

## TRAINING FOR PEACE

NEW YORK, according to all accounts, only presents in exaggerated form what is a common phenomenon of American cities today. There is a bustle and stir of people here that is repeated throughout the nation, a congestion in hotels and restaurants and places of amusement that is quite without precedent in our history. Just where the floating population which crowds transportation and housing facilities in Manhattan and elsewhere comes from, no one seems precisely to know. Yet it is everywhere, deploying through the streets, filling the shops, jamming the picture shows, lending to a country just emerged from war a festive and gala air. Small wonder if the service man newly returned from the battle area or the non-combatant home from war duty is taken aback by the apparent callous indifference of his countrymen to the misery which he has left so rampant in the lands abroad. "Nylon mentality," someone has called the prevailing mood of the nation, and in so doing has meant to denounce the abundant vivacity of the time.

It is a commonplace, of course, that it is harder to maintain morale in a period of comparative security than when danger is imminent. Men and women, both as individuals and nations, rise to a height of self-abnegation and heroism under the urgency of crisis which they cannot achieve under normal conditions. Nor are they so constituted that they can long sustain an emotion at white heat. Inevitably ardors cool; hatreds, too, grow less intense. Already we have the spectacle of England, so lately demanding destruction for the Germans, proclaiming now that they must be fed. Again, it is the rarest individual who has the imagination to project himself into a situation which lies outside his own ex-

perience. The American is not shrugging aside his responsibilities in relaxing from the tenseness of war days; he is following what are almost inevitable laws of his being. He is an optimist by nature who believes in the future of his country and cannot disbelieve in the future of the world. With the poet of a happier day he holds: "But somehow the poor old Earth blunders along. . . Gets to port as the next generation will witness." Times have changed, alas, since Lowell's day. War and science have so advanced that the poor old Earth won't get to port next time if it takes up arms. Every American must be made to realize that.

There should be, there must be, some way of making the problems of peace as dramatic as the problems of war. We fought for freedom, we still have to fight for freedom. The mere act of overthrowing Hitlerism and Fascism and Japanese aggression has not ushered in a new era; it has only opened the way to it. Its problems are more intricate and obscure than those of the war years, for while the fight was on there was at least a common denominator for all freedom-loving peoples. That has been enormously reduced now that the conflict is over and separatist influences are exerting themselves. This is an emergency which can be met only as war was met, by mobilizing the whole nation to meet it. We've got to get over certain ideas—international control, amalgamation of the interests of labor and capital, education for freedom and a fuller life. Somehow that restless activity which creates the impression of indifference to the precarious affairs of the world must be harnessed for the drive toward peace. The politicians who have known how to organize to win elections ought to know how to organize for wider ends.

They, and the speakers who were so eloquent in urging the nation to its war efforts, the writers who backed them, and the journalists who supported them still have it in their power to build morale and influence policy. Why not compulsory peace training?

A. L.

## THE NATIONAL WAR FUND

THERE is perhaps no better way of maintaining the morale of a country than by giving it a direction for the idealism which is always latent in it. Despite its concentration on destruction, the war spirit of a nation is always held to its maximum effort by an appeal to the higher purposes of its people. And so in peace, endeavor can be raised to high success if the imagination of men and women can be kindled by a worthy cause. We have the worthiest of all causes—the ministration to body and soul for which the organizations comprising the National War Fund were formed—still demanding the consecration of all effort to its fulfillment. As the President of the Fund said last year, "As the war and the peace are continuous, the one flowing out of the other . . . the community social services which will continue when the war is over . . . are even now under greater pressures than before." There has been no lessening of the need in the months since peace has come. The relief agencies for the various nations so recently at war, directed toward every phase of suffering caused by the conflict, stand in need of all the support they can get. Victory loans, relief from tension of battle days, nothing should be allowed to lessen interest in the National War Fund's work. Every individual who aids lays a stone on the road to peace.

## War

By Simons Roof, Lieut., U.S.N.R.

FED on the rotting blooms of loves that sour,  
the godless prayer, the coined sun that blinds,  
War is the monstrous nightmare coiling hour  
to hour dark at the back of all our minds.  
And sleep and dream, the wide white fields of rest,  
quake starkly as the giant shadows pass  
chilling as death. Yet waking on the crest  
of calm, selfdrunk, we move where shadows mass.  
War seeds in us. It is the idiot child  
of hate, that bursts from skull upon our skies  
blocking the stars, the peaceful air defiled,  
until consumed we look out through its eyes.  
This is the monster, evildark above,  
that can be slain by the shining act of love.

## Judge Goldstein on Gambling

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Saturday Review sent copies of the article by Morris Ernst [SRL Oct. 20], "What About Gambling?" advocating the legalizing of gambling, to the three candidates in New York City's Mayorality campaign. As of Oct. 29, only Judge Goldstein, candidate on the Republican-Liberal Party ticket, had sent in a comment on Mr. Ernst's suggestion.

SIR: I agree that every ten years or so we reiterate the need of a campaign against gamblers in New York City. We should have learned by now that a few isolated convictions do not really go to the roots of the problem. Surely, a few spectacular cases which send a few gamblers to jail do not lessen the influence of the men at the top of organized gambling.

As a matter of fact, years ago big-time gamblers were partners with politicians. They used the politicians to protect their illegitimate business.

Now the gamblers have assumed political power. They have named judges and have prevented others from becoming judges.

A real city administration should try to do more than just prosecute. Whether or not Mr. Ernst's suggestion of legalizing gambling [SRL, Oct. 20] with complete disclosure is the right answer, I am not prepared to say. I do know, however, that gambling will not be stopped in New York, unless we do something more than engage in periodic raids and recurring prosecution. Obviously, police power alone will not curb the gambling instinct. The least we can do and should do is to spotlight the "politico gamblers."

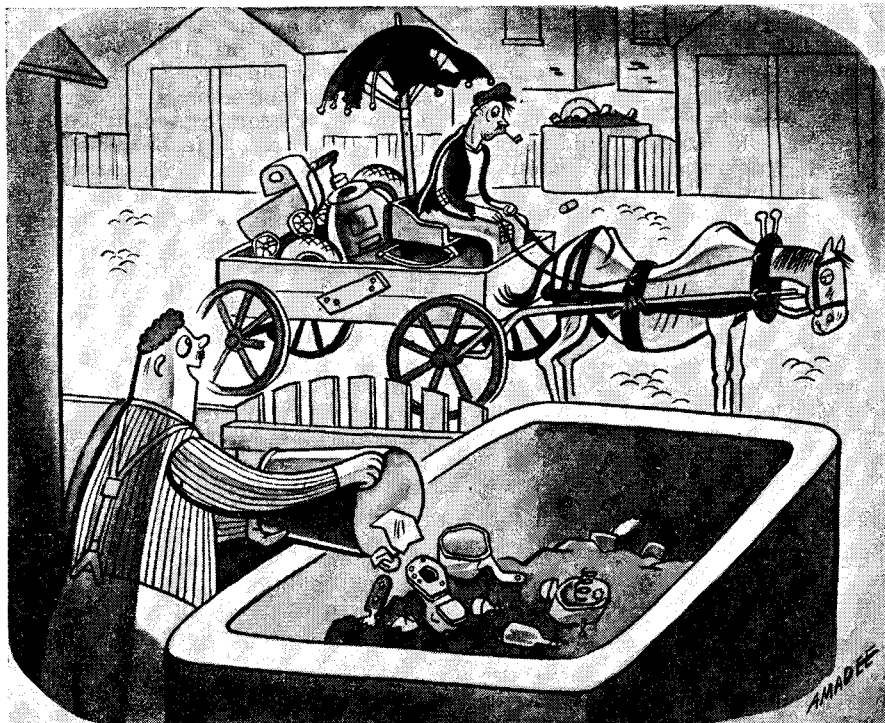
This will help awaken the public to the need of dealing with the issue at its roots.

JONAH J. GOLDSTEIN.

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## The Author of "Bambi"

SIR: Felix Salten who died recently at the age of 75 in exile in Switzerland, was the exact opposite of his greater colleague, Richard Beer-Hofmann, who died about the same time in New York City. If it took the latter many years to complete a work, if he labored over each line with the conscientiousness of a Flaubert, Salten wrote with the rapidity of a hack writer, rushing his manuscripts to the printer before the ink had dried. He was thus able to publish nearly forty volumes—novels, short stories, dramas, and essays—in addition to the countless *feuilletons* and reviews he contributed to numerous Central European newspapers. In one of his early novelettes he had portrayed an over-ambitious young man, eager to grasp all the honors, pleasures, and riches of the world for himself, hunting after them as though nobody must share



"Tell me, Mr. Pflugal, how are you coming with your memoirs?"

them with him. It was Salten's self-portrait.

This phenomenon is comparatively easy to explain. Unlike the other members of "Young Vienna" who, like Hofmannsthal, were of aristocratic birth, or like Beer-Hofmann, were the heirs of large fortunes, or, like Schnitzler, had scholarly backgrounds, Salten, the frustrated son of a bankrupt Jewish business man of Budapest, was a self-made man who had acquired his knowledge of German as an adolescent. Hence his pride about his brilliant German style (which, however, failed to camouflage the writer's occasional shallowness); hence his desire to go a-hunting with aristocrats; hence his peculiar blending of pro-Catholic leanings with Zionist sentiments; hence his indecision in political matters, as though he continued to be an office clerk, afraid of losing his job. He made us liberals and anti-Fascists angry when, at the international meeting of the PEN Club at Ragusa (1933) he, as president of the Austrian section, advocated a cautious, appeasing attitude towards the writers of the Third Reich.

On the other hand, he was a kind person, helpful to younger colleagues, an ardent lover of children, animals, and flowers. There were moments when he overcame his anxiety and produced masterpieces of social protest; for instance, his anti-militaristic drama "Der Gemeine (The Private)," published in 1899, but banned from the stage by the Austro-Hungarian censor—it was played in Vienna only after the revolution of 1918. In his novelette "Die Kleine Veronika" he depicted the

tragedy of an innocent country girl seeking employment in the Sodom and Gomorrah of Vienna. One of Salten's great idols was Emile Zola, and he became famous overnight through a brilliant obituary of the French novelist and champion of justice.

Salten was an unusually talented writer. But, alas, he could adopt any style he wanted. He could write like a medieval chronicler, like E. T. A. Hoffmann, Heinrich von Kleist, Arthur Schnitzler—until there was nothing left of Salten himself. If Beer-Hofmann had too much self-criticism, Salten had too little. Some of his works start most promisingly, yet after a while the author's journalistic flair for word-making gains the upper hand. Nevertheless, if we separate the yellow mica from the genuine gold, there is enough left of the latter to secure for Salten a lasting monument in the field of Austrian literature.

I am least fond of his animal stories, which became so popular all over the world. In his introduction to "Bambi," John Galsworthy admitted that he did not like the method "which places human words in the mouth of dumb creatures," yet he praised the book because "behind the conversation, one feels the real sensations of the creatures who speak." In any event, that famous tale of a deer is infinitely better than its many rather artificial sequels, excepting perhaps Salten's creation of Perry, the squirrel, which is considered as good and as original as Riki-tiki-tavi, Black Beauty, or Peter Rabbit.

When "Perry" appeared, Salten already lived as an exile in Zurich. The