

feated candidate for the Presidency. Moley regards Roosevelt as the complete master of politics.

He was unusually attractive in physique and manner [writes Moley]. He liked people and most people liked him. His mind tended to discursiveness, except when politics was concerned. He was what high-browism lists as an activist. He did not quarrel with life as he found it... His mentality was perfectly suited to the life he was to lead... His academic record at Harvard and Columbia Law School was mediocre... Roosevelt simply was not reflective or philosophical. One can hardly recommend this sort of preparation for statesmanship, but it had immense reward for Roosevelt. It freed his mind for intense, almost passionate concern with matters which most serious people regard as the escapist pastime of idle hours. And these, when pursued with intense concentration, are invaluable in politics.

Willkie is rated as the "immortal amateur." Says Moley,

Willkie died the amateur in politics, rejected by the party that had married him in a midsummer night's burst of emotion and adventure. But he died also in the cherished memory of a group that will always defy assimilation and that will never achieve political maturity.

Moley sums up another major Roosevelt opponent in these words:

The significance of Thomas Dewey must be in the amazing fact that he went so far with so little natural political endowment. If ever a man circumvented the designs of Providence, it is Dewey. The quality and bent of mind, temperament, the demeanor and off-hour diversions of Dewey, carefully analyzed, would suggest great success in law, medicine, business, or in the Episcopal clergy. For politics, they simply do not apply.

One of the most interesting studies in the book is that of Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter. Moley holds that

...a close examination of Frankfurter's views on public questions reveals a rather narrow range of constructive ideas. In fact, they show little or no originality or deep comprehension of economic or social movements... Frankfurter has always been a conservative and one of his most effective political possessions was having the reputation among radicals as a sympathizer, while he could in truth align himself with conservatives.

Moley quotes Roosevelt as saying, during the holding-company fight in 1935, "Felix sounds just like John W. Davis."

World's Largest Trade Union

THE U. A. W. AND WALTER REUTHER. By Irving Howe and B. J. Widick. New York: Random House. 309 pp. \$3.

By WELLINGTON ROE

THIS is a book written on two levels. First, it is the story of the formation, rise, external policies, and internal politics of the world's largest trade union, the United Automobile, Aircraft and Agricultural Implement Workers of America, CIO. Secondly, it is an attempt to relate the union's development to the social and economic aspects of American life. Its authors are a free-lance labor journalist and a chief shop steward of the UAW in the Chrysler plant in Detroit.

On the first level the work is excellent. Here is a vivid picture of the unwholesome social atmosphere in which the American automobile industry grew—the high-rent slum habitations of workers, the economic pressure of never enough money and no job security superimposed upon working conditions in which labor spies, brutal company police, and intimidation were the auto barons' favorite methods to keep their employees docile.

Henry Ford used his famous \$5-per-day wage in 1914 actually to cut labor costs. This was done by discharging skilled craftsmen who earned a higher rate of pay, then rehiring them at the \$5 rate as semi-skilled workers although their duties upon re-employment were identical with those they had previously performed. Under this system it was common for Ford to discharge as many as 500 employees a day while hiring 500 to replace those dismissed.

Nor were the personnel operations of General Motors, Chrysler, and Hudson, as examples, much different. Racial differences have been ruthlessly exploited by the automobile manufacturers as a way to keep their workers separated and suspicious of one another.

Against such a background the UAW was formed. Despite brutal repression of unionized workers by their employers, it grew powerful. Reading these portions of the book one soon understands that the UAW or some similar union was inevitable in the automobile workers' battle against the dehumanizing process which the plant managements had contrived. This story is "must" reading for anyone who hopes to understand the meaning of the UAW.

In their attempt to relate the organization to the larger aspects of Ameri-

can life, however, many of the authors' conclusions seem to emanate from concepts of the union which cannot be sustained by the internal evidence even of their own work.

While they do not use the term, the authors contend in effect that a Third Force in America will arise through the growth of industrial unionism.

One may dissent from this opinion regarding the role of vertical unions in national affairs without rejecting evidence that the rise of industrial unionism through the CIO has been a major event in recent social history and that it is a "significant social force affecting the lives of millions of American workers." But when this has been acknowledged there still remains the need for examination of the social logic of this new force. Is its direction toward a desirable equalization of the pressures caused by the modern industrial system or will it become merely another movement devoted to the advancement of special group interests through political action?

As the UAW is easily the most important body among the industrial unions and has been for years the bellwether of social action in the CIO, its trend on matters of social import is a vital indication of the direction

Out of Print

By Sjanna Solum

LITERATURE of leaves is on the wind
That blows the story of summer
from the world
In crisp, flamboyant phrases which
are whirled
To doom beneath these woods so
quickly thinned.
Those who go walking ankle-deep in
leaves
Fallen and faded, drying into dust,
Need hearts well-fortified, because
they must
Ignore the creaking of the bough that
grieves.
Summer has withered to a tale
well told,
Dear to the memory, but growing dim
To ease the taut remembrance now of
him
Who holds its fabulous charm against
the cold.
Through dessicated glory the
late-comer
Will search these dusty files in vain
for summer...

of the entire industrial union apparatus.

The UAW has undeniably brought some sanity to the automobile industry, where human qualities have been consistently ignored by employers. It has given auto workers a sense of dignity which the assembly-line process tends endlessly to destroy. It has made employees of the automobile corporations among the higher paid laborers in the country. On cultural levels, however, it has barely scratched the surface. Among UAW members, the authors acknowledge, "—and for that matter among its leaders—there is hardly a seed of cultural curiosity." For a single example, jim crow, which is rampant in the auto plants, is frequently abetted and occasionally practised by officers of the union.

Admittedly, the UAW's top leadership has struck some heavy verbal blows against anti-Negro activities; nevertheless it has neglected to implement anti-discrimination talk with disciplinary action against union officers who foment race antagonism. To the answer that to do so would disrupt the peace of the organization one can reply that there was no hesitancy about destroying peacefulness in the union by the now dominant Reuther faction when they were fighting to take control of the body from the left-wing leadership.

It is this split personality of the UAW which causes many observers of organized labor to doubt that the claims of superior social consciousness made for its leaders will stand the weather.

Even the authors of this book, who profess admiration for Walter Reuther, are constrained to remark in a late chapter that his present tendency in thought and action is away from the robust democracy which made the early UAW an amazing and inspiring organization. "Is there not," they inquire, "something undeveloped and contrived in Reuther's personality?"

But regardless of the thin spots in the UAW fabric there is validity in the book's statement that "no other union has helped so many Americans to improve and elevate the quality of their lives." The UAW is a great union with immense potentiality for good in the nation. But, wonder the authors, "Will the UAW settle into the usual union rut and become just 'another union' or will it use its vast resource of energy and power to become a new social force in American life?"

That question is of the sixty-four-dollar variety not only in reference to the UAW, but regarding the entire American trade-union structure. Nowhere in their book do the authors attempt to answer the query.

Poetry. The poetry of today can by no means divorce itself from the state of the world, and the principal books reviewed below reflect this condition. However, in the case of Harry Brown our reviewer finds his statements not sufficiently definitive. The recent controversy concerning the Bollingen Award has made the publication of "Selected Poems" by Ezra Pound of especial interest. The writing of Florence Converse has long been dedicated to the cause of international peace. Again we have in the work of Louis Simpson evidence of the continuing influence of Parisian culture among contemporary American poets. The reviewers of these books approach the poetry through its relationship to the issues today. Also assessed is new poetry by Alma Ellis Hoernecke, Francis Maguire, and Florence Burrill Jacobs.

History, Tragedy, and Sentimentality

THE BEAST IN HIS HUNGER. By Harry Brown. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 84 pp. \$2.50.

By ROBERT GORHAM DAVIS

HARRY BROWN'S poetry is rich in sensibility and variety of poetic phrase, but it is undetermined in style and idea. The four elegies, the eclogue, and the ode which compose the first section of "The Beast in His Hunger" are elevated in tone and have a certain consistency of theme, but there is nothing to require one image rather than another, one phrase rather than another, and so, inevitably, the ghosts of more positive poets assert themselves in the stream of association. Brown sounds like Hopkins when he is addressing a bird, like Hart Crane when he is addressing the sea, and like Rossetti when he is addressing fair ladies. He summons up dead heroes and voyagers some-

times in the idiom of Yeats, sometimes of St. John Perse, and sometimes of Sacheverell Sitwell. Yet his associations are not genuinely free in the surrealist mode so that unexpected conjunctions occur to stir the imagination. The author of "A Walk in the Sun" and "Artie Greengroin" remains within a kind of *lingua franca* of poetry that is Shakespearean at its best; he makes almost no use of vernacular and of the imagery of contemporary life.

In Brown's long war poem, "The Conquerors," his four soldiers all speak in the same grave and level voice. The first soldier says, "Let me have about me men that are gross." The second says, "We believe in signs./We have faith in the flight of birds, in necromancers,/In potions brewed by old women, in certain herbs,/In the phases of the moon and the entrails of oxen." The third refers to "this anabasis" and "this most puissant charge." Only the sergeant snaps us out of it. There are many swans in the war poems and the head of Apollo, and elsewhere many castles and willows, "curving lovesick to the pale bank." Some of the poems of the middle section, like "Nietzsche in Hell," "The Disembarkation of the Hero," and "Murderer, Murdereer," are stronger in character and more composed. But even here one feels that the hero is any hero, the murderer any murderer, and not in the sense of Aristotle's "Poetics," which makes poetic generality superior to the concreteness of historic fact. Brown's genuine feeling for history and tragedy is made sentimental by its diffusion in plurality and generality, by its failure to comprehend poetically and dramatically particular men, particular deeds, particular truths.



Harry Brown—"like Rossetti when he is addressing fair ladies."