



FULL STATURE

WHEN the first of these annual issues of *The Saturday Review* dedicated to university presses was proposed, there was some shaking of heads among the elder statesmen, some hurried and anxious exchange of letters. Was *SRL* going to embalm the idea prevalent among many of the Murray Hill gentry, that university press publishing was something to quarantine? Or was *The Saturday Review* itself just throwing out a tarpaulin to catch all and sundry advertisements from that section of the publishing fraternity reputed "not to advertise"? Doubts were quickly resolved; Don Geddes, whose "Pleasures of Publishing" at Columbia became almost as widely known as Nicholas Murray Butler, was chosen the first guest editor, Don having left the academic atmosphere of Morningside Heights to be editor of Pocket Books.

Since that time, the *Review's* circulation has been zooming, although not necessarily on that account. On top of that, since that time, too, the University of Oklahoma's "Plowman's Folly" sold almost 300,000 copies, Chicago's "The Road to Serfdom" stirred up a hornet's nest while selling 100,000 copies, and Rutgers published a garden book which touched a mere 600,000 copies in its various editions, all without benefit of clergy (for the uninitiated, without book club selection). This paragraph, we admit, may not impress the professors, God bless them, but it may put ideas in the head of some professor's wife who wants a new fur coat.

Also, in this period, the Association of American University Presses has become a full-fledged professional group. It has established standards of membership which will help not only to maintain the high principles of its

present members but aid universities to plan the establishment of presses and start operations without fumbling.

The days of "professional amateurism" of university press publishing are over. University presses are now an integral part of American publishing. They are continuing the fine, frequently unrecognized and unappreciated service to American scholarship which has always distinguished their lists. They have added a new and increasingly valuable service to the non-scholar, and more and more they are encouraging the forward-looking among American scholars to write for a citizenry which is composed, in its majority, of business men, professional men, farmers, and workers. These presses also have learned how to sell books, and they do advertise. Even during the darkest days of the prewar depression, they never lost sight of their high standards of book making. Two presses, even, have been responsible for new type faces, California with the face of that name, and Monticello, now being designed for Princeton.

As important, perhaps, as the professional touch is the regional and national distribution of these old and newer publishing houses. University presses truly make of American publishing a national industry. And this is important to American writing. Any editor will tell you that trying to tell an author in writing what is wrong with a book is difficult at best, if not impossible. But when you can sit down with the author and talk over what is wrong, you are going places. It is now possible for the writer of non-fiction to have such direct help without having to travel all over the country to get such advice. He will find a press not too far distant on the Pacific Coast, in the Southwest, the Southeast, the Midwest, the East. Not only can the author thus obtain direct help, but he is in a position even to give "needed" advice on advertising, without which an editor's life would not be complete.

In many respects, university presses are ahead of their campuses. There was a time when the graduate school called the turn so far as a university's general standing was concerned. Today it is the university press which is more and more acting as educational accelerator. Despite its nobility of purpose, graduate training has tended more and more to become part of the great wastelands of the intellect. Unfortunately, many university presses have been turned loose to forage on this wasteland, through the requirement that they publish *all* dissertations for the doc-

torate accepted by their particular universities. Not all university press publishers will go so far as this writer in bemoaning this requirement, as readers of previous issues of *SRL* devoted to the presses will recall. By and large, however, there is a healthy revolt against this indiscriminate requirement, both among publishers and among younger faculty members.

Previous special issues of *SRL* devoted to university publishing have been written almost entirely by the publishers. In this issue, we have asked a number of university publishers to tell what the presses have done; and, in fairness to the frequently abused scholar, we have asked some of the foremost exponents in the great disciplines to tell the university publisher what remains for him to do.

NOW, both the learned and the non-learned are puzzled, yes, even baffled, by the knowledge that in the period of climax of mass education, civilization seems to be crumbling. We seem to be approaching a doomsday, powerless to prevent it. We expect conformity in our educational leaders and we condemn those who do not fit into the accepted group. We are slaves of the necessity of making a living and we expect our educational system not only to teach us how but to train us as well in making an even better living than the generation that taught us. We pay our teachers and professors less than our auto mechanics, because the mechanic makes it possible for us to speed along life's highway without our seeing the deserted villages, the desolate store fronts, the harried faces of the onlookers which line the road on which our speeding car dashes to a momentary and illusory happiness.

We have passed the steam age for the combustible age. We are so accustomed to speed that the calmness of pause makes us dizzy. Frenetic. Irritable. Statesmen and common folk merge in one common stream of mutual frustration. We should be able to turn to clergy and scholar for spiritual sustenance, but it is difficult to hear them, because the pounding of our hearts drowns the weak cry of solace.

How to restore faith, a healing faith, is the cardinal question of our time. And so we conclude our special issue with Paul G. Hoffman. He speaks for the vast inarticulate masses. He raises some of the questions which make university publishing, in these times, no mere calling but a challenge to leadership.

JOSEPH A. BRANDT,
Guest Editor.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Racial Discrimination

SIR: The letter from William H. Tymous on "Stereotypes and the Race Question" in your April 27 issue interested me. I should like to see it and similar letters get still wider circulation. A few months ago Wolcott Gibbs, in his drama column in *The New Yorker*, quoted from a very fine letter concerning the play "Strange Fruit."

This brings me into the field of reprint rights and so on, about which I know absolutely nothing—but wouldn't it be fun if someone could make a little collection of letters to various publications on this subject of racial discrimination and reprint them in pamphlet form? Somehow the ideas seem to carry more weight when they come as spontaneous outbursts of citizens rather than as paid editorials or articles.

Have you any ideas? For my part, I should be delighted to begin keeping a clipping file if someone can be found with the money, inclination, and good old American know-how to do something with it.

MRS. R. W. STOUGHTON.

116 East Malta Road,
Oak Ridge, Tennessee

The Lunar Rainbow

SIR: I am interested to learn that the lunar rainbow is particularly rare, since I once witnessed it myself. I cannot describe it in poetry, as Starr Nelson did, but it was a rather romantic occasion, since I was on the way to a dance with a group of young people. 'Twas a July night in the Missouri Ozarks—the customary evening electrical storm suddenly ceased and the lunar rainbow appeared like a phantom. It was white, but with shadings, and very beautiful, with stars glittering all about and the lightning still flashing across the sky.

This was in 1938, in Shannon County, if you are interested in statistics. The rainbow was visible for about twenty minutes as I recall—an experience I shall never forget.

ELIZABETH REED.

Arlington, Va.

Reviewwords

SIR: Comment on the present lavish use of *virtually*:

A writer is terser, his *virtue's* no worse

When its well is unshared by *ally*;
For though avid with pitcher he'll be none the richer

When the spring of his thought runs dry.

PEARL YOUNG.

St. Augustine, Fla.

Widow's Sons

SIR: "He was a widow's son." So reads a verse in the seventh chapter of I Kings, describing Hiram of Tyre, worker in brass who did the expert work in brass on the temple at Jerusalem. I am compiling a list of significant personalities of whom it would be said, "He was a widow's son." When James J. Hill, empire builder of the



THROUGH HISTORY WITH J. WESLEY SMITH

"It's a new unemployment project—Rameses calls it a pyramid."

Northwest, was carrying on his great achievement of helping to develop the mighty agricultural resources of the Dakotas, he said: "If I want to find a man who will be dependable and resourceful, I look for one who is the hope and support of a widowed mother." What widow's sons do you know who have achieved distinction or rendered special service?

OTIS MOORE.

Pastor, Garnerville
Methodist Church,
Garnerville, N. Y.

Woodman, Spare That Tree!

SIR: Mr. Brown's article [SRL, May 11] analyzing a phase of Ph.D.-ism is one of a series of outcroppings that have recently erupted concerning scholarship. Beginning with the avowed intention of not attacking all scholarship, the effect of these columns and of the labels applied is indiscriminately inclusive.

Seemingly, the dry-as-toast researchers have cast their burnt crumbs upon the water only to have them turn up as wormwood in any number of cups. To counterpoise this over-exaggerated aridity, Mr. Brown and others bring weighted arguments for "live estheticism." The solution, as per usual, lies somewhat about the limbo of the in-between.

Clothed in the disinterested mantle of lifting "the dead hand of scholarship," the reasons underlying these particles of bitterness range from the stress on practicality and vocationalism to personal disappointment. They rail against scholarship's picayune tendencies, rant about its piddling disquisitions, failing, all the while, to understand its value. They seem to forget that a culture is not built on secondary effusions of appreciation, but that it is built on facts, and that these facts are sought out by scholars. Without them any generalization or evaluation is a tissue of lies

and false conclusions. Even those scholars who engage in resolving what appears to be desiccated minutiae are infinitely more valuable than the frothy appreciators. The details in learned articles are there for a creative mind to gather and to relate to modern instances; groundless simulated estheticism does not warrant discussion. Thus, any thinking individual who permits himself the luxury of blanketing a derisive connotation onto researchers is shortsightedly hacking at the supports on which he stands.

AARON B. SEIDMAN.

New York, N. Y.

A Shocking Parade

SIR: Your recent editorial "For Murderers Only" [SRL, May 18] stirred me to pass on this suggestion for those Americans who still do not realize the importance of feeding the world's hungry.

Why don't we have a nation-wide tour of several hundreds of starved and starving people from various sections of the world to awaken us, to disturb us, to shock us into action? Perhaps this sideshow would be the answer for the American temperament, that something has been received for humanitarianism.

NICHOLAS MOCHARNIUK.

New York, N. Y.

Vice-Presidents and "Who's Who"

SIR: Mr. Huxley feels (SRL April 13) that of all the curious omissions in the British "Who's Who" the "most extraordinary" is that of President Truman. "Granted, he was only Vice-President when the 1945 'Who's Who' appeared, but after all he *was* Vice-President!" he exclaims.

But he *wasn't* Vice-President when the book went to press. "Some occurrences of a date later than the end