

# The Balance Wheels of Social Order

**CAPITALISM, SOCIALISM AND DEMOCRACY.** By Joseph A. Schumpeter. New York: Harper & Bros. 1942. 381 pp. \$3.50.

Reviewed by FRANK KINGDON

THE society that emerges from our present world struggle will not be a Marxian society but it may be profoundly influenced by Marxian ideas. Therefore it is essential for us continually to re-examine and re-evaluate the Marxian insights. One of the main values of Professor Schumpeter's book is his incisive dissection of Marx in the light of developments within our economic and political systems since the appearance of "Das Kapital." Even though no two students of Marx will agree on the precise ways of modifying Marxian doctrines, Professor Schumpeter's way of approaching the task is enlightening. How much of Marx is valid? What specific modifications must we make to meet conditions he did not foresee? Such questions certainly point the way to getting out of Marx that which will best serve the society we are now building.

We have to accept his premise that men do not act as individuals independent of the society in which they live. This was obviously no new insight with him but he pressed it further than his predecessors by asking what factor in society is the decisive one in affecting men's actions. The answer he gave is that the economic is the dominant one. Having decided this, his method was rigorously to examine the influence of this economic determination. His advantage over all other men in his field is that he did an exhaustive job on economic determinism and thus presented for it a case superior to any that has been presented for any of the other moving social forces. His erudite over-simplification of the complexity of social motivation, however, results in an incomplete picture.

## ANSWERS TO LITERARY QUIZ

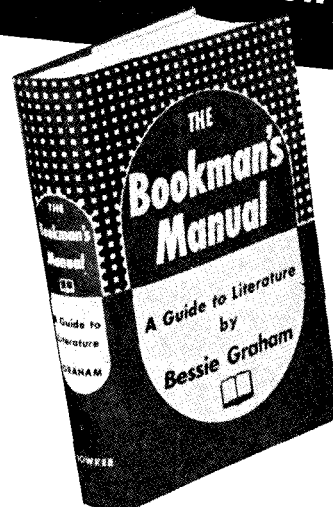
1. Fagin, in "Oliver Twist."
2. Abel Magwitch, the convict, in "Great Expectations."
3. Uriah Heep, in "David Copperfield."
4. Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Lamble, in "Our Mutual Friend."
5. Daniel Quilp, in "The Old Curiosity Shop."
6. James Carker, in "Dombey and Son."
7. Bill Sykes, in "Oliver Twist."
8. Mr. Pecksniff, in "Martin Chuzzlewit."
9. Rosa Dartle, in "David Copperfield."
10. Mr. Wackford Squeers, in "Nicholas Nickleby."

though its generalizations seem to provide a scheme into which all events fit. Therefore the criticism of Marx must go beyond the pointing out of his fallacies and produce a positive social criticism including definitions and exploration of the extra-economic factors as comprehensive in its way as his presentation of the economic factor.

To a degree Professor Schumpeter points the way to this kind of criticism. It is enlightening to follow his thought through the mazes of society and to find many neglected corners illuminated by his clear scholarship. It is somewhat unfortunate, perhaps, that he has cast his thinking so definitely into a pattern of semaphore words like capitalism, socialism, and democracy, for the total effect of his thinking is to indicate that none of these words represents a stable and inflexible condition, but that social dynamics working within a society dominantly capitalistic will produce socialistic tendencies, and that a society dominantly democratic will have tendencies toward socialistic ways which, as they fulfill themselves, will threaten democracy itself. This preoccupation with fixed symbols also produces a somewhat pedantic style of thought which registers sometimes in pedantic writing.

In a vital sense we ossify democracy when we identify it so closely with a given machinery of government that we consider mechanical changes as modifications of democracy itself. Democracy is rather a process than a definition. It is the attempt to relate social organization so intimately with social will that the inherent tendencies to change within the community will eventuate in such new adjustments as will serve the maximum interests of the greatest number of people. Democracy may therefore be fulfilled rather than destroyed by fundamental changes in economic and political constitutions. It is a creative idea moving within the dynamics of social change. Its basis is far more than "the little field which the individual citizen's mind encompasses with a full sense of its reality." If intellectuals and experts learn to identify themselves with the people, their enlightenment and skills will become effective influences within the flux of opinion. If, however, they hold themselves aloof as objective and cynical observers, they will be mere spectators, and the forces they despise will reject them as eccentrics. If Professor Schumpeter's book does nothing else, it makes it plain that men of the mind must activate the reason and get into the arena to share responsibility for social action.

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# —The Phoenix Nest—

## The Cerf Canard

WE take it for granted that you have paid little attention to recent remarks in a semi-literary department on another page, by our brisk young confrere, Bennett Cerf. The fact is that he is a trifle perturbed since we dropped in, the other day, at his *alter* office at the House that Random built. You remember the famous lines A. E. Housman once wrote about Bennett, don't you?

Wenlock edge was umbered,  
And bright was Abdon Burf,  
And warm between them slumbered  
The smooth green Bennett Cerf—

That's what he was doing when we peeked in the door. He had his feet up on the mahogany and he was lying back in one of those old-fashioned reclining chairs, upholstered in purple plush, that you could adjust from any angle. We say "could" advisedly, because Bennett actually was fortunate enough to procure the last of those old cast-iron frameworks, with the big wheels for locomotion, that date from the '80s. It includes a head- and foot-rest, and a big metal stand for the dictionary, that brings the type right down under one's eyes. (*Not so good on the old spelling, eh Bennett!*) Cerf has this right in front of him, as long as he can keep awake composing his column; but why he needs *three* secretaries at the same time, we just can't fathom. (*Especially that Titian job with the convertible eyelashes.*) Then there's the cellarette from the Nineties, and those little glass windows installed for him by Horn & Hardart. He doesn't even have to put a nickel in them to get a club sandwich or a slice of cocoanut pie! Then, too, there's the Chute . . .

## Inside Bennett

Oh, you want to know about the Chute? That's for interrupters. We used to wonder why there were so many dishevelled people staggering around on East 57th Street, apparently under the influence of alcohol; until we caught on to the way that they had been sent down the Chute from Bennett's private office, which spills them out, though right side up (but bewildered) right on the Street of Art Galleries amid the passers-by. The trap-door to the Chute is in front of Bennett's desk. He controls it by a button (when he is awake). We guess that's why he was a teeny bit miffed with us, because we just merely peeked in the door while he was asleep, and didn't step on the accelerator. The henna-rinse job was fanning him, and the champion spark plug was sipping

a coke. It all looked very peaceful; but we had to go to work.

## Quercus No Black Cat

The ace of this department, not to say of "Trade Winds," was formerly that heart of oak, P. E. G. Quercus, intimately known to his friends as "Old Quirk." On November 15th last we received the following letter from him. But before we paste it up, in our hard-working way, we must here set down how the late Don Marquis, in the old *Sun* office, used to have a way of running a column which might solve both Bennett's problems and our own. He would need, we'll say, three inches of type to fill his space, whereupon he would thrust both hands into the vast mass of unanswered mail piled high upon the rickety desk he had, and pull forth some misguided *MS.* or other. Tearing open the envelope with his teeth, he would quickly scan the contribution. Once we were present when he handed it to us, asking, "What say?" "Stinks," we answered succinctly. Thereupon he delved for another. By this method of trial and error he eventually hauled to light something passable, that would fill the space. This he took down to the composing-room, and then repaired in a virtuous glow to his favorite tavern. Good Old Don! There were giants in those days!

But to return to Chr—oops, we mean Quercus—we were mighty glad to hear from him, and here is what he has to say:

I've been so pleased to see the response to yr note on Louis Tracy: Yes indeed, "The Wings of the Morning" was one of the big reading adventures of my two brothers and myself in boyhood; the fiendish Dyaks often figured in juvenile games; it was the kind of book that my father used to send himself off into his after-lunch nap. In yr recension of good old corn, how about the exuberant John Oxenham; who got a bit pious later but did some readable adventure yarns, e.g. "Barbe of Grand Bayou" which pleased me at the age of 13. How about some of the less known Anthony Hopes, usu-



ally published here in very small volumes by Henry Holt and by Ten-nyson Neely. [Felix Riesenber] and I used to struggle to revive some interest in Cutcliffe Hyne (Charles John Cutcliffe Wright Hyne); if I had known when I was living in the cottage of the village postman in Bibury, Gloucestershire, and studying for my final exams at Oxford (in 1913) that C. J. C. W. Hyne had been born in Bibury in 1866 I would have done even worse in my Schools, as they were called. But say a word for our old favorite *Captain Kettle*, and Horrocks the purser and McTodd the engineer—I think Captain Kettle began as early as 1895; there was *The Adventures of Captain Kettle* in 1898; and *Captain Kettle K. C. B.* in 1903; and *The Marriage of Captain Kettle*, 1912—he began to slip about then; I'm afraid I never followed him through Captain Kettle's Bit and Captain Kettle Ambassador, etc. Anyhow, that's the best kind of juveniles. [F] And good for Kirk Munroe: you'll see on p. 207 of "Thoro-fare" that Jeff Barton knew Kirk Munroe.

Were you raised on Mayne Reid?

[F] As for Islands, I don't suppose you ever read "Pandora Lifts the Lid" (1924), written by Don Marquis and me. We really had an island within an island, as the story proceeded from Long Island to Gardiner's Island (which we called Thatcher's Island in the story) and if you'll change the smugglers into Nazi spies it's timely this moment. Anyhow, you're just the right age to be reading that sort of thing. No one should read anything serious after he's fifty?

P. E. G. QUERCUS.

## "Resurrection Men"

We wish we had known, when we were in Boston in the early Fall, of Norman L. Dodge, editor of *The Month*, put out by Goodspeed's Book Shop on Beacon Street. We browsed in the store in the basement of "Old South," where we made a number of purchases. And we wish Goodspeed's would put us on their list for a catalogue every now and then. Mr. Dodge has written us:

Your reference to Burke and Hare and your quotation of the Hook quatrain reminds me of another four-liner about the famous resurrection men who lived in Tanner's Cross. The Knox of the last line was, of course, the Dr. Knox who bought the corpses.

Up the Close and down the stair,  
But and ben wi' Burke and Hare.  
Burke's the butcher, Hare's the thief,  
Knox the boy that buys the beef.

Burke and Hare were not resurrection men at all in the true sense, but the former has the distinction of having added a word to the English dictionary.

How many readers remem—anyway, Bennett, that wasn't a blonde job, and there is no such word as "curvaceous"—and the job was a triple-threat brunette. And anyway, also,

Serene we sit,  
And knit, and knit,  
Something warm for you. . . .

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.