

only the first great step in the Negro's struggle for integration in American life.

From the Civil War, Mr. Bontemps's story skims briefly into the present. This, of course, makes his work chiefly important for its early history, which I presume was his intention. This much, at any rate, is poetic and moving, and indeed notable for its

accuracy and objectivity. The author has abandoned the orthodox method of breaking up a book into chapters. He has instead given us a series of tableaux, some somewhat static. But the illustrations by Raymond Lufkin, resembling woodcuts, point up the text effectively. The book might well be described as a "primer for white folks," young and old.

for piano by Charles and Ruth Seeger are appropriately simple and easy to play. The editors have drawn on their previous collections, but they also have ranged widely among other folklorists and folksingers.

The songs in "The People's Song Book" remind us of another dominant characteristic of American song: it has long sung its propaganda. A hundred years ago the Hutchinsons were leading the singing of such Abolition songs as "Get Off the Track!" and when they had sung slavery out, they turned to temperance and woman's suffrage. A generation or two ago the Salvation Army and the IWW's set their propaganda songs to tunes already popular. When the Okies started gypsying the roads in their jalopies, they made a balladry of the displaced and dispossessed. With a relative living under each railroad bridge, they wandered the West, singing such songs of the Dust Bowl as, "I'm blowing down this road feelin' bad/An' I ain't gonna be treated this-away." Now labor sings its cause, heartens its men with song. Such recently famous songs as "Union Maid" and "Mister Bilbo" follow the pattern of much of our propaganda music by fitting new words to old tunes.

Here are the songs one hears at hootenannies and labor rallies, and on the records of the Almanac Singers. In this book of vigorous, hard-hitting songs the singer will find pieces he will not find in such general collections as the Lomax one. It is worth having for "I'm on My Way" and "So Long, It's Been Good to Know You," to mention only two of its good songs, the former a magnificent rolling gospel-hymn, the latter a fine, swinging tune superb for mass-singing.

Kingdom of American Balladry

FOLK SONG: U. S. A. Collected, adapted, and arranged by John A. Lomax and Alan Lomax. New York: Duell, Sloan, & Pearce. 1948. 407 pp. \$6.

THE PEOPLE'S SONG BOOK. Edited by Waldemar Hille. New York: Boni & Gaer. 1948. 128 pp. \$2.50.

Reviewed by HORACE REYNOLDS

THE hero of American folksong is the common man. The ballads our forebears made in Britain and brought with them to America sing of such nobles as Lord Randall and Lady Margaret, such champions as the proud Percy and the Earl of Douglas. But the hero of our native songs and ballads is a worker—or a hard case. John Brown was a Kansas farmer. John Henry made his living as a steel-drivin' man; Po' Lazarus was a pick-and-shovel laborer. Frankie and Johnny strolled out of the barrel house. Jesse James robbed banks and trains. It's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man, except as menace, to enter the Kingdom of American Balladry.

Migration is the keynote of the American experience, movement of emigrants across the sea and then across the land. The songs here collected, which Alan Lomax describes as "the first attempt to set up a canon for American folksong," reflect that experience. Here are the songs our foreparents sang as they crossed first the Alleghenies and then the plains. Here are the songs the cowboys sang on the Chisholm Trail, the seamen on the clipper ships, the lumbermen on the spring-rise rivers. Some songs are not here. The wagoners who drove the six-horse teams across the Alleghenies, the Negro rousters who coonjoined freight up and down the stage planks of our river steamers—their songs are not here. They have gone with the Conestoga wagons and the gleaming side-wheel packets—which never did run "between New Orleans and Chicago."

Mr. Lomax writes interesting introductions for every section, orient-

ing each song on the musical map of America. Taken together these essays do much to express the significance of and meaning of American folk music. He thinks the railroad train has been a dominant influence in our popular music, in our blues and stomps. He hears in this music "the smashing, rattling syncopated rhythms and counter-rhythms of trains of every size and speed." So sympathetically does he write of "the surge and thunder of the steam engine, the ripple of wheels along the track, and the shrill minor-keyed whistles," that he has his reader also hearing these sounds in the best of boogie-woogie and the wail of jazz trumpet. The rhythm of the gasoline engine is perhaps the most pervasive of all the rhythms of modern life, but its rhythms are monotonous, its motions secret. It lacks the dramatic clash and outside motion of the train.

This collection is one of the best of its kind. The Lomaxian habit of combining variants, rearranging stanzas, although painful to some folklorists, frequently gives the singer a more coherent story to sing than he could find in any one variant. The settings



"Frankie and Johnny," by Thomas Benton.

Personal History. In "*Apologia pro Vita Sua*," John Henry Cardinal Newman wrote not only one of the most beautiful pieces of prose in English, but a confession ranking with those of Rousseau and St. Augustine. Yet as is almost inevitable when a man writes about himself, in this and other autobiographical works he left much for others to explain. Eleanor Ruggles's "*Journey Into Faith*," reviewed here, fills the want for his early years. Robert Morss Lovett's "*All Our Years*" (see below) is the autobiography of another man of thought. Like John Erskine, whose "*My Life As a Teacher*" was reviewed last week, Lovett's career carried him into the world of affairs. Our other personal histories are engrossing autobiographies of men of action—Gerald Averill's "*Ridge Runner*" tells of a Maine woodsman, Alfred A. Weinstein's "*Barbed Wire Surgeon*" of an American in a Jap prison camp.

Cardinal Newman Before Conversion

JOURNEY INTO FAITH: *The Anglican Life of John Henry Newman.* By Eleanor Ruggles. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. 1948. 336 pp. \$4.

Reviewed by WILLARD L. SPERRY

WILFRED WARD'S "Life of John Henry Cardinal Newman"—the "definitive" biography—is a two-volume work of a full 1200 pages. Only some 120 pages are allotted to the first forty-five of Newman's ninety years, which cover his pre-Roman life in the Church of England. There has been, therefore, occasion for this present work.

The author states her thesis and concedes at the outset the difficulty, perhaps the impossibility, of her task. "How and why did Newman leave the Church of England for the Church of Rome? The 'how' can be traced, and yet the 'why' can never be wholly fathomed." Newman himself was once asked to state in a single paragraph why he went over. He replied that this would be utterly impossible; that he could hope to enable others to understand his step only at the cost of living over with him patiently and at long length his inner history over many years.

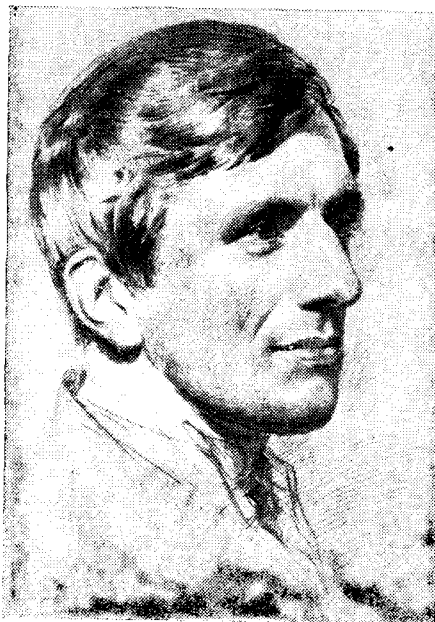
There is, at first, a leisurely account of the boyhood, presided over by a rather ineffectual father, and of the brothers and sisters, each with his own distinctive temperament. There was affection in the home, but little social solidarity. An evangelical parson inducted Newman as a lad of sixteen into the mysteries of the divine election and Newman without the slightest hesitation assumed that he was among the saved.

When the time came for him to go up to the university a chaise stood at the door and his father was unde-

cided up to the last moment whether his son was to go to Cambridge or Oxford. The chance word of a friend who was on hand turned father and son in the latter direction. One cannot help wondering what the difference might have been, in the course of the religious life of England, had they turned northward from London.

Newman's career as an undergraduate ended in bitter disappointment. He barely passed his classics and failed his mathematics. It says much for the perception of those concerned that he was subsequently offered a fellowship at Oriel, the one college in the Oxford of those days where the lethargy of the eighteenth century had been superseded by a fresh zest for the world of ideas.

The story of the Oxford years is



—From the book.

John Henry Newman: "God intends me to be lonely."

reasonably familiar. Newman owed more to Hurrell Froude—who died untimely—than to any other one of his companions, but his friendships with Keble and Pusey did much to further, if not to form, his own thinking. His thought, however, was fashioned mainly by his own study of the Fathers of the early Church, who were at the time relatively unknown and dismissed as "sad rubbish." He still clung to his evangelical conviction that the Christian tradition is what the Bible proves, but he came to the conclusion that the Bible is to be approached through the Church.

In so far as one can anticipate at this time the reasons for Newman's ultimate decision to enter the Church of Rome, they can be foreseen in his alarm at the spread of liberalism. The proposal for Catholic Emancipation and the Great Reform Bill were a threat to all that he valued. Newman was, as his present biographer says, a "fastidious" man, and he recoiled from the vulgarity as well as the secularity of the political liberalism of his day. The *Via Media* became a more and more impossible position to hold, and rather than be party to the excesses of the left, he turned to the right, where the ancient apostolic Church offered sanctuary.

On one of the first pages of the "*Apologia*" Newman says of himself that he tended to "rest in the thought of two and two only absolute and luminously self-evident beings, myself and my Creator." That note is sounded more than once in the pages at hand, in quotations from sermons and letters: "God intends me to be lonely. . . . The religious history of each individual is as solitary and complete as the history of the world. . . . I wish to go, to my Lord by myself, and in my own way." This may be one of the reasons why during all his earlier years as a "vert" he failed to find a place in the corporate mechanisms of Rome. By 1865 he was, to all intents and purposes, a forgotten man and only Charles Kingsley's stupid attack upon his honesty rescued him, through his "*Apologia pro Vita Sua*," from obscurity and laid the foundations for his final fame. Query: Why has Rome been so signally unsuccessful in capitalizing the skills and the devotion of so many of her converts from Protestantism?

One is glad to have as the frontispiece of this volume, and as the central item on the dust cover, the lovely drawing of Newman's face made by George Richmond, in 1844. That face recovered its serenity only as seen in the photographs and portraits of the 1880's. And one is grateful to the author of this book for her delicate analysis of her elusive subject.