

what she saw and of what she heard from reliable sources.

Mrs. Mitchison frankly states that she is writing as a socialist, and is therefore giving an account of her experiences from the socialist point of view. Let us, then, bend over backward and eliminate ninety per cent of her account as party prejudice—any ninety per cent. In the ten per cent left, there will be enough material to arouse the most intense disgust for the Dollfuss Government, and to stimulate any fair-minded reader to honest and clean hatred not only of that particular fascist Government, but of all fascist governments whatever.

That the Austrian socialists were honest and sincere people, on every occasion and in every way endeavoring to make life easier and more beautiful for those whose lives had had little ease and beauty; that they were genuinely devoted to the cause of the working classes, there is no reason to doubt. How successful they had been, Mrs. Mitchison shows clearly enough in her accounts of conversations with the inhabitants of the community houses which were so ruthlessly shelled by Government troops. The "lower classes" in Vienna, who love beauty, and who desire nothing but an honest, gentle, and *gemütlich* life, were happy and content. Because they would not and could not give Dollfuss and his Church party the support demanded, they were pitilessly attacked and without mercy, without possibility of legal assistance, persecuted. (How can a man be defended in court when he is held in prison without a charge against him?)

But Mrs. Mitchison, the socialist, is perhaps too apt to portray the Dollfuss government as a government of Bad Men. There is no doubt that Dollfuss, like Mussolini and Hitler and other dictators, brought about results which would gladden the heart of the worst man that ever lived; but to assume that Dollfuss was really a bad man, and did what he did out of motives not honest, is a large assumption. Whatever Dollfuss did, and for whatever reason, he paid an enormous price; he suffered the same death that some of his socialist opponents had suffered.

Incidentally, Mrs. Mitchison shows why the National Socialist party is gaining adherents in Austria; anything is better than what they have, say the people. She also gives reason to suppose that she is right in stating definitely that the Socialist party is not dead in Austria, and that it will return to influence, though not in the way that socialists had hoped.

Despite charming sketches of persons, and a remarkably good-humored whimsicality about the preposterousness of the press, the legation, and the English socialists, the "Vienna Diary" is not pleasant reading. For even discounting ninety per cent of what Mrs. Mitchison says, there is still enough tragedy left to move men to abandon the gentle and inept methods of old liberalism, and really get down to facts and work for those things which intelligent and sensitive people love. But the Diary is more than a collection of horrors: it is also a document that portrays the high-heartedness of men and women in time of trouble.

Stanley A. Nock has recently returned from Germany where he spent four years in university circles.

A Liberal on Russia

(Continued from first page)

been able to write with the knowledge that he is not returning to Moscow as a correspondent (he is to go to Tokio for his paper), and he is willing to face the possibility that he may never be allowed to re-enter the Soviet Union in any capacity. No one can write a really respectable book or even article about Soviet Russia unless he is willing to face this possibility.

One is at once struck by the tremendous difference between Chamberlin's first book on Russia and the present one. Part of the difference is accounted for by the circumstances noted above. The main difference, however, is that the first book was written about the Russia of the New Economic Policy. "Russia's Iron Age" tells the story of the period after the New Economic Policy had come to an end and the period of forced industrialization and collectivization of agriculture had got thoroughly under way. The whole book is written under the shadow of the great famine of 1932-33 which was the result of this policy. There can be no doubt that it was this famine which definitely and completely convinced Chamberlin that the results of the Soviet experiment to Russia and to the world were negative. Shortage of food and even famine is no new thing in Soviet Russia. But the decision to allow the most recent famine to continue and to conceal its existence from the Western World made its effect on the sympathies of an observer of Soviet institutions far different from that of the famine of 1921. Furthermore, the earlier famine could quite logically be considered in part an inheritance from Czarism and in part the results of the destruction occasioned by the revolution and the Civil War. The famine of 1932-33 was directly attributable to the results of forced industrialization and collectivization of agriculture.

There is nothing new about the terror which Chamberlin considers one of the most fundamental of Soviet institutions. Wholesale arrests, execution, exile, forced labor—these things are familiar to anyone who knows anything about Soviet Russia. For a long time, however, it was possible to say that the end justified the means if the end was certainly attainable and the means was temporary. Mr. Chamberlin has had ten years to observe the struggle toward the end. He has seen that in terms of material standards of living, the people of Russia are, as a whole, worse off than at the beginning of the ten-year period. He has seen that there has been no diminution in the terror which was considered a means to an end. If at certain periods the terror diminished for a time, he saw it always mount higher at a later time. He saw, finally, the brutalizing effects of this terror on the whole population.

Mr. Chamberlin, to be sure, recognizes certain achievements of the Soviet regime. These achievements, such as the construction of new industrial giants of all types, are those appropriate to the New Iron Age. But the author always returns to the conclusion that to Russians as human beings it has not been worth the cost. He finds that the terror which has been inflicted upon the aristocracy, the bourgeoisie, the old intelligentsia, and the kulaki has not been compensated for by any increase in the personal freedom of the proletariat.



"THE SCOOP OF A LIFETIME"

The only time Stalin ever sat for his photograph. From "I Photograph Russia."

One day's absence from work which is unexcused may be punished by dismissal and the loss of the food card. The theft of state property, in a country in which almost all property belongs to the state, is punishable by death. The principle of the punishment of relatives, even though innocent, for the crime of individuals, is legally recognized. An enlightened attitude toward the treatment of common criminals is more than balanced by the rigor and cruelty of the treatment of the much larger number of political prisoners.

On the cultural side, Chamberlin can credit the Soviet Union with little that is highly creative. This he finds true of literature, art, and drama.

The significance of Chamberlin's book, aside from its detailed revelations of the famine of 1932-33, is primarily as a record of the final impression of life in the Soviet Union upon an intelligent liberal. It should be read by all liberals.

In the Camera's Eye

I PHOTOGRAPH RUSSIA. By James E. Abbe. New York: Robert M. McBride & Co. 1934. \$3.

MR. ABBE is a globe-trotting professional photographer, and the eighty full-page photographs which he accompanies by a gossip and very readable text are probably the best that have come out of Russia. So far as giving the long-distance observer some notion of what life in Soviet Russia is really like, they are decidedly superior to those of Miss Margaret Bourke-White. For the whole connotation of Miss White's brilliant studies in masses, angles, and mechanistic light and shade was rosier than the facts warrant and most of her pictures of machinery might just as well have been taken in any capitalistic industrial plant for *Fortune* magazine.

Mr. Abbe, who had already visited Russia several years ago and published a book about his adventures, this time really settled down and lived, with his family about him. Mme. Litvinoff, wife of the Foreign Minister, bunked informally in his summer "dacha" in the outskirts of Moscow. He actually wormed his way into the Kremlin and took a photograph of Stalin at the latter's desk. When Mme. Stalin died, and her imposing funeral cortège moved through streets bristling with bayonets and under windows closed by GPU orders, Abbe took a big chance, and snapped several shots from a hotel window and got away with the negatives before the GPU men, who finally spotted him, could nab him.

Abbe makes no pretense of being anything but a brash Yankee photographer, just like the boys who go down the bay to meet incoming liners and brusquely order foreign dignitaries to take off or put on their hats. We must expect, therefore, a certain amount of rather tiresome boasting and shop-talk, hard to suppress when you've spent two weeks getting permissions to do a job which takes two minutes, but he has seen and heard a lot, and most of his comments are shrewd and sound. He knows Soviet Russian realities far better than most Intourist trippers, however academically prepared, ever get to know them. And his pictures are the real thing.

Art for Life's Sake

ART AND THE LIFE OF ACTION, WITH OTHER ESSAYS. By Max Eastman. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1934. \$2.

Reviewed by HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

MAX EASTMAN is always a stimulating writer who sometimes runs amok among the conventions but more usually displays a happy union of acute reasoning proceeding from common sense. And unlike many other writers upon literary criticism he never fails to consult his own creative imagination before laying down his formulas. Only recently, in "Artists in Uniform," he described the unhappy state of the creative writer in the grip of Russian dogmatism; in this little book he steps ahead of his instances to philosophize the relation between art and propaganda. There is an esthetics of revolution as well as a politics of revolution and if it is to be criticized there is no one so likely to do a good job as a revolutionist. It is not surprising therefore to find Mr. Eastman's discussion of the most burning question in esthetics today—the relation of art to current activity in social reconstruction—sympathetic and well informed. It is not surprising, but certainly a boon, to discover in his brief tract the best and soundest analysis of this vexed subject available in any source known to me.

Mr. Eastman believes in both propaganda and art, but hates their forced union. He is scornful of the slaves to the dialectic of materialism who try to prove that the true artist can be successful only in the cause of Bolshevik or any other ideas. He shows that every great social movement from religion through education down to therapeutics has tried to make its necessities a justification for art, so that the communist's claim that art must propagate socialist ideas is only an end term of Aristotle's thesis that art was good because it purged the emotions and taught men by imitation. Art, as Mr. Eastman defines it, is an intensification of consciousness, a vivification of experience realizes qualities instead of (like science) conceiving relations. Hence the art whose mind is set on fire by a flare up, whether it be in religion of the thirteenth century or socialism of the twentieth, gains in so far as he is more alive, but loses if he conceives of his art (which is intensification) as subordinate to the ideas or the information it conveys. His power is real, but it inheres in the intensity of the life of his book or his painting, not in the ideas which underlie it, although, if he is successful, they may be more effectively propagated than by tract or sermon. For art (says Eastman) is an inhibition or arresting of a stimulus which might lose itself in action but in the artist finds a form which brings it into vivid and sustained being. "All works of art . . . must find some way to stand up against the stream of action. A cup or beaker, if it is to be artistic, must not only satisfy our eye and hand and lip, but must stop us from drinking."

The communist idea of an art whose end is action for the cause is, on this basis, demonstrably unsound, as indeed the failure of Bolshevik art except among the "fellow travelers," who sympathize with revolution but are not its slaves, is excellent evidence. To persuade the creative writer that he can be useful only by joining an organization or a cult in order to turn his conceptions into action, is regressive not progressive. It is headed back toward the medicine man who made the artist his accomplice in the crude beginnings of natural science, or the emperor who asked Virgil to teach the simple agriculture of his day by verse.

I cannot do justice in a review to the acute reasoning and vigorous imagery of this short but important contribution to straight thinking in the esthetic murk of this day. For those oppressed by the mystical, unscientific thinking of fascist and communist dictatorships more interested in the means than in the ends of living, it is a sharp sword stroke which cuts out the heart of their argument.

The rest of this book is a miscellany of critical and descriptive sketches. It is the title essay that makes it important.



A CLOTHES QUEUE—AND NOT ENOUGH CLOTHES TO GO AROUND
Another forbidden picture, from "I Photograph Russia."

The Saturday Review OF LITERATURE

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An Irishman Looks at England, and Beyond

When an Irishman writes a moving and utterly sympathetic lament for the self-destruction of a great race—and that race the English—something is happening in this distressed world which transcends nationalism. The lament is a play, "Within the Gates," by Sean O'Casey, a strange and powerful fantasy. The self-destruction is, one feels, and the playwright clearly hopes, only temporary. But that, and not the various moralities of which the dramatic critics have been writing, is the core of his drama. A statue of a soldier in trench uniform, a heavy, ominous figure, dominates the corner of Hyde Park in which is all the action of the play. It is the war, unwanted, brutalizing, disintegrating, that hangs like a thunder cloud which will not clear over an England that has lost its confidence. Behind is the recurrent chorus of the down-and-outs, in front the vulgarities, trivialities, cynicisms, and tragedies of a demoralized society, with only the virtues of courage and humor left. The little whore, whose soul stresses are the plot of the play, is disillusioned youth personified, her weak heart is symbolical of a lesion in the mind which leaves her without fixity of purpose except to die game. As Blake wrote in another age of demoralization—

The harlot's cry from street to street
Will weave old England's winding sheet.

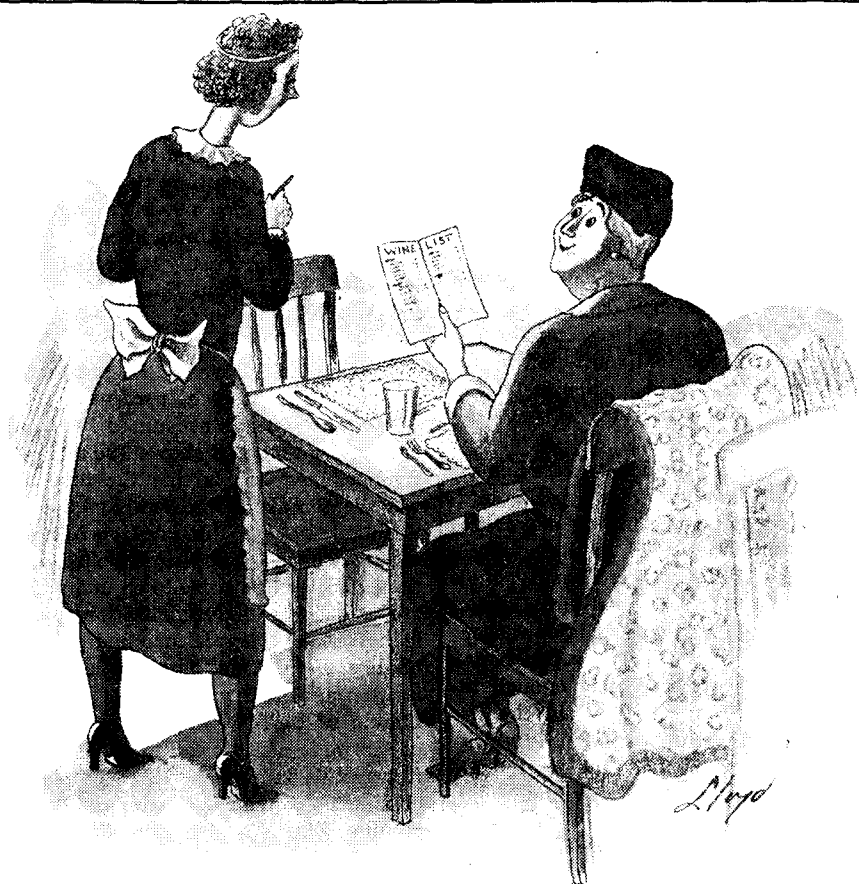
The technique of expressionism, in which this play is written, grows already a little out of date. When life roars and rushes or is shaken by nervous vibrations, writers tend to throw aside the old simplicities of story telling, and describe the impressions upon their own sensitive souls instead of the incidents that do the impressing. One gets plots upside down, flashes of consciousness, vivid action that creates a mood rather than tells a story; or, as in this drama, conventional ideas in conflict (like the old morality plays, dating also from an age of disintegration) where a bishop, a whore, a vulgarian, a dreamer, an atheist, a sensualist, broken men and ruined women say their pieces, yet it is not what they are, so much as what they mean in the fantasy of a muddled world, that makes the scenes dramatic.

There is an incoherence, more apparent than real, in expressionism, which, as the issues of post-war civilization become clearer, will give place again to the simplicity of form that great art always

chooses when it can (there will be no Joyces, no Gertrude Steins, no cult of unintelligibility in the next generation). Nevertheless, the emotional convictions of this play dominate its mixed fantasies as the cretinous statue of stupid calamity dominates Hyde Park. The Irish mind sees the English types as fellow humanity suffering in ways new to their experience. It laughs pityingly at the idiosyncrasies of an independent people, and the lack of self-knowledge in a great race which was too successful in the last century to carry an argument *ad hominem*; it sees in the English character a spark of bull-dog courage that glows unquenchable, and fans it into a flame symbolic of the tenacious grip on life which is the hope of all humanity. Poets with a sense of humor are rare, dramatists who are poets also are even rarer, symbolists who make their symbols weep and laugh and talk like humans are rarest of all, except perhaps a nationalist author in this day who really believes that all men are brothers. Mr. O'Casey's gates open upon a world where Irishmen love Englishmen for their misfortunes, a world in confusion which nevertheless is sane by comparison with the patterns of success which Stalin, Mussolini, and Hitler have been making for us. At the end of this stirring drama of humanitarian fantasy, one feels that there is more real hope in the little whore's game courage than in the whole lumbering machine of dialectic materialism, with its ominous promise that the next great race will create a culture by force.

Royal J. Davis There is probably no field of endeavor in which more good work is produced under the cloak of anonymity than in that of journalism. It is only among the fraternity of newspapermen themselves that men know what authorship attaches to the mass of writing which every day brings forth. Yet it is safe to say that qualities such as those possessed by the late Royal J. Davis, whose death the other day deprived *The Saturday Review* of one of its staunchest friends and most valued contributors, were sufficient to have won general recognition for his name. He had a passionate preoccupation with truth, a scrupulousness of statement, a range of information, and an eager curiosity toward the passing, and especially the political, scene which are the very bedrock of good journalism, and which made him an asset of inestimable value to a daily paper. But outstanding as these qualities were, it is not for them that his associates will remember him, but for his noble humility, his generosity toward his fellow workers or those who sought his advice, for his stoic fortitude under trial and anxiety, and the gay humor which no difficulties could ever quench. It might with truth be said of him as an earlier contributor to his own *New York Evening Post* said of his fellow, "None knew him but to love him, nor named him but to praise."

The battle for simplified spelling, which seems to have spent its force some years ago in this country, is waging merrily in England at present. The *London Observer* recently polled a group of representative persons which included prominent writers, professors, a scientist, and a librarian with the result that a majority vote was cast for simplification. Among those voting were Julian Huxley, Amabel Williams-Ellis, T. S. Eliot, and C. K. Ogden. The suggestion was made that a Prime Minister's committee might explore the question.



"WHAT KIND DO YOU THINK JULIAN STREET WOULD CHOOSE?"

To the Editor: Hervey Allen Reports the White House Presentation

The White House Library

SIR:—It has been suggested to me that the writing and reading fraternity in general might be interested in hearing what a thoroughly successful and generally pleasing event the recent "White House Presentation" proved to be. What might have been, under less fortunate circumstances, quite a formal, if not a cut-and-dried occasion, to the tune of a little nervous oratory, happened quite differently. From first to last the presentation of the two hundred volumes of Modern Literature—supplementing the five hundred books presented in 1930—as a gift to the nation from the American Booksellers Association remained just what any occasion concerned with modern life and letters should be—quite casual and frank, yet decidedly to the point and urbane. That it was so, was chiefly due to the quick understanding and proper guidance of the whole affair by Mr. E. S. McCawley, President of the American Booksellers Association, and his colleagues, and to the much more than official hospitality and appreciation shown by the hostess of the White House and the President of the United States.

The original plan was for the presentation committee to have appeared briefly before the President at two o'clock on Tuesday, October 23rd, and then and there to have "conveyed the books to the nation." This was pleasantly altered, however, by an invitation to the entire committee, Messrs. W. W. Norton, Frederick G. Melcher, E. S. McCawley, Frederick L. Allen, Hervey Allen, and Mrs. Pearl Buck, to take lunch at the White House, the presentation to the President to take place immediately afterward. Accordingly the committee assembled shortly before one o'clock at the White House, were introduced to one another together with a number of other guests at the same luncheon by the White House aide, and after having been shown the place card, done in a beautiful Spencerian hand, extant perhaps only in Washington, were ushered into the dining room and there most agreeably welcomed by Mrs. Roosevelt.

Something a little "Spencerian" seemed to be carried over from the place card into the manner of the meal. As far as one could gather the conversation on all sides was easy, rapid, and flowing, but the nature of the occasion and a certain colonial dignity in the official furnishings of the room itself served altogether to remind one of the trace of old fashioned writing. That is not to say that there was anything formal about it. Quite the contrary. Your correspondent observed with some inward sympathy President Tyler gazing longingly from his portrait just above the sideboard at a cocktail shaker securely locked, apparently with other trophies of the past, in a cabinet immediately opposite. It seemed possible that he might catch the eye of Mr. Elliott Roosevelt, who, however, remained completely enthralled by the author of "The Good Earth," while Ted McCawley, Fannie Hurst, Mrs. Roosevelt, and Mrs. Elliott Roosevelt just across the table discussed, I am told, relatives,

publishing, and books. Farther around the board the author of "Only Yesterday" seemed very much taken up by the President on his right, while on my right and left two ladies discussed across my body the advantages of Urbana, Ohio, over Chicago, Illinois. For the rest there was fruit cup, soup, a succulent chicken pie, endive salad, dessert—and exodus into the next room, where the President awaited us seated behind his desk with two or three small gingham donkeys, somewhat used-up I observed, but still kicking, lying helplessly before him.

No one could possibly have been more cordial and warm-hearted both in his reception of the committee and the gift of books that they came to confer than was President Roosevelt. Mr. McCawley presented the volumes in a conversation with Mr. Roosevelt rather than in any formal way. The President commented with evident satisfaction on the fact that some excellent juveniles had been included in the library and also added that he was going to see to it that proper shelving space would be provided in one of the White House rooms, something which has hitherto been lacking. He asked how the library had been selected and requested the authors present to autograph their books. "There is no hurry," said he, "there is nothing on after this but a cabinet meeting."

Everyone was delighted with his geniality, the smile under the tired eyes that lit up the whole room that was full of gay talk, people laughing, others being presented, still others gathered about the long table, where the two hundred volumes were displayed, making a brave show. Because of the peculiarities of the government pens it was almost impossible to get the books autographed. The President was considerably amused by this and grinned when I remarked to him that now we knew where the Post Office Department sent all its old pens. "I sometimes use eighteen or twenty to sign one bill," he said, "but the souvenir hounds have something to do with that." We also learned that about five thousand volumes a year are presented to the President by authors or publishers. They are sent to the Congressional Library.

The gift to the nation from the American Booksellers, however, is to remain at the White House. I hope that I have made it plain that it was not only gratefully, but graciously received.

Oxford, Md.

HERVEY ALLEN.

A Keats Bibliography

SIR:—I have been engaged for some time in the compilation of a Bibliography of John Keats which I hope soon to have published. If any of your readers know of editions of Keats or critical items which might prove elusive, I shall appreciate hearing from them. Particularly, I desire information concerning academic theses and dissertations.

WARREN PERRY, Librarian.

College of Puget Sound,
Tacoma, Washington.

The Saturday Review recommends

This Group of Current Books:

MORNING SHOWS THE DAY. By HELEN HULL. Coward-McCann. A tale of small town life.

OLIVER CROMWELL. By JOHN BUCHAN. Houghton-Mifflin. A full-length biographical portrait.

A GUIDE TO MODERN POLITICS. By G. D. H. COLE and MARGARET COLE. Knopf. A survey of existing political systems.

This Less Recent Book:

DARK HAZARD. By W. R. BURNETT. Harpers. The story of a gambler.