

us to state that the American soldier is a coward, a knave, and a beast. It becomes folly, and we can certainly question the good intentions of anyone who asserts that charge on the morning that our armies land on Anzio or Iwo Jima. Somewhere undoubtedly there was an American soldier who was a coward, a knave, and a beast, but a portrait of such a soldier at a time of war is a disservice, and moreover, probably could be construed to be inflammatory, if not treasonable.

We are still in a war—a war against prejudice and venal intolerance. During such a state of intellectual siege we owe some obligations to minority groups so that the opposing forces are not comforted. If we were living in a world in which all children and people were being carefully insulated from hate and prejudice, there would be no inherent danger in portraying a bad Jew or a villainous Negro or an evil Catholic.

Perhaps Mr. Holmes and Mr. Brown can protect their families from the imposition of prejudice that Fagin might bring. I feel almost certain that I can protect my three children. But, if there are others—such as the family nearby that slammed a door because they discovered we were Jews; or the people around the corner who protested that there were too many “niggers” working too close to them; or the people across the street who said they were in trouble because “the lousy Catholics” had taken over the country—then, certainly, we must weigh carefully the damage that can be done by “art” that unwittingly becomes propaganda for the bigot.

Certainly the Jew or the Negro or the Catholic must not be spared acknowledging his share of sin and error. But the Jew has been the main target of hate. Anti-Semitism in all its virulent aspects, economic, political, social, and religious, is not a sometime thing. It is a calculated program that continues under various auspices. It must be destroyed and forgotten as must all anti-minority hatreds. Part of that good fight includes the business of not aiding or comforting the enemy. The bigots can be comforted by “*Oliver Twist*” and its Fagin, because of the tremendous wallop of the image.

A successful motion picture is seen by perhaps thirty to forty million people all over the world within a period of some twelve to fifteen months. Any image that reaches that many people in so short a time can do harm or can do good, and do it fast and perhaps permanently. The risk of Fagin doing harm is a great risk. This is not a casual harm it can do, but a

real active harm in flaming up the fire that is being fought by every decent agency of information and communication in America.

The American prototype is that of a tall, thin, lithe-muscled man who can shoot straight, hit hard, is self-reliant and knows how to handle himself in any tough circumstances. Because of this flattering identification, we can well afford the criticism and occasional evil portrait of the American personality. If once the Negro stereotype becomes that best represented in the personality of Dr. Bunche, the Negro will be able to afford the luxury of less complimentary portraits. Once the Jewish stereotype becomes perhaps that of a Baruch, we, too, easily will be able to accommodate the representation of a Fagin.

“*The Birth of a Nation*,” mentioned by Mr. Holmes, was a great film. However, in view of the renewed activities of the Ku Klux Klan, a remake of this film could bring legitimate cause for alarm to the Negro minority.

When a war is over we forgive our conscientious objectors who are denied freedom of action and freedom of speech during the days of danger to the republic. When the war against bigotry is concluded, we can condone carelessness and lack of judgment; but, until that time, we have the right to defend ourselves against anything that might help lose that war.

*Dore Schary is Vice-President in charge of production at the studios of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. He was formerly a writer, director and producer.*

## On Dedications

*(This is written to whom it may not concern)*

A GOOD many years ago, when I was young and charming (Cf “H. M. S. Pinafore”) I read all dedications, long introductions, and prefaces to second editions. They seemed to me interminable. Usually they were dedicated to a patron, frequently some lord or other, who had given the author a few pounds.

So I dedicated books, too. To friends—Edna Ferber, Ring Lardner, and Montague Glass. What books? Out of print.

And, for no reason that I know, or ever knew, John O’Hara dedicated a book to me, and so did Dorothy Parker. What books? “*Appointment in Samarra*” and “*Not So Deep as a Well*.”

And this leads me to some books that I dedicated: One called “*Over-set*,” “*To Herbert Bayard Swope, Without Whose Friendly Aid Every Line in this Book Was Written*.” Mr. Swope at that happy time was my boss on *The World*, which newspaper died February 28, 1931.

About that time Mr. Francis Hackett wrote “*The Invisible Censor*.” It was written “*To My Wife, Signe Toksvig, Whose Lack of Interest in this Book Has Been My Constant Desperation*.” Onspired by this candor, I did a few mythical offerings, such as “*To My Daughters, Spenda and Blowa, But for Whose Extravagant Idleness I Should Not Have Had to Write this Unworthy Novel*.”

Of course, my four children hadn’t been born when I wrote those fictitious dedications. I am now not particularly hard at work on another book, which I may dedicate “*To Cer-*

tain Schools and Colleges, in the Hope that the Royalties on this Book Will Be Enough to Defray What I Still Owe these Four Institutions.”

I actually did dedicate a book to my wife. It was “*Half a Loaf*,” (Doubleday, Page & Co., 1927), and it was consecrated “*To Esther, Who Continually Urges Me to Write More—and More*.” And in 1932, I dedicated “*Christopher Columbus*” (Viking, 1932) to

To Anthony and Timothy, my beautiful boys;  
To all my readers, Yids and Goys;  
To every critic, saint or crook;  
To anybody who buys this book;  
To everybody who wishes it success;  
Meaning me and The Viking Press.

I have some in reserve. Such as:

I hurl at you this lovely book;  
At your unbrainful head I shy it.  
For, oh you parsimonious crook,  
You’d never buy it.

And I wrote this, if I write another book, and if I feel as I do this spring afternoon:

Not any line, my love, nor letter  
Within this book but might be better.  
Yet were mine every written line  
Than man hath ever done more fine,  
Richer than man will ever do,  
Still would be too poor for You.

Some of these dedications might be litigious. But seriously, as the orator said who hadn’t made any change at all, I’d better dedicate my forthcoming book “*To William Shakespeare, from whose Attorneys I Am Unlikely to Hear in the Morning*.”

—FRANKLIN P. ADAMS.

**Belles-Lettres.** Just as each generation of publicists and historians reinterprets the past in the light of the realities and illusions of its own moment, each generation of critics reevaluates literature according to its own standards. A recently published volume, "Theory of Literature," by René Wellek and Austin Warren, which Professor Jones reviews below, is an invaluable compendium of the yardsticks critics and historians are currently applying. Another volume of this type is the Johns Hopkins symposium, "Lectures in Criticism." This week's books include also several examples of contemporary criticism at work on individual writers. Mark Van Doren's judicious and beautifully written "Nathaniel Hawthorne" is a worthy addition to the important new American Men of Letters Series. Also notable are a symposium on Gerard Manley Hopkins and Richard D. Altick's life of the Cowden Clarkes.

## The Manse and the Wayside

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE. By Mark Van Doren. New York: William Sloane Assoc. 1949. 285 pp. \$3.50.

Reviewed by NEWTON ARVIN

HERE at last, with this third volume in the American Men of Letters Series, is a Hawthorne in whom one can believe; here, indeed, is a Hawthorne who is not only credible but whom one understands appreciably better than one did before Mr. Van Doren wrote his book. Hawthorne has been presented to us, in recent years, in various incredible guises; he has been presented as an average, colorless citizen of New England who held two or three minor offices under Democratic Administrations, but who cannot be imagined as having written a tale, let alone a novel; he has been presented as the animating center of a network of intrigue and conspiracy that suggests, not the Manse or the Wayside, but some Parisian or Muscovite spirit-vault crowded with anarchists.

Mr. Van Doren, writing sensitively and subtly in the key of the subject itself, is guilty of neither of these arrant misreadings: he knows, though it is by no means the heart of his knowledge, that Hawthorne was not a "normal" pillar of society, but a very specially gifted man of imagination, and that in natural consequence his real life was a strange, irregular, and troubled one; but he knows, too, that the strangeness and the trouble were largely inward, and that outwardly Hawthorne's life was singularly free from sensational or even very picturesque events.

It had, nevertheless, the most marked and personal character of its own: a character that suggests that of no other American writer and in

fact no other American person, except of course in certain large and representative traits; and no one has ever evoked that character, as by painting a portrait, more delicately or more truthfully than Mr. Van Doren has done. It is not that he has any "theory" about Hawthorne: strictly speaking, I should say he has none at all. He has only a very strong and luminous sense of the kind of man Hawthorne was—a curious mixture of tenderness and coldness, of intensity and indolence, of personal withdraw-

ness and shrewd practicality, of diffidence and a rocklike immovableness—and he succeeds to admiration in conveying this sense to us without ever insisting on or italicizing it. There is no parade of ostentatious "research" or obtrusive erudition; yet in fact all the most recent knowledge about Hawthorne has been incorporated, inconspicuously and as if effortlessly, into the fabric of Mr. Van Doren's narrative, and the result is a book that has its own quality—and a genuinely Hawthornesque quality—as a composition.

It is quite as largely critical as it is narrative; indeed, in the end, it is essentially a criticism of Hawthorne's work to which a good deal of biography has been made to contribute. Criticism of the sort it is could hardly be less perfunctory, more alert, awake, and attentive than Mr. Van Doren's: nothing is taken for granted, and no piece of Hawthorne's work, not even the slightest sketch, slips past Mr. Van Doren's eye in careless companionship with some other piece to which it may bear an apparent resemblance but which in fact is of a quite unequal quality. "Young Goodman Brown" seems to him one of the things that Hawthorne never, in kind, exceeded; "The Great Stone Face" on the other hand he quite properly describes as "very worthy, very noble" but "embarrassingly unreal." The conventional



**THE AUTHOR:** Mark Van Doren was recently startled to find himself hung in *Life's* gallery of distinguished "dupes and fellow-travelers." The feature implied, at least by editorial juxtaposition, group support of the Waldorf "peace conference"—a conclave which he had refused to sponsor or attend because "to me it was a meaningless sort of protest and special pleading. . . . My interest is in world government. Communism bores me, but I don't happen to be afraid of agreeing with it about something. I don't think liberal people can afford to be scared back into the bushes—forced to worry about what they are going to say. I think that this is what they were really trying to do. I am free to admit that I am a rather radical person, but why isn't everyone? I was for Wallace. I have signed anti-Franco stuff and so on, and I'll continue to." Otherwise the papers he's signed are not regarded as especially inflammatory: nine volumes of poetry, of which "Collected Poems" won the 1940 Pulitzer Prize; compendiums of American and British literature; critical studies of Thoreau, Dryden, and Shakespeare; three novels, and a few juveniles. He lives in Greenwich Village, does his research winters while teaching English at Columbia, and writes summers at a Cornwall, Connecticut, farm which keeps him from nostalgia for his native Illinois soil. There he also accumulates enough exercise to stay lean the rest of the year, and still boyish-looking despite the scrim of fifty-five years. His next book will probably be a compilation of short stories, some of which are based on single-sentence ideas in Hawthorne's notebooks. Years ago his mother gave him a set of Hawthorne, and "it's been in my gizzard ever since. . . . When Sloane's American Men of Letters Series was begun—I'm on the editorial board—I picked him without question. I feel quite identified with him."—R. G.

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