

munism or Communism in the United States, but will denounce Russia at the same time.

Meanwhile, Russia, balked at strategic military points around the globe, will unleash all her fury at America. The President will be denounced as a vicious warmonger and the government will be charged with trying to foist its imperialism on peoples all over the world.

Once this happens, the war of nerves will be on in full force. America will probably make public all its information and charges about the German-Russian non-aggression pact. Russia will counter by laying bare all the secret data about Munich.

Then we come to the third stage—specific incidents leading to war. It could happen in Italy, in France, in Greece, in Turkey, in Palestine, in Czechoslovakia. As America tries to organize all Western Europe, and Russia tries to organize all Eastern Europe, at some point there may be resistance. If Czechoslovakia shows any real resistance, the Russians will move in. If Italy shows any real resistance, Americans will move in. And if anything happens on the border between Yugoslavia and Greece, both America and Russia will move in.

Palestine will find Britain with one foot in and the other going out, America with one foot out and the other going in—and Russia with both feet ready to jump in and out at the same time. Europe will have a stake in the outcome of the civil wars in China and India.

* * *

You must see these incidents against the background of the new weapons. At the end of the war, Germany as you know had in its preliminary stages the development of chemical, biological, climatological, and atomic weapons which, if we had only been able to develop them earlier in the war, would have assured victory for us in a matter of hours. We were developing V-2's which could carry explosives over oceans. We were developing submarines which would have blasted New York and Washington off the face of the earth if we had had only six more months. We were developing atomic weapons through heavy water which could have produced radioactive clouds of death covering thousands of miles. We had just perfected and were already manufacturing the greatest weapon of all time when Von Rundstedt opened the gates and allowed the enemy to pour through. This weapon, as you know, was Tabun, a chemical agent that is dispersed in the air in almost infinitesimal quantities and is impossible to detect, but which attacks the brain

(Continued on page 33)

Personal History. *At first glance there seems to be little in common between New York City's beloved mayor, Fiorello La Guardia, and James Madison, whose Federal years are covered in the second volume of Brant's continuing biography (reviewed this week). La Guardia, whose memoirs appear below, was a native New Yorker, son of an Army band master, proud of his immigrant parentage, vociferous, and a great showman. Madison was a Virginian of a settled family, a quiet, retiring, scholarly figure, much overshadowed by his versatile friend Jefferson. Yet both men possessed the highest qualities of statesmanship: fairness, integrity, persistence, and a wide-ranging imagination. These are qualities as much needed in American public life as they are rare. And these are qualities which belong, fortunately, to other American statesmen—like Stimson, whose memoirs have also recently been published.*

Story of a Great American

THE MAKING OF AN INSURGENT.
An Autobiography, 1882-1919. By Fiorello H. La Guardia. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co. 1948. 222 pp. \$3.50.

Reviewed by ROBERT S. ALLEN

ALL HIS life Fiorello La Guardia labored and fought valiantly and honorably. Throughout his long and memorable career, he never swerved from the hard path of impeccable personal and public integrity. Always, he hated and crusaded against greed, corruption, misrule, and reaction. As few leaders of his time, he never compromised on what was right, decent, and enlightened.

In "The Making of An Insurgent,"



La Guardia relates simply and quietly how he came to be that way. Without bombast and self-righteousness, and also, surprisingly, without the turbulence that sometimes characterized him, he unfolds in this posthumous autobiography the formative forces and experiences that fathered his indomitable liberalism. This book could well have been titled "The Making of a Great American." That would have been a perfect fit for the profoundly moving story it records and the truly great citizen who wrote it.

It is a sad story, although definitely not doleful reading. There is humor in it, and it is lively and well written. But the sadness arises from the practically unrelieved shabbiness and sordidness that La Guardia encountered throughout his public career, and the fact that his untimely death cut short the completion of his life story and cost the nation a towering liberal champion it could ill spare. It is a real tragedy that this man who was such a great American, and who performed such distinguished service for his country, did not live to serve it further, as only he could. Particularly in these anxious days, when we have been "captured by pygmies."

The book covers La Guardia's career up to his service as an Air Corps Major in World War I. Although he was still a young man, he had already had a widely varied and full life, ranging from the Federal Immigration Service both in the United States and abroad, the odorous garbage can of Manhattan politics, to the no less odorous pits of Capitol Hill in Washington. From the very start he encountered heart-sickening crassness and venality.

As a youth, working as an interpreter in the Immigration Service's Night Court, an older employee told him, "You can get experience in this

Publisher's Gallery



—Drawn from life by Norkin.

V: Charles Scribner

THERE never was any doubt what Charles Scribner, chief of Charles Scribner's Sons since 1932, was going to be when he grew up. He doesn't recall the subject being bandied in household discussions, but "the influences were all there." So, with an A.B. from Princeton (1913) in hand, he turned up matter-of-factly at the family firm (Grandfather Charles partnered its founding in 1846, Father Charles and Uncles John and Arthur renamed it in 1879) and went to work.

The present Charles Scribner regards the business "as a trusteeship" to be handed down with the hallmark intact: hewing to the belief "publishing is a profession, a career"—"my grandfather and father would whirl in their graves to hear books called merchandise"—, not making sheeps' eyes at rental libraries. Any aura of excessive traditionalism is dissipated by a warm voice, radiant good nature, self-deprecation—"they say it's a good thing to let brains lie fallow for a generation; my father was the family genius [star-spangling the trade list with Barrie, R.L.S., Henry James, Galsworthy, Santayana, Scott Fitzgerald, Hemingway, Thomas Wolfe] and my son [Charles, Jr., salutatorian Princeton '43], our advertising manager, is a Phi Bete."

Mr. Scribner has elephantiasis of the memory, says an ex-employee. He works in town two evenings a week—"no literary teas, no cocktail parties, no publishers' meetings; I figure other publishers are competitors, so I'm a lone wolf, but a friendly one"—, gladly leaves his native N. Y. for Far Hills, N. J., other nights. He is a Republican, but "not political," a tennis player, a rider to hounds (*Mrs. S.* is joint master of the Essex Fox Hounds), a raiser of Cairns. He hasn't time for reading—"except mss. of all my friends!" —E. P. H.

job, or you can make a lot of money. I don't think you're the kind who will go for the money. But remember this, the test is if you hesitate. Unless you say 'No' right off, the first time an offer comes your way, you're gone." All his life, La Guardia never hesitated. But before he reached Congress, he had an extraordinary education in the ways of men who didn't say "No."

There was the judge who congratulated him on the presentation of his case, but still decided against him. When La Guardia asked why, the judge replied that he'd give him "a break" some other time. "What a hell of a way to dispense justice," La Guardia comments. "This same judge is now on the bench of the New York Supreme Court." Then there was the judge who called over the lawyer for a trolley line and said, "Was it all right, Joe? Don't worry. If they bring in a verdict against you I'll set it aside."

After experiences of this sort, La Guardia studied the system by which judges were selected for nomination, and found that most of them were hand-picked by politicians. When he was mayor he tried to correct the situation, "but did not get much help from the Bar Association."

When he was deputy attorney general of New York, La Guardia brought a case against some large packing houses for violation of a new weights and measures law. When the case was called, State Senator James J. Walker, later Mayor of New York, appeared for the defense. Walker told the court he was author of the law, and knew it was not intended to apply in such cases. Afterwards, when the case had been dismissed and Jimmy and the judge had genially invited him to have a drink, La Guardia asked Walker how he could come into court to defeat his own law. Jimmy replied:

Fiorello, when are you going to get wise? Why do you suppose we introduce bills? We introduce them sometimes just to kill them. Other times we have to pass a bill. Why are you in the Attorney General's office? You're not going to stay there all your life. You make your connections now, and later you can pick up a lot of dough defending cases you are now prosecuting. The Judge, La Guardia adds, "acquiesced in all that."

La Guardia first got on the Republican ticket for Congress because the leaders in his district had no one else they cared to run. He almost got elected, without their help. But although he deserved the nomination again two years later, he found that a young outsider was slated by the leaders to get it. The fortunate young man's friends had promised a substantial contribution to the party if he was nominated. The young man

was Hamilton Fish, but La Guardia was adamant and insisted on making the race anyway. He organized his own campaign and his own watchers, and he won. He got in by 357 votes, and his final disillusionment came when he got back to Republican headquarters and overheard an official there apologizing to the Democratic precinct leader and assuring him they had done nothing to help La Guardia. "An apology for my victory instead of congratulations! Those are just some of the little things that have made me an incurable insurgent," relates La Guardia.

And he found no improvement, as he went higher up the ladder.

[In Congress] "I saw how easy it was to exploit public office to get law business. . . . Even lawyers tried to retain me to appear in Government cases or before Government departments. Members of Congress, of course, are forbidden by law to engage in such practice. However, strangely enough, a great deal of it was going on during the seven terms I served in the House of Representatives."

La Guardia arrived in Washington in time to hear Woodrow Wilson deliver his war message, and his story of it is a vivid one. In uniform himself, before his first term was over, the new Congressman obviously enjoyed cutting Army red tape right and left and promising to pass a law if anyone made trouble about it. He has scathing words for the Liberty Motor scandal and equally scathing jibes at the Army medical service.

La Guardia's book should be required reading in every political science course, and in every law course. It is disillusioning, but it demonstrates what one determined individual can do against the system, both by way of personal advancement and in cleaning things up.

Originally scheduled for publication on May 12, "The Making of an Insurgent" is to be published on May 19.

If to the Aconites

By Christine Turner Curtis

AND IF to the aconites, other noons
Bring other lovers, leaning in awe
above those cylices of gold,
ribbed with faint viridian veins;
and other voices, two by two,
marvel at that burning ore
minted from mounds of snow . . .

well, it is obvious, is it not
that clockwise the sure seasons move;
the hours from ice to aconite
only the shadows can compute;
petals catch fire, and petals drop;
and bitter or sweet, the cup of love
is rudely dashed from the lip.

The Saturday Review