

on the March" and J. Raymond Walsh's "C. I. O.: Industrial Unionism in Action." Levinson sees the "C. I. O. in Action" in the form of a duel between a quadrumvirate of light—Lewis, Hillman, Dubinsky, and Howard—and a quadrumvirate of darkness—Green, Woll, Hutcheson, and Frye. Levinson's canvas is larger than Walsh's, and shows a more experienced wielding of the brush; also, whether real or fancied, his portraits live. In trying to give the great upheaval of our day a historical setting, he defines it as a modern Knights of Labor movement, with the same emphasis on complete solidarity but minus the "excess baggage" which was responsible for the victory of the pragmatic Gompers. Walsh sees the C. I. O. as a bulwark against a fascist attack on American institutions. In their eagerness to issue a death certificate to the American Federation of Labor, both authors have overlooked the danger to our democracy and to labor from a continued division. Nevertheless, Levinson is too faithful a reporter to find that with the C. I. O. America has been presented with a class-conscious labor movement. For the present he is content to watch Lewis's brilliant moves on the checker-board, confident that evolving conditions may be trusted to look after the proper ripening of labor's ideology. Of course, the A. F. of L. is "out of this."

If the A. F. of L. is a "lost cause," where does its resistance power come from? Are its defenders not doomed to failure in this age of machine technology and mass production demanding a class-conscious labor movement and unionism by industry? Is not there anything in the theory of the survival of the fittest? The answer is that one must not become overwhelmed by the sole importance of the technological factor in determining the fitness or unfitness of a labor movement. Labor is hardly headed for a metamorphosis into an unskilled factory proletariat. The idea that it is so is a survival from early Marxism. Whether the real, deep-seated aspirations of those who joined the new C. I. O. unions differ from those of craft unionists is more than open to question. Both movements can well be explained on the basis of a job consciousness without assuming any revolutionary class consciousness. Both are thinking above all in terms of job control and of formal agreements with the employers. Moreover, in the heat of the battle the banners are becoming strangely interchanged as are the arguments advanced before labor boards. Federation representatives are found organizing industrial unions, and C. I. O. lawyers are found arguing against elections by entire plants.

On the issue of labor in politics and reliance on labor legislation, the differences are likewise exaggerated by the exigencies of factional maneuvering. It is noteworthy that the Federation's attack on the National Labor Relations Board was not followed up by a demand for a congressional investigation. Obviously,

the Federation aims to influence the Board rather than destroy it, and with it the very valuable governmental promotion of unionism. Also a return to the Federation's policy of the twenties, with its almost exclusive reliance on economic action and its shyness of politics, is out of the question under a "reconstructed" Supreme Court and a contracting capitalist economy which forces the government to take up the slack.

Nor is there any appreciable difference in their respective fighting effectiveness. Where the C. I. O. has the advantage of a more flexible and more inventive strategy, the older organization derives strength from its more ready acceptance by the middle classes, which so far as labor is concerned will more easily forgive violence that does not advertise itself as revolutionary than they will overlook a revolutionary label even if pasted on by an enemy. The plea for unity raised by President Dubinsky and others is well



CRAFT

From "The Village Carpenter" (Cambridge University Press).

supported by searching analysis. A labor movement which for over fifty years has lived as a unified government will never again see peace if it continues as two rival labor sovereignties. What is in store in the absence of peace is an endless succession of drawn battles rather than an Appomattox.

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THE POST-WAR HISTORY OF THE BRITISH WORKING CLASS. By Allen Hutt. New York: Coward-McCann. 1938. \$2.75.

THE LABOR MOVEMENT IN AMERICA. By Marjorie R. Clark and S. Fanny Simon. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 1938. \$2.

WHEN LABOR ORGANIZES. By Robert R. Brooks. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press. 1937. \$3.

LABOR ON THE MARCH. By Edward Levinson. New York: Harper & Bros. 1938. \$3.

C. I. O.: INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM IN ACTION. By J. Raymond Walsh. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 1937. \$2.50.

## Big Time Athletics

FAREWELL TO SPORT. By Paul Gallico. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1938. \$2.75.

Reviewed by JOHN R. TUNIS

BUT there's nothing new here. True, dear reader. There isn't meant to be. This is history. This is the story of our leisure time in the United States between 1924 and 1930, when the American male would pay sixty dollars for a bad seat at a prize fight which he knew was framed, and twenty dollars to watch, in a December blizzard, a football game about which he knew nothing. It was the era of million dollar gates, of promoters who got rich overnight, when eight or nine stadia scattered over the country were full with eighty thousand spectators every Saturday. When characters like Dempsey and Tilden and Jones and Sande and Ruth were performing for the multitudes. It was a strange time, and Mr. Gallico is its recorder.

A good recorder, too. Because he is first of all a former college athlete, and, unlike most of the tribe, a man who continues to play games. Moreover, he is one of that small circle of writers who are the despair of the rest of us pedestrians; he cannot be dull. He is wrong sometimes, inaccurate sometimes (who of us isn't?), but dull, never. Whether he is discussing Mildred Didrikson or Primo Carnera or the race question in sport, he is always entertaining.

The book isn't in the least profound, and seldom touches on some of the fundamental problems of what for lack of a better term we call sport. It never pretends to do so. It is what it is, and nothing more, an amusing, readable, and accurate account of the scenes and the dramatis personæ of big time athletics during one of the most cockeyed periods of these United States. As such a valuable contribution to Americana.

Mr. Gallico tells of his mistakes, how and why he chose Dempsey to beat Tunney, explains his technique of always guessing wrong to amuse the clients, is frank, modest, and gives a real picture of the life of a sports writer on a metropolitan daily. He often sums up in one penetrating sentence. "Golf makes a simple-minded, superstitious peasant out of an otherwise apparently intelligent person." "Champs are dull and solemn dodos." "I watched football degenerate into the biggest and dirtiest sports racket the country has ever known."

His best chapter is on baseball, a game he loves and writes well about. The poorest is on football, to which he adds little that wasn't said when he was rowing on the Columbia crew. It's hard to agree with his estimate of the honesty of sports writers; but Mr. Gallico has never lived in a small town. In the next edition he ought to correct a few inconsequential errors in an otherwise first-class job.

# Mousetraps for Mice and Men

BY ELMER DAVIS



ELMER WHEELER

**C**RITICS of the present economic order ought to realize by now that what they are shooting at is not the "capitalist system" but the capitalist lack of system. A System would never have allowed the book\* here considered to be advertised for sale to the general public. Its contents would have been circulated as confidential memoranda to sales managers, with no risk run of their falling into the hands of the consumer.

Its author is a practical psychologist whose Wheeler Word Laboratory, in the past ten years, has tried out 105,000 word combinations on nineteen million people to see what phrases most effectively sell the goods to the customer. What goods, to what customer? That is not Mr. Wheeler's concern; he is a technical expert. So is a chemist, or an aviation engineer, who serves pure science in the laboratory; if the end product of his labors is such an appalling slaughter of the innocents as is going on at this writing in Barcelona, that is not the business of the technical expert. He devises the means, leaving others to determine the ends.

Mr. Wheeler is not quite so hard-boiled as that; every now and then he weakens his argument by some weasel words about being sure your goods give real "owner benefits"; but his technique can be used to sell whatever you have to sell, to anybody who happens to be in the line of fire. "The mousetrap will ALWAYS spring at the right moment," he assures you, "if you bait it right"; and some of his illustrations are educative to the mouse still untrapped. For instance, the piano buyer in a department store whose boss told him he could give his customers only twelve months to pay, when his competitors were giving them eighteen. He merely advertised, "A Whole Year to Pay!" and sold more

pianos. Or the Cleveland civic booster faced with the job of shaking down business men for twice as big a contribution to the second year of a local exposition as they had made to the first. He told each man privately that the committee was thinking of putting him down for three times last year's quota, but that he might head them off by getting in his check for double the amount before they met. Or the butcher who, cutting two pounds of steak for a woman who wants only a pound and a half, does not say "Is that too much?" but "Will that be enough?"

"Don't ask if," our counselor advises, "ask which!" To the customer buying soap, never say "Large or small?" but "Do you want the economical family size?" (which, of course, is the large size). Ignore the possibility that the prospect might not want the goods; ask him "When do you want delivery? How would you prefer paying?" A hotel chain boosted its wine sales by asking every diner, "Would you care for a red or white wine with your dinner, sir?" till it encountered a New England customer (he ought to have a statue on Boston Common) who asked, "Is it on the house?"

This, it will be observed, is the technique of diplomacy, not of war. Ambassador Kennedy has said that "you cannot run down a customer with a bayonet," and Mr. Wheeler would agree with him, at least since hard times have taught prospects the bad habit of saying "No." The old high-pressure methods, accordingly, must give place to subtlety and suavity. No longer does the household canvasser stick his foot in the door incautiously opened by the housewife; he suggests (in winter) that the house is getting cold while they talk on the doorstep, or (in summer) that they are letting in the flies. Nor should he, says Mr. Wheeler, smile "insincerely" at the pros-

pect, "like the wolf at Red Riding Hood." But what could be more sincere than the smile of a wolf contemplating a square meal, whether he expects to get it by the methods of Hitler or of Metternich?

"Good sales words," we are told, "must be clothed in 'innocence' to work effectively, for once you recognize that you are being sold with a sales talk, you will close your reasoning and become a poor prospect." This implication that reason is not reason unless it is based on ignorance deserves the attention of philosophers. As an example of what "innocence" means in this connection may be cited the salesmen of a butter-and-egg house, who don't ask the grocer if he wants to buy more butter and eggs; they tell him they have been sent to get his opinion as to how he can sell more butter and eggs. Or the salesman of farm implements who begins by asking the farmer, "How would you like to have a new cow every year?"

The detailed exposition of the technique of making a sale ought to be worth money to any salesman, and still more to any consumer. "Always get the customer's alibis or excuses." (Observe that the burden of proof is thrown on the defense, not on the prosecution.) "Why?" is the hardest word for the prospect to answer." If you can once make him admit, "That is my only objection," you've got him; for whatever it is, there is an answer to it. If he asks you why he should buy the damn thing at all, come right back at him with "Why do you ask me why?" (There must be some law providing that this word may be used only by the salesman.) "When you are lost for words, ask questions . . . Keep the prospect talking and you do the thinking."

But most of your thinking is given you here, in capsule form. If the prospect is crass enough to ask the price, you should reply, "I am coming to that, but first let me show you—" If he says he knows

\* **TESTED SENTENCES THAT SELL.** By Elmer Wheeler. New York: Prentice-Hall, 1938. \$3.75.