally, to Mark Sullivan, whose work has been of some assistance to them in their own.

Bonfils, Tammen, and their Merry Men

(Continued from first page)

region of which Denver is the capital. The sphere of influence of the *Denver Post* extended from the western Kansas line well into Utah, north into Wyoming, and south into New Mexico, an area larger than an average European state. It is sparsely settled but rich in natural resources and rich in political power. So Bonfils and Tammen became American princes of the blood, men of power, satraps of the central Rocky Mountain region; and lived scrappily ever after, carrying to their graves the bullets of their adversaries. So much for the story.

This book by Gene Fowler who was a reporter on the *Post*, is a merry tale. Fowler is splendidly equipped to write this story. He reveals himself thus: Being sent to interview Buffalo Bill, he insulted the old plainsman by asking him what the duke really said when he caught the Colonel in the lady's bathroom. Of course Buffalo Bill resented it. When Fowler re-

turned to the *Post* to write his piece, Tammen called the young reporter into his office. Cody had just demanded that Fowler be fired.

"Were you always impudent?" asked Tammen.

"Yes," he admitted, "I always was."

Tammen put his hands on the young man's shoulder and said, "Keep it up, son, it is something you cannot buy." The gorgeous impudence of this book, its felicitous, diabolical cynicism, its authentic un-morality furnish the perfect tempo in which the story of the Bonfils and Tammen adventure should be told. The tale is a most delicious bit of Americana. Bonfils and Tammen could not have lived in any other country. Yet they might have lived in any other American state. Any newspaper which appeals directly, consciously, and intelligently to the moron mind is reasonably sure of financial success. Sometimes it acquires political power but rarely has standing in the profession. Bonfils, the editor of the *Post*, resigned from the Society of American Newspaper Editors after an inquiry into his activities in connection with the Teapot Dome exploitation. The *Post* was always held in low esteem in the higher Pecksniffian circles of the journalistic craft. Yet despite the fact that it paraded up and down the primrose path of American journalism, it was a type, exaggerated to be sure, of journalistic success in this country.

Tammen was a good showman. Bonfils kept the box office. The two made money. They made a demagogic appeal to the great plain people. The *Post* was supposed to be the big brother of the Rocky Mountain region. Its editors like to call it the paper with a heart and a soul. Its enemies added, "and a price." Yet it did dominate a region, it molded the politics and to a certain extent the external mind of that region. The *Post* was indeed an exponent of its territory. It represented the hard metal mining region. It was the errand boy of a rather crass plutocracy, perhaps not a corrupt agent but none the less the representative of great riches quickly gained, unsteadily held, and endowed with all the unconscious arrogance of conscious wealth.

Of course the story that Gene Fowler has told here lacks coherence; it wanders all over the lot, is full of extraneous stuff all interesting, all illuminating, all a part of the background out of which the story springs. And when one has read the book which is easy reading, as easy reading as the *Post* itself or any tabloid paper, one has a sense that he has been slumming in darkest democracy. He has read an ugly story, viewed ethically, but a merry one which will sadden the reader if he has any sense of what it really means. It should be published and circulated by the Society for the Suppression of American Optimism. It would be the society's perfect handbook!

William Allen White, editor of the *Emporia Gazette*, is one of the leading figures of American journalism.



STEVE BRODIE IN HIS SALOON, 1886

(Photographs on this page are from "The American Procession")