

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."

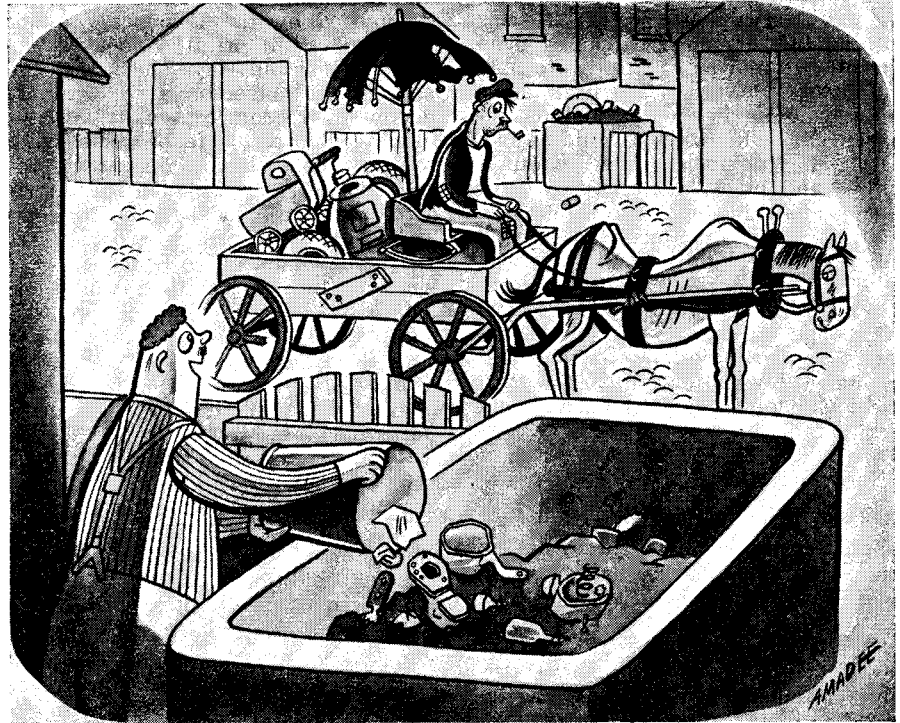
This will help awaken the public to the need of dealing with the issue at its roots.

JONAH J. GOLDSTEIN.

New York, N. Y.

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

septuagenarian placed his opposition to the Fascist philosophy in the mouth of his creatures; for instance, when he made the animals talk about the Hitler of the forest, the fox: "He hasn't a friend in the world," says Magpie. Perry's mother says: "He has nothing but enemies. He hates even himself. He murders his own brothers and sisters." "What a sad life!" sighs Perry, whereupon the wise magpie remarks: "If he knew it, it would be sad. But he has no idea. All he wants is killing and blood." Once Perry says of the squawking jay: "He thinks he's the best singer in the forest. He's hated me ever since I told him his voice was ugly." He receives this answer from the magpie: "Child, he would have hated you anyway." Reading these lines, I remembered how Goebbels had become a Jew-baiter only after Professor Gundolf at Heidelberg had told him that his poetry was poor.

ALFRED WERNER.

New York City.

Every Man His Own Lawyer

SIR: Permit me to speculate on the interesting consequences suggested by Judge Frank's delightful article, "The Cult of the Robe" [*SRL*, Oct. 13].

Says the learned judge: "The courts should feel obligated to make themselves intelligible to the man on the street or in the subway. Unfrock the judge, have him dress like ordinary men, become in appearance like his fellows, and he may well be more inclined to talk and write more comprehensibly. Plain dress may encourage plain talking."

Now, I ask, why, really, does it matter whether the "man on the street or in the subway" can comprehend the *obiter dictum* and *ratio decidendi* pouring forth in such voluminous streams from our tribunals?

Two answers suggest themselves. Perhaps Judge Frank thinks that when our law reports come to be written in "legal basic English," something he assumes is possible, they will vie with comic strips and best-sellers for popular consumption. (Fancy "321 U.S." or "75 Fed. Sup." standing next to "Forever Amber" or "Cass Timberlane" in the book pages.)

Or, perhaps, this new knowledge to be reaped from the transformed reports by the "man in the street or in the subway" is meant to be used by him. In such event, what is to become of Judge Frank's learned profession? Why will society continue to need its counselors, if, verily, every man not only will be presumed to know the law but actually will know it? Maybe finding the law will be the impossible task for the layman so that the lawyer will still be of service in the mechanical function of looking up the cases in the books. This suggests, too, that law school curriculums can be sliced to the single course in Legal Bibliography. But after a while perhaps the "man in the street or in the subway" can be taught to manipulate the legal indexes, which no doubt are also susceptible to simplification.

And the courts themselves. What

lies in lurk for them? The authoritative grounds of decision, now to be expressed in every-day parlance, will be comprehensible to all. The authoritative technique, "the artificial reason and judgment of law," may as well be superseded by the layman's common sense. The authoritative ideal is beclouded now anyway, since the emphasis is no longer on the individual's maximum freedom consonant with the like freedom of his fellows, but tends towards compelled coöperation and collectivism. This would permit us to democratize the judiciary as it seems Judge Frank desires to do: let the courts be manned by laymen; not a word in the Constitution would forbid it.

What do we gain by it all? Away with the exorbitant fees we're always hearing about, away with the shyster lawyer (indeed, all lawyers), away with the *ipso facto's*, the *res ipsa loquitur's*. And the cost? Reckoned in would have to be the amusing and charming jokes about the devious ways of the old law, the tidbits about its professional practitioners, the cracks about its old courts, all to be lost in the reformation.

One wonders where it all started. Where and by whom was this conspiracy upon mankind begun to be perpetrated? Where and by whom was legal superfluous verbiage first utilized?

Overruled.

IRVING JACOBSON.

Cambridge, Mass.

A Repatriate Demurs

SIR: I am prompted to write regarding Emily Hahn's review of the new Robert Payne book, "Forever China" [*SRL*, Oct. 13]. I have just returned from service in the China Theatre, having spent nearly a year between Yunnan and Szechwan, Shensi and Kansu. I have returned with a great respect for China and the Chinese people.

In assigning this book to Miss Hahn

for review, you have committed an injustice. It was an unfortunate editorial mistake. It is little less than amusing that she criticizes the title, and even dares to suggest that it was prompted by the title of a novel which recently made publishing history. And I am certain that Payne apologizes for having been in the "crucial places at the crucial moment." Was Miss Hahn writing an appraisal of the book-jacket, or of the book itself?

She objects to the author's "exquisitely careful" style. This is psychologically understandable; her own style is so wholly antithetical. At that, I should deny that Payne has striven meticulously for great literary height. At times his writing lacks cadence. It is *not* British; in fact, it seems strangely Chinese.

I have read much of China since returning. A good deal of it is rubbish. Much is biased, uninformed rot. Miss Hahn has contributed her own bit to the drivel. But here, for the American reader, is a book on the look and sound and smell of China, written by a man who has fallen in love with that country, and who wishes to share the unusual sensation.

SGT. REXFORD STEAD.

Rye, N. Y.

The Nicotinian Muse

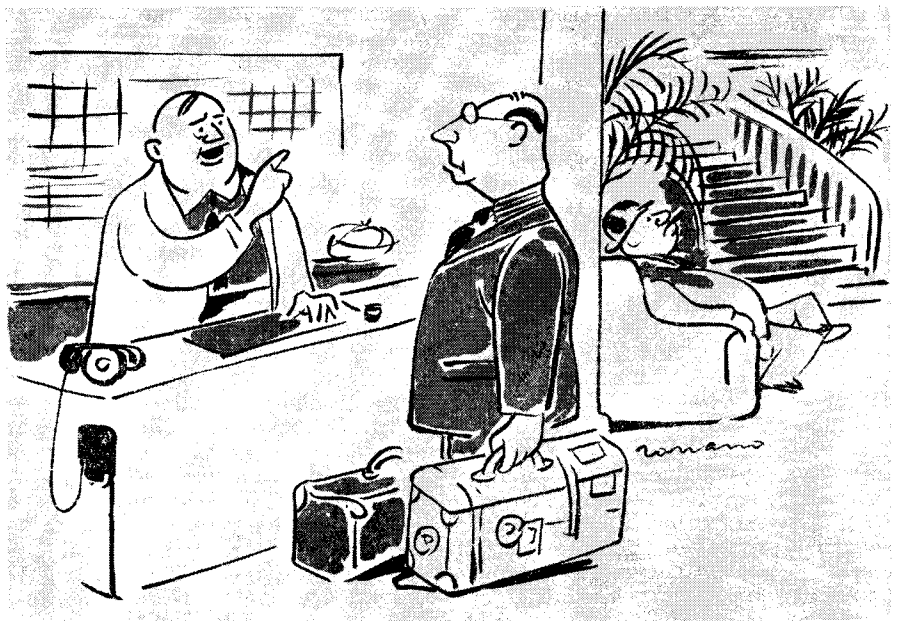
SIR: The "Ode to a Cigar," beginning "Yes, social friend, I love thee well," may be the one whose author is sought by Gene Boardman Hoover [*SRL*, June 9, 1945]. It was written by Charles Sprague and appeared in *The New York Tobacco Plant*.

ALFRED H. DUNHILL.

London, England.

The Librarian's Stake in Education

SIR: Your Annual Education Issue [Sept. 15] was a splendid one; Dr. Carman gives emphasis to a sound point of view; the need for well-rounded individuals in a community which goes beyond local confines, be-



"Your room number is Trafalgar 8-8766. That's the first phone booth up the hall."

yond nationalism, into a world community. Dr. Tead's lucid arguments and Dr. Carman's editorial combine the best in ideas with the best in style.

Schools and libraries are mentioned in the editorial as places for adult education; there is even a sketch depicting young people using a library. Surely librarians have a stake in education, and are competent to give views on educational problems. Why was not a librarian included in the distinguished roster of contributors?

ARTHUR R. YOURZ,
Assistant, Reference Department
New York Public Library.
Long Island City, N. Y.

No Holds Barred

SIR: I knew that the contents of my book, "Where Do People Take Their Troubles?," would be controversial. I realized, also, that there would be such "reviews" as pop up in the *New York Spiritualist Leader* and like publications—they traditionally blast wholeheartedly all questioning of efforts of trance mediums. However, I did not expect to meet, under the guise of a "review," the exhortations of occultian thobbing in the dignified pages of *The Saturday Review* [SRL, Sept. 22]. May I ask how you could expect Mr. Thomas Sugrue, whose excessive admiration of his favorite trance medium caused him to write "There Is a River" (from which I shall quote), would be able to approach objectively the task of reviewing a work which challenges the therapeutic value of such practices?

The story Mr. Sugrue tells of this trance medium is the usual exalted portrayal—this one, however, specializing in "psychic diagnosis" of physical disorders. Therein is portrayed the usual difficulties which occultians encounter with the law. In due time "associations" and "societies" are formed to obviate legal pressure so that, instead of medium and sitter, we have "employee" and "member of an incorporated ecclesiastical governing body." In New York City, this "religious" aspect enabled the trance medium to evade conviction as a fortune-teller. The medium has the usual endorsers by psychic "researchers" like Thomas L. Garrett. There are the usual complaints that "scientists shunned him." The "scientific" conferences of the group held discussions on "symbolology, auras, numerology, modern trends in metaphysics, etc." At one time, one member "wanted to approach the scientists, especially the psychologists, but it was obvious that they would be hard nuts to crack." "Better leave them alone," the medium advises . . . "we'd be hooked." True scientists like Dr. Gardner Murphy and Dr. J. B. Rhine tarried briefly and passed on—with no comment.

Andrew Jackson Davis, a trance medium who antedated the Fox Sisters, is given considerable space by Mr. Sugrue, as is the admiration of Manly Hall (the one-man Philosophic Research Institute of Los Angeles). Toward the end of this portrait of oc-



THROUGH HISTORY WITH J. WESLEY SMITH
"Will a skeleton key do?"

cultian personalities, Mr. Sugrue steps out of character as biographer and gives us a dissertation on his theosophical concept of how the world happened, how it "vibrates," and a statement of our destiny—in the usual American occultian manner.

This is the Mr. Thomas Sugrue whom you have selected to give an objective "review" of my psychological research "Where Do People Take Their Troubles?" Is it your custom to assign to a Lutheran minister the task of making an objective appraisal of the Roman Catholic church? Mr. Sugrue's convictions are based on faith. Had he read my book, instead of "reviewing" it, he would know that I have repeated that demonstrations of faith healing can be evaluated only by those who possess such faith. I was a bit surprised at Mr. Sugrue's suggestion that "shouldn't we be a little abnormal now in the direction of the spirit?" Strange viewpoint for one who is an exponent of faith healing!

I can understand Mr. Sugrue's devotion to the trance medium who helped effect his cure. I can understand his acceptance of all of the points of view of this "psychic diagnostician." But with this "already confirmed self," from whence did you expect him to obtain the ability to understand my book, or even to care to do so? He quotes concepts I never expounded, conclusions at which I never arrived. In fact, he has metamorphosed me into one more vehicle through which he can express his occultian opinions. He accuses me of "shooting dead Indians." He shoots at even greater length—Indians that never existed—figments of what he would write into a book. He quotes Chaucer, Thoreau, Einstein, General MacArthur—anyone except the author of the book he was assigned to "review."

And that "quick fling around the

circuit" I took—twelve years may not be important to one who regards life from the karmic point of view, but in terms of current living arrangements, and if Mr. Sugrue knows my age, twelve years is a sizeable piece of my life.

Mr. Sugrue makes the accusation that I was "bothering only to convince her already convinced self." Might I ask which of us, Mr. Sugrue or I, approached the task with a mind completely determined as to results? It is no secret that he doesn't like psychology, which he considers "in the same state of evolution which chemistry was in when it was called alchemy."

Might I suggest to him a more honest method of presenting his conviction of the superiority of trance mediumship over psychotherapy? I shall be happy to offer him the opportunity to work with scientists which he claims has been denied his mentor. I'll bring to his trance medium a troubled girl of twenty whose problems have not yet been resolved. I'll meet the expenses of transportation to bring her to the "psychic diagnostician." We shall invite a group of distinguished scientists to witness the results. We'll give the trance medium all the co-operation he wishes. Let's have this an objective appraisal of Mr. Sugrue's hero rather than to have it injected into a "book review" in which a reviewer with a mystical approach to life vents his ire upon a profession against which he happens to have a vehement antagonism.

"In Chaucer's time," says Mr. Sugrue, "all a seller of indulgences needed was a bag to hold his sheepbone." The changes herein seem to be slight to the Americanized version of oriental occultism—merely transmutative and juxtapositional. The sheepbone has become "scientific" jargon, and the customer now holds the bag.

LEE R. STEINER.

FROM EASTPORT, MAINE, to Sappho, Washington, stretches the Northern boundary of the United States, some two thousand miles of rugged and ever-changing country, but all of it is the back-yard of one of America's most picturesque authors, Stewart Holbrook. Within the past six months, Holbrook has been in Bad Axe, Michigan, to check details on a story about the Frank Merriwell books, Bemiji, Minn., on an article about the wild rice industry, Bangor, Maine, for a story ordered by the *New York Tribune*, and Seaside, Oregon, to investigate the hemlock looper, which, I am sure you know, is a species of worm that is intent upon eating up our Northwestern forests. When I saw him, he was headed for Butte, Montana, to collect some data for a book he just signed to do for Crown Publishers. "That whole border," he said with an appropriately sweeping gesture, "is my big pasture."

Holbrook was born in Vermont, but his professional career began in Northern Minnesota. He was an actor in the Harry St. Clair Stock Company. Mr. St. Clair himself, a ripe sixty-nine, played the leads; his wife Jennie, just turned sixty-five, essayed the ingenue roles; and Stewart, all of seventeen, invariably was cast as an old man, wearing a moth-eaten set of whiskers that generally fell off before the second-act curtain. On the side, he yodelled and took tickets. The musical accompaniment was furnished by a single man, but St. Clair felt justified in billing him as a "full orchestra" because he invariably was. One night he passed out cold at the piano during the first act of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Holbrook had to play the music while Eva crossed the ice and howl like a pack of bloodhounds at the same time. One lady in the first row was so entranced she followed the company for two weeks.

The villain of the troupe was a young chap named William Pratt who tired of one-night stands and decided to try his luck in Hollywood. He didn't do badly there either—particularly when he changed his name to Boris Karloff.

One of the towns on the St. Clair itinerary was Sauk Center, and a Dr. Emmet J. Lewis and his wife, prominent citizens of the community, came to see a performance of "East Lynne" in December, 1884. Harry St. Clair told the story at least once a day. "That doctor hated actors as a general rule," he would boast, "but when he

saw me do 'East Lynne,' he got so excited that he persuaded his wife to name her forthcoming baby after me. It was born February 7, 1885—a boy—and sure enough, she drove over to St. Cloud, the county seat, to name it Harry St. Clair Lewis. Unfortunately, the registrar was hard-of-hearing, and he entered the name as 'Harry Sinclair Lewis.' It was a tragic error for the poor baby, but nothing could be done about it. I understand that boy has become a writer or something. If he ever writes a play, the St. Clair Stock Company will be proud to produce it—if there's a good part in it for me."

That boy Sinclair is just about monopolizing the literary reviews these brisk autumn days. "Cass Timberlane" is sweeping the country and will out-sell even "Main Street" and "Arrow-smith." On the side, Mr. Lewis has been the center of two piping-hot literary imbroglios. In the October *Esquire* he hands it out to Louis Bromfield in the most pulverizing analysis I have read in many years. In the new Portable Fitzgerald, he is on the receiving end of an almost equally withering blast from Introducer John O'Hara. To complicate the situation further, O'Hara signed to write the motion-picture scenario of "Cass Timberlane." Spencer Tracy will play the part of Cass when MGM gets round to filming the story. . . .

TRADE WINDS ARE blowing word games in with every gust in the house. Bill Hall calls to mind Napoleon's palindrome, "Able Was I Ere I Saw Elba," but prefers Adam's terse and cadenced introductory salute to Eve, "Madam, I'm Adam." (Yes, he spoke English.) . . . Peter Bowman asks you to trans-pose "funeral" to two words, "Presbyterian" to three, "sweetheart" to three, and "Spanish marriages" to four. (Answers to these and the following are in the next to the last paragraph of this column.) Caswell Adams vows there is but one word in the English language with four consecutive vowels; what is it? . . . Wolfe Kaufman asks for a word beginning and ending in "Und." . . . Frank O'Rourke wants you to produce entirely different words by rearranging the letters of RELATING, DIALECT, MADISON, and COASTING, and change CAPERING by adding a "Y." . . . Herbert Wise submits a poem with seven blanks; the same six letters, differently arranged, will spell out all the missing words:

A sat in his grey
Watching the of moonbeams
play,
And as he sat, this was his lay:
"Thou the weak; thou the
strong.
To thee the of battles belong."
And the of leaves echoed his
song. . . .

HIGH FINANCE . . . In spite of war-time taxation and the severe rationing of paper in England, Britain's book publishers evidently have not been faring too badly. One New Yorker has preserved a clipping from the *London Bookseller* of December 9, 1943—long before the Allies were out of the



"You there . . . whoever you are . . . go in at right tackle."