

ists' surplus wealth. The owners of the town lived far away from Holyoke, and if they spent some of their wealth on museums and schools and churches and charity, Holyoke never saw it. The owners built Holyoke ugly—they never even bothered to sow grass seeds on the plot marked "city square" in the original plans. And the owners kept Holyoke ugly. The city is situated among some of the most beautiful scenery of Massachusetts—a winding river, trees, rolling hills. But the population lived in airless tenements and were lucky to see a tree once a week, on Sunday. Why should the owners of the cotton mills and the paper mills bother to plant a tree in Holyoke? They didn't live there.

Miss Green takes her story only up to the early 1920s. It would be interesting to know whether the WPA has planted any trees in Holyoke or whether the CIO has organized the workers. The book would profit from even a brief epilogue. Outside of this omission, "Holyoke" is inclusive enough—its chief fault, indeed, lies in its "scientific" method. For Miss Green writes with such careful dryness, such precise lack of bias that I, at least, finally found the manner of the book infuriating. Must historians pretend they do not care whether children labor in the mills from sunup to sundown? Is it unscientific bias to attack city planners who erected tenements in the middle of farms? For my part, "Holyoke" would be a much more effective book with more fire and fewer footnotes.

Strangely enough, with all this emphasis on the scientific method, Miss Green does display a most unscientific bias in her handling of the history of organized labor in Holyoke. She presumes that the best labor unions are the ones which get along best with owners—a presumption open to question at least. She writes enthusiastically of unions which seldom called strikes and treats with casual lack of emphasis the succession of abortive, hopeless, tragic mill strikes that peppered Holyoke's early history.

Miss Green believes the workers did not effectively organize against the owners because they accepted with spiritless apathy the conditions they found in the New World. But she indicates in her own text that the owners could—and did, when necessary—starve their workers into any kind of submission.

"Holyoke" is a valuable addition to the growing body of knowledge about America. Its faults do not obscure its worth—its tragic story overshadows the manner of its telling.

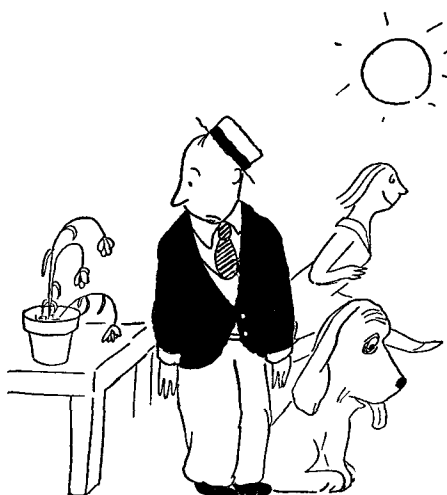
Ruth McKenney is the author of "Industrial Valley," an account of Akron, Ohio.

What the Man Will Wear, Maybe

MEN CAN TAKE IT. By Elizabeth Hawes. New York: Random House. 1939, \$2.

Reviewed by GOULD CASSAL

HAWES is almost as bored with men's clothes as most men are. In 1936 she designed some emancipatory garments which were run up by Tony Williams in a limited edition. "Fashion Is Spinach" considered the problem briefly. "Men Can Take It," a bombshell that will upset the conservatives and perhaps inspire a few canny manufacturers, goes into the subject thoroughly. Indeed, Hawes covers so many related topics while preparing the background of her argument that she may become



Drawing by James Thurber for "Men Can Take It"

known as the Dorothy Thompson of designers. Like Miss Thompson, she combines a decided personality and a passion for reform with a penchant for declaration on many subjects which seem slightly outside her province. Such wild-eyed crusading, however, often increases the liveliness of the book.

Clothes as clothes are thrust aside for almost too much of the time while Hawes ponders the subversive influences which persuade men to stick to their routine hats and suits. Only by prodigious self-effort, she contends, can men free themselves from their medieval attire. They must fight their conditioned educations, middle class tradition, jealous wives, and collegians who garnish rather than make styles. There are also the manufacturers, merchants, and retailing associations who fully realize that the finicky changes they call Fashions for Men are more compatible with profits than a comfortable, stylized costume.

Hawes has no startling innovations on hand, but she enthusiastically rec-

ommends slack suits for summer wear. She is so positive about their virtues that more than one male reader will be prompted to buy one. (A check-up recently made at the World's Fair revealed that approximately every twentieth man was wearing such an ensemble in single or mixed colors). It is to be regretted that in this connection she does not apostrophize at greater length on workclothes. For comfort and grace, they are the envy of many men who must conform to type in offices.

"Men Can Take It" will have its reinforced binding tested by many conventional gentlemen this summer as they throw the book down; and fifty-five percent of the female population—herein castigated as spoiled and stupid creatures—will have hatchets out for Hawes. Altogether, a highly promising beginning for the men's style revolution Hawes humorously anticipates.

Viennese Music

MUSICAL VIENNA. By David and Frederic Ewen. New York: Whitteley House. 1939. \$3.50.

Reviewed by PAUL H. LANG

THIS history of Viennese music as told against the background of the cultural evolution of the Hapsburg capital is a welcome sign that the principles of modern history writing have gained admittance to quarters heretofore hermetically sealed to literature and scholarship. But while the plan is laudable, the execution still falls short of standards established in other fields of the history of art. The student will be surprised to discover that the Messrs. Ewen date the history of Viennese music from the second half of the eighteenth century, although the ancient musical traditions of Vienna are known to every American concert-goer who has heard the celebrated Vienna Choir Boys. The reader will be no less disturbed by the stock sentences, typical of the old-fashioned, uninformed, and uncritical musical essayists: "Haydn was to lay the foundation for the German symphony . . . Gluck was to create the first great music drama . . . With Schubert the German Lied was born . . ." etc. The bibliography alone will convince the initiated that this book was put together in haste. Yet with all its faults, "Musical Vienna" may prove helpful and informative to a goodly number of people accustomed to the narrow field of musical appreciation, for it will teach them that music is a part of our cultural life, and not a pastime to be indulged in after dinner.

Travel Notes

I. Return To Olivet

BY FORD MADDOX FORD

(In this and following articles the writer will record various literary adventures that befall him in travels at home and abroad.)

WHEN we return to Olivet, which is in South Michigan, it invariably snows. It doesn't matter when the visit may take place; it can snow, in Michigan, in the dog days as well as in the Winter Solstice. It snows all through the night; the wet snow has all melted by sunset. Then it snows again. Michigan is the homeliest of all the States. Her face is that of a pock-marked Cinderella; nevertheless, shyly and deprecatingly, her soil is more loved by its native sons than that of any one of all the other forty-seven. When the Michigander talks of his homeland, he has an expression of wistfulness like that of a son speaking of a mother who will not do him credit in public assemblies but who is infinitely loved. Her one great beauty is conferred by the luxuriant trees that shade all the streets of her villages.

The snows of Olivet are of two kinds. It snows vertically from the heavens, but, no less persistently, it snows horizontally through the mails and express companies—from Boulder, Colorado; from Baton Rouge, Louisiana; from Berkeley, California; from Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Even from London, England. So that when the writer has waded through the drifts to his professorial office, he is unable without difficulty to enter its door because of the piled up snows of manuscripts, letters from authors, from publishers, from agents, from mothers who wish to know whether, considering the manuscripts accompanied by letters, this writer considers that their sons should be encouraged to enlist in the ranks of the pages of our Lord Apollo. Not infrequently one agrees. One accepts the responsibility of advising that these young things shall be encouraged to cultivate the Muses on a little thin oatmeal. That was the motto of the first Edinburgh Reviewers—*Musas coluimus perva tenui avena*.

It is, indeed, astonishing what a large proportion of the efforts of these writers from nearly all the country, south of, say, Detroit, is really readable matter. If you were let loose in this writer's office study at Olivet, you would find enough matter to keep you in literature of escape for a long time—even if only because of all you would learn of the lives of

the innumerable strata and classes that go to make up this immense republic. In a recent week this writer found himself kept away from his usual avocations by (One) a manuscript remarkably projecting the life of the richer Negro class—the doctors, clergy, bankers, lawyers—in the suburbs of a large provincial city; (Two) by an equally vivid projection of what happens to the inhabitants of a locality when by means of political intrigues the course of a state road between two points is diverted. Along the original stretch of road the garage proprietors, hotel and store keepers, and a whole small tribe of men and women operating services



A dormitory at Olivet College

of one kind and another are quite ruined, another set along the new road being favored—but not so much favored as all that—by fortune. And (Three) the adventures and reflections of an Episcopalian minister who, at the age of sixty, abandons his cure and, becoming a hobo, travels preaching for years and years all across the surface of the States. And all these manuscripts are pithily written, conducted with a certain view of coming to a climax—what the French call *progression d'effet*. And all are perfectly convincing. There is no reason whatever why every one of them should not be published to the profit of society. For the matter of that, four of this writer's students last week offered him short manuscripts, every one of which would be quite well worth publishing in any literary magazine—if any literary magazine existed in Anglo-Saxondom. And two

of them—one of them by Mr. Philip Ewing and the other, Mr. Charles Fiske—would adorn the pages of any magazine, literary or profane, in the world. (We may as well mention the names of some of our unpublished writers so that readers may give themselves the pleasure of seeing whether those names won't again bob up in the tides of future literary history. I do not know that there is any law against this, though I will admit that the practice is novel.) There is in short, in the broad lands between Detroit and Denver and Berkeley and Baton Rouge, a hunger for expression that hasn't as far as this writer knows been paralleled anywhere at any time except when the Elizabethan theater flourished in London or the troubadours sang in Provence and the richer peasants of South Germany produced their matchless folk-songs. It is really a folk literature flourishing in circumstances that you would say were the most unlikely.

There is, for instance, Mrs. E. E. Severence, a mother of five, from Illinois who in Lansing, Michigan, gets up every morning at four to write away at a novel, getting her day's work finished in time to get her children ready for school. And in these last years, she has produced a novel of primitive Egyptian life of really extreme beauty, erudition, and convincingness. Whether "The Death of Ikhnaton" will ever get published only the publishers who decide the matter of the life and death of novels shall tell us. But there in the corner of the homely surface of the State of Michigan burns quietly a great gem of sand and sunshine and palms and the Nile.

Or again in a suburb of Chicago there sits writing Mrs. Wanda Tower Pickard. This lady has a gift of ironic observation of the male that makes her manuscripts—the publishers having hitherto frowned upon her efforts!—that makes her manuscripts, then, some of the most exciting things that this writer has, in his long pilgrimage, come across. She is engaged in chronicling, sardonically and with a gay lack of regret, the passing of a whole parasitic society on the shores of a lake. These things are worthy of the attention of mankind.

Or again, in Kalamazoo—and there really is a place called Kalamazoo with colleges and banks and a Main Street and paper mills and celery fields and a country club—sits Mrs. Helen McColl writing her novel of United States Army life. It should, I imagine, take the skin off quite a large proportion of the artillery arm of the descendants of the A.E.F. It is a work of a Rabelaisianly diabolical innocence of observation—of the male. No such men were ever before