

Boehm-Bawerk's criticism that Marx's labor theory value failed to explain the relation of costs (labor time) to prices. A serious charge, so serious in fact that Strachey maintains that the whole gigantic construction of Marx would collapse if the charge were substantiated. Unfortunately, Strachey cannot refute it. To state, as he does, that the labor theory of value explains the whole of production (sic!), is to explain nothing. The point at issue is to explain prices. Prices are always ratios, never aggregates. But this time Strachey fails to give Marx the benefit of the doubt. All the contradictions in the world could not really diminish the intellectual stature of the author of the "Communist Manifesto."

The concluding chapters of the "Capitalist Crisis" suggest why Strachey pleads so insistently that capitalist economic theory is impotent and Marxian theory vital. Strachey is not interested in theories except as they can be used to influence actions. He sees clearly that capitalist economics is basically amoral; Marxian economics, despite its protestations of objectivity, is steeped in moral values. No theory can foretell the future; but theory can influence the future. If it be true that capitalist economic theory cannot even think its way out of the present impasse, it is very improbable that capitalism will work its way out. Marxian economics has a much easier task. It need only prove that capitalist theory and capitalist society have run themselves into a *cul de sac*. Strachey is convinced that Marx has proven that they are caught.

Perhaps he has, perhaps not. Time is of the essence of the problem. Eighty-seven years have passed since Marx first exhorted the workingmen of the world to unite and aid in hastening the death of capitalism. Yet, capitalism lives. Moreover, it was none other than Karl Marx who explained why it might continue to live for many years. Dr. Hayek is saved, at least for a time, if factors of expansion help to take up the slack of unemployed men and unemployed capital. Marx showed how the exploitation of new countries, the development of new industries, can help to sustain the system. Strachey knows and fears that Marx was right. However, he is convinced that Marx's eventual prophecy of doom is also right. The end can only be delayed; the rigor *mortis* made more horrible.

Imperialistic wars, fascist dictatorships can come between a dying capitalism and a nascent communism. Strachey hoped that his review of capitalist economics would prove that the factors of expansion were at an end; the impasse was permanent. Of course, he learned nothing from this study for the simple reason that capitalist economics never studied the problems of expansion. Marxian economics did deal with these problems but unfortunately it could not reveal whether the expansion was exhausted.

Strachey prides himself that he is a student of Marx; assuredly, he is not a student of Marxism. Only the other day, Joseph Stalin explained to Mr. Wells something of the relation between ideas and actions. The acknowledged leader of the Marxians stated that "Education is a weapon the effect of which is determined by the hands which wield it, by who is struck down." To write about the inevitability of revolutions is one thing; to have one's writings used for the making of inevitable revolutions is another; to make the inevitable revolutions is still another task.

Theories are not without influence on the real world; upon occasion, they can be most influential. At the present time, capitalist theory is significant; so is Marxian theory. Yet, capitalist theory is of no value for the making of revolutions; Marxian theory is extremely valuable. So far, Strachey's analysis is sound. But he goes further. Strachey searches for the true theory, for he believes that in truth there is might. Yes, might there is for the student of truth, not for the engineer of revolutions. Some men play with ideas; others with bullets; still others with ideas and bullets. Truth and revolutions do not mix.

Eli Ginzberg is the author of "The House of Adam Smith," a study which has been highly praised by economists.

Personal Appearances

Saturday Review News Pictures of the Month by Robert Disraeli



Five million words are in the box of manuscript which Thomas Wolfe keeps in his Brooklyn apartment. This is the matrix of his new novel, "Of Time and the River" (almost 500,000 words, or ten per cent of the available MS) which will be published next week. Mr. Wolfe reads a page while the camera clicks.



Naomi Mitchison, who writes modern novels of ancient life, and Maxim Lieber, literary agent. Mrs. Mitchison is touring the U. S. . . . Drinking tomato juice below is Dr. A. J. Cronin, arrived from Scotland for a U. S. visit. Drinking tea is Honoré W. Morrow.



Three views of Julian Huxley on a recent visit to the Saturday Review offices. . . . On his return to England, Mr. Huxley will assume the direction of the London zoo.

Below: Paul Horgan, 1933 Harper Prize winner, with his sister, dedicatee of his new novel, "No Quarter Given."



Alan Villiers brings his ship the Joseph Conrad to New York. From left, Bruce Rogers, Mr. Villiers, Sir Gerald Campbell (British consul), and Commissioner Dow of Australia.



(Left) Juliet Lit Stern gives a party for old St. Nicholas contributors. Seated, Mrs. Stern, Josephine Daskam Bacon, Mary Raymond Shipman Andrews, Mrs. Everett Dean Martin. Standing, Tony Sarg, C. G. Sherlock (new St. Nicholas editor), John Martin, Burton Rascoe, Eric Berry, Margaret Widdemer, William Rose Benét, Fannie Hurst, Robert Garland. . . . (Right) Stefan Zweig gives his only New York interview.

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Advice to Unborn Novelists

(Continued from page 514)

original sin, not under the doom of salvation. Go out and be born among gypsies or thieves or among happy workaday people who live in the sun and do not think about their souls.

My books have been called foreign not only in their material, but in their very speech. People say they are written in a style like that of the Bible. I hear Stark Young has been so kind as to disprove that, though I have not seen what he said or how he did it. But he is right. The style is not biblical, it is Chinese. For of course when I wrote in China of Chinese things about Chinese, I used the Chinese tongue.

This brings me to another piece of advice. Never, small unborn novelist, learn first to speak in a language which is not your own. For I made that great mistake. After outgrowing the market basket, I naturally learned to talk, and I talked Chinese. The first curls of my tongue and lips were made about Chinese vowels and consonants, and my first sentences were in Chinese idioms. The consequence is that when I am writing about Chinese people the story spins itself in my mind entirely in Chinese, and I literally translate it as I go. The phrases for which I am praised or blamed are idiomatic Chinese phrases, and I do not even know many times whether they are good English. I know that so long as I live I shall have difficulty with prepositions, because the Chinese language has very few, and English is simply prickly with them. Why do we say settle up, settle down, settle in, settle to, settle with, settle for, and yet the one verb to settle, really settles nothing? Birth alone can settle it. I advise the unborn novelist, therefore, to begin to speak in the language in which he intends to write. This is by the way, although it is very important.

For what I really want to say is that the unborn novelist must not think that merely being in a place all his life is going to make him welcome there. Quite the reverse. In the first place, a great many Chinese do not like white parents or missionary parents, and in the second place they won't appreciate what he writes about them even if he writes what he thinks the truth. One of the isolating factors of my own experience has been that some of the morbidly sensitive modern Chinese, especially those abroad in foreign countries, have not liked it that I have written of the everyday life of their people. In all justice to them, I must say that this attitude has changed in the last two years very much, so that I have very ardent friends among them, but certainly "The Good Earth" at first displeased many Chinese in the United States. In China itself it was accepted without dislike, except that it was a foreigner who wrote it. It was often said there, "It is a book which the Chinese should have written." But among the Chinese in my own country, who felt they had the honor of their country to uphold, it made distress. They had to deny it, to criticize it, to struggle against it. This also was as astonishing to me as the letter from the Fundamentalist board member. Apparently, with the simplest purpose in the world, namely, to write novels, surely a harmless necessity for a novelist, I was able to infuriate an astonishingly large number of people.

So the point I am trying to make to the unborn novelist is, if he is to lead a comfortable life, that he belong somewhere, and that he write about his own. Yet I begin to have premonitions that there is no real comfort anywhere for the novelist. I call to mind now two reviews I have read in the last few days of a recent book, unfortunately mine, in which the endeavor was made to portray very briefly through the eyes of a reticent Chinese student four or five Americans. I thought them interesting and likable people,—a landlady, very good-natured although overweight as many landladies seem to be the world over, a dreaming, sensitive, religious-minded professor and his kindly Christian wife, and their daughter, a keen, intelligent, rather moody young librarian in a university. But the reviewer says with great indignation, "At least the author might have chosen the best types to represent out of her own country." It

is the old familiar accusation, "Why don't you use your writing for the glory of Jesus Christ, for the glory of China, for the glory of America"—always some glory or other! The one inexorable answer of any novelist who at least desires above all else to be a true artist as far as he is able, is that he will not use any little ability he has for the glory of any religion or any cause or any country or any people or anything. He will let his writing flower as it will, and his only cause be humanity, whatever its color or creed, whether it be good or evil. He will portray human beings only as he sees them. His sight may be partial or it may be warped or it may be defective in many ways, because he also is no more than human, but if he be artist he will still write only what he really sees and knows, as he sees it. He cannot follow any other sight or hearsay, nor will he tolerate the guidance of a cause, however Christian, righteous, moral, or communist it may be.

It may be then that all my advice to the unborn novelist is worthless. The truth is that he will never quite belong in the world, however carefully he chooses his native land. For it is not true that he is only human—he is always a little fey—a little just off the human. He will live much of his life bemused by his companions, his actual flesh and blood companions who are always more to him than mere flesh and blood, and besides them, he will have all the people whom he shapes from them, his book people, his real people. And because he lives in two worlds and never quite in either, is never quite upon this planet, and yet can never get wholly away from it, he will never know how to answer the questions people will surely ask him about his books—strange, definite, hard questions.

They will ask him, "Do you take your characters from life?" How can he answer? He knows what they mean. They mean, "Did you lift such and such a character from an actual setting? Is it Mrs. This, or is it Dr. That?" Well, of course, it is not either. It is not an actual person, for how could an actual person fit into the covers of a book? The book is not a continent, not a definite geographical measure, it cannot contain so huge a thing as an actual full-size person. Any person has to be scaled by eliminations to fit the book world. Of course, it is true that many of

his characters do come from ideas given him by factual people, slight pictures he sees as he passes. The way a woman leans her head upon her hand habitually may suggest to him some other woman of his own mind, and he may clothe that dream woman with the same eyes and hair, and bestow upon her certain gestures and ways that are that factual woman's also. But he never, I think, exactly reproduces any character or any situation. His own imagination, his own emotions, the peculiar need of the situation in his book, shape and remold and inform all he takes from the actual world about him. It is true that even his imagined people, however, must have their start in actual life, because the novelist cannot imagine life quite without actuality as one cannot imagine music who has never heard a note of music.

What is real, anyway? Not what happens outside a person. I have spent my life in the midst of the most foolishly extraordinary external circumstances. I have seen the crude happenings of nature in famine and flood, and I have seen the crude happenings of men in wars and conflicts and oppressions. I have made long journeys in sedan chairs and in oxcarts and on horseback and in airplanes. But there is nothing intrinsically interesting in such things except as they happen to some person. It is only what happens inside a person that is really drama and really exciting. It brings one back to the old question of whether there can be a noise if there is no one to hear it. Does anything happen if it does not happen to someone? The novelist at least must believe that it does not.

And this little novelist must be born with one thing more. He must have a stout heart. He cannot be afraid of anyone. He cannot care for what anyone thinks. He must care for everyone, because every human being has for him especial interest. A novelist above all men must like people, and yet he must not let any human being shape his course or direct his art. He must let no approbation deceive him, nor any criticism dishearten him. Above all, he must seek to please no one. Not even the critics? Not even the critics!

For let no simple minded, newly born novelist think that with the publishing of his book his trouble is ended. There is



1935 — TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VIKING PRESS

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THE CHART OF PLenty

THE STATE IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

that horrible day of publication, which is really for him a day of judgment, when the critics in the newspapers sharpen their carving knives and leap upon their prey, determined to send him to heaven or to hell. I do not know how to advise this young novelist, how to prepare him against that dreadful day. Let me go back into my own experience and see what in my former life has helped me most to endure the literary critics serenely.

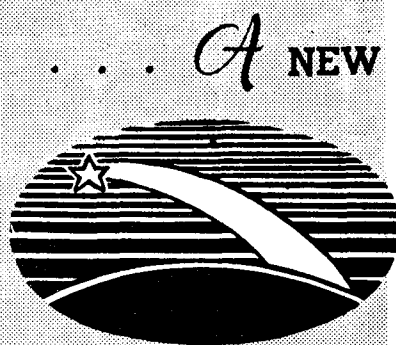
For it was a matter of some astonishment to me that even at first I did not mind them as much, apparently, as first novelists usually do. That very first day when a kind friend came in with a crumpled newspaper in her hand and said with a preparatory, consolatory air, "Now you must not think they all feel as this one does—remember he is very young—and his reviews are very much based on his personal prejudices," and all those things which kind friends do say to a novelist when a critic has given the beloved book a bad review. Well, I braced myself, and read the review, and it was very unfavorable. But somehow, I did not mind. It seemed as though I had heard it all before—all the accusations and denunciations, all the reiterating of a violent personal creed, to which I had no objection, but with which I did not agree—for myself.

Well, the point of it is that I must advise the little unborn novelist when his first book is published and his second and his third and to his twentieth and even to the end, that he must not allow himself to be cast down by critics patterned into creeds of varying political religions, any more than he must allow himself to be weakened by fulsome praise of critics too loose and too little discerning, so that by their over-praise he relaxes his own high standard, which is to know what he wants to do, and do it to the height of his ability, and let the result stand.

The truth is, of course, that amazingly few literary critics are able to obey that simple basic rule of all criticism, to ask what does this novelist want to do, and has he done it? The critic has no right to say, "I don't like this book because I don't agree with the author's point of view or his choice of people—in other words, I don't like his theology because it is not mine. I believe in immersion and he doesn't, and he's wrong." What have we Americans done to ourselves to become so imbued with religious intolerance that it saturates all our life? It's the old witch burning business, it's the hateful lynching business, it's the old foolishness of setting ourselves up to the rest of the world as God. Let any man be judged, assuredly, by whether he succeeds or fails in what he has set himself to do, but that is the only standard by which he can be fairly measured.

It may very well be that the little novelist decides after all this that it is better not to be born a novelist at all, and he had better be born something else. My final advice to him, then, is that if he can bear to be born something else, he had better be. But if, like some of his fellows, he had rather never live than not be a novelist and a teller of tales, then let him come with the stoutest joy, for the heartiest life in the world awaits him. He will suffer ten times as much as anyone else, because he will be born cruelly sensitive to every impact upon him, to the touch of every person, of everything, of every happening. He will suffer a hundred times to another's once, because he suffers not only through the medium of his own one life, but through the lives of every person he creates. He will see ugliness beyond his endurance, because he cannot help seeing everything. To feel—to see—are his nature, even as it is his nature to create. But he will see beauty, too, as none other can see it. He will feel joy as none other can feel it, love will be to him a radiance greater than the sun, and appreciation will find him somehow if he does his work to his honest best and it will be sweeter than honey to him. If his every sense is heightened to an agony of perception, it is justly heightened, and joy is acute, too. And his will be that acutest joy of all, that rare, strange, secret, inexplicable ecstasy of joy, the joy of a god who one day took earth into his hand and created a man and a woman, and saw them live.

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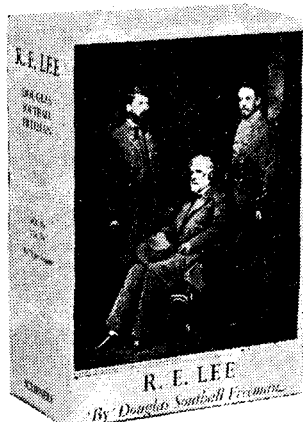
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The Marxian Philosophy

THE MEANING OF MARX: A SYMPOSIUM. By Bertrand Russell, John Dewey, Morris Cohen, Sidney Hook, Sherwood Eddy. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1934. \$1.

Reviewed by FABIAN FRANKLIN

UPON a book entitled "The Secret of Hegel," by an eminent English scholar, a reviewer passed sentence as follows: "Mr. Stirling has written a book on the secret of Hegel, and he has kept it very successfully in several hundred large octavo pages." The teachings of Marx, in their purely philosophical aspect, stem from those of Hegel; accordingly, on hearing of a book on "The Meaning of Marx," the fear arises that it may lie open to the judgment which the English reviewer passed on Mr. Stirling's treatise. But the fear proves to be unfounded. One part of that judgment is obviously inapplicable, for we have here not a bulky treatise but a little book of 144 pages; and it may at once be added that, although the book is small, and although of its space not more than perhaps one fourth is devoted to Marx's philosophy, it succeeds in giving the reader some understanding of that philosophy. To have done so much as this, in a brief space, is a meritorious achievement; and if the writers have not made Marx's philosophy more fully intelligible to the rude Anglo-Saxon mind, the fault, dear reader, is not in themselves but in their Marx. At least such is the opinion of the present reviewer; and by the same token he feels absolved from undertaking to condense into a few words the gist of Mr. Eddy's or Mr. Hook's condensation of the Marxian philosophy.

The major part of the book is concerned not so much with Marx's basic philosophy as with his practical conclusions. Every one of the five writers dissents vigorously from Marx as to some of the most important of these practical conclusions; but, broadly speaking, Hook and Eddy are reverent Marxians, while Russell, Dewey, and Cohen are not. The contributions of the last three are grouped under the heading, "Why I am not a Communist"; but their non-communism consists chiefly in

objections to the specific type of communism embodied in the existing regime of Soviet Russia, to the cast-iron Marxian theory of class conflict and its ignoring of the role of individuality in human life, and to the attainment of communism by violent revolution. On all these points, both Professor Dewey and Professor Cohen present their case with great force. Bertrand Russell's very short paper is too offhand to be impressive.

As to the two Marxians, a few words concerning their dissent or deviation from Marx are all that it is here possible to say. To a non-Marxian like the present writer, it is a satisfaction to find in Mr. Eddy's paper such outgivings as these:

I do not for a moment believe that labor-power is the sole source or measure of value. (p. 39.)

Is it any wonder that in spite of its ponderous economic theory, despite its glaring defects and inconsistencies, the burning heart of the message of Marx has gone straight to the heart of labor in many lands?

of which the second goes far toward pricking the bubble of Marx's prestige as an economist. And Mr. Hook, after quoting Marx's definition of historical materialism as the belief that "the mode of production in material life conditions the general character of the social, political, and spiritual processes of life," proceeds to say that "the extent to which this conditioning goes is an empirical matter," and therefore a matter of degree on which "different historical materialists have different theories." This takes the starch pretty completely out of that cardinal Marxian doctrine; we can all be historical materialists on these terms.

But though observations like these are pleasing to a non-Marxian reviewer, he cannot forbear to remark upon the absence, in the whole book, of anything like a candid acknowledgment of the simple fact that under the individualist regime capitalists and entrepreneurs perform an essential function in the process of production, and that therefore their appropriation of part of the result of that process is not the sheer robbery which Marx's economic theory makes of it.

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