

to jot down very much about them, but those who might serve as characters for novels. In 1917 the novelist was sent to Russia on a secret mission, and the pages that treat of that country and its literature are especially interesting today. Page 111 contains the three notes upon which, he says, "I constructed a story called 'Rain'." Today "shilling shockers" in their American equivalent solace him, and he has a good word to say for them. A perfect jotting of "situation" concerns, on page 263, a woman reading her lover's letter at a house-party. A strikingly told account of a struggle with the tidal flood known as a "bore" reminds one of his story in which this watery phenomenon is a prime factor. Anecdotes of Mrs. Langtry, and of the woman in Texas who wanted Major Tompkins, are in their different ways memorable, as is the account of his discovery of certain Gauguin paintings near Papeete. There are unforgettable notes concerning Maugham's medical service in the First World War. There are brief descriptions of great beauty, and shrewd sketches for possible stories, one of the best being about the lonely young man on a tea-plantation who buys a letter from his friend.

But this book is a rich fruit-cake of good reading, tart and mellow, not to be assessed from a bit nibbled here or there!

Object and Image

By Evelyn Ames

LIKE an oriole among spring branches
It appeared. Where, a moment before
Nothing between you, look or word
Revealed it, there was now this song.
This blazing bird.

Though you both saw that visitation,
You acted as if it were not there
But in the presence of its flame,
She who remained beside you, was
No longer the same:

Was not herself, nor the reflection
She had met daily behind glass,
But one more beautiful and wise,—
More nearly like the fabulous creature
She found in your eyes.

And you who held up to her gaze
This likeness of what she could
become,
Received in trust the gift of power
Which will decide if she shall be
Herself in flower.



"He wrote a sensational novel, but, unfortunately, his characters were not coincidental."

Clemens and His "Other Mother"

MARK TWAIN TO MRS. FAIRBANKS. Edited by Dixon Wecter. San Marino, Calif.: Huntington Library. 286 pp. \$5.

By ROBERT HALSBAND

IN 1867 Mark Twain embarked on the steamship *Quaker City* for a tour of the Mediterranean and the Holy Land. On that voyage he wrote the newspaper dispatches which he gathered to make his "Innocents Abroad," published two years later. He also met Mrs. Mary Mason Fairbanks, a Cleveland newspaper owner's wife and a cultivated amateur penwoman. During their friendship, which continued until her death in 1898, he sent her a series of letters now printed and edited for the first time. They fall into three groups: those relating to his courtship of Livy, to his new household, and to the busy, troubled years of his mature career.

They are not at all self-conscious "literary" letters. In them he bounces and struts, healthily displaying all the exuberance and resiliency of his personality. He played a role with Mrs. Fairbanks, just as every letter writer does with his correspondent. With her he is the rough boy out of the West (a Lochinvar invading Elmira, New York), filially devoted to his "other Mother," as he called her, and eager to confide, to learn, and to please. "Don't be afraid to write sermons," he begs her, "I am perfectly willing not only to receive them but to try to profit by them." He related to her his aspirations, marital as well as literary; and the concern for his writing which he shows in these let-

ters proves how seriously he took the problems of his craft.

His submission, in literary matters, to Mrs. Fairbanks's tact and taste is one of the most illuminating aspects of his correspondence with her, for it relates to one of the controversial questions of his career. Van Wyck Brooks has set forth the contention—later refuted by De Voto—that Livy exerted her gentility on Twain's flowering genius and suppressed him from becoming the American Rabelais. Yet here, two years before he married Livy, he writes to Mrs. Fairbanks about a lecture he was to give: "I'll expunge every word you want scratched out, cheerfully." And four years after he married, with Livy joining him in his attachment to Mrs. Fairbanks, he writes to the latter: "... you & she are my severest critics." The truth seems to be, and it is borne out by his literary submission to William Dean Howells, that Twain was so eager to improve his writing that he invited, and usually accepted, the advice of those whose education and refinement he respected.

Mr. Wecter's editing is in all ways a superb job. He knits the letters together with a narrative which is unobtrusive yet which keeps the letters from seeming to be, as indeed they are, fragments scattered over a long range of time and topic. He provides supporting documentation from published and unpublished Twainiana; and in judging any controversial issues, he looks with the judicious and accurate eye of a perfect umpire. Such editing, along with such excellent printing, is a happy circumstance for Twain's correspondence.

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The Philosopher As a Man of Action

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following guest editorial is by Mark Starr, who, in his work as educational director of the International Ladies' Garment Worker's Union and in adult education generally, has for many years been applying the teachings of John Dewey, a long-time associate. Mr. Starr has broadcast and lectured about Dr. Dewey's principles, and in 1946 he was Inglis Lecturer at Harvard on "Labor Looks at Education." He is also author of "Lies and Hate in Education."

DEWHEY rejected education as mere explanation and underpinning for the status quo. To him education is the agency for change, the instrument of instruments to help not only the pupil unfold his capacities but also for that pupil to help his social group unfold, and thus be an agent in never-ending beneficial social change.

Not in any ivory tower above the battle but in the free fight of competitive ideas would truth emerge. Teachers should be free to examine challenging and critical ideas and study economic and social questions. Learning by rote of accepted dogmas must be replaced by the unending quest for knowledge. Ideals of individual and material success in cut-throat competitive individualism would be changed to community well-being secured by cooperation between well-informed citizens. Participating students, accustomed to group activity

and planning, would become participating citizens to create community welfare, with no danger of becoming leaners on the government.

The teacher would not climb on the pedestal of professional pride, but would recognize himself as a worker and insist on the right to organize. Education dare not end with the formalities of graduation but be a continuous process through appropriate public facilities for adult education. The essence of democracy consists of self-discipline and self-criticism.

Dewey might be regarded as an intellectual commando infiltrating into the regimentalists, defending the old battle positions, and blasting away their corroding self-satisfaction. He was never content to be the cloistered pedant. Dewey, the reformer, following his own theory of uniting ideas and action, is a story by itself. He has always belonged to the American Federation of Teachers despite his cooperation with the National Education Association even before it had changed its attitude on salaries and conditions. He has always been proud to link himself with the trade unions of the American Federation of Labor through his AFT connection.

He took sides on hot questions. Neither the Clericals, the Communists, the NAM, nor the varied sorts of dictators support Dewey's insistence upon the use of free discussion to end in fearless action. Dewey was active in the Seabury investigation to expose Tammany Hall corruption in New York civic life. When New York teachers were accused of subversive activity after World War I, Dewey was active in their defense. While currently recognizing the unfitness of Communist Party members to teach, he also warns against hysterical action "bound to have indirect consequences—more harmful in the end than the evils guarded against."

When Brookwood Labor College in 1928 was under fire by the American Federation of Labor for alleged radical teaching, Dewey spoke publicly, protesting against the attempt to throttle free inquiry and criticism of labor's sacred cows. When the intellectual underworld of New York City was able, by pressure upon La Guardia, to prevent Bertrand Russell from taking up the post to which he had been appointed at CCNY, Dewey joined the protest. Some forty-one years ago Dewey stated forcefully the dangers of released time for religious study and of state support for sectarian schools.

In international affairs he has also taken a fearless stand against the red and black totalitarians. When others found excuses he protested the purges

which followed the Moscow trials of 1938. Dewey defended the Trotskyites in Minneapolis when the Communists applauded the application of the Smith Act now being used against twelve of their leaders in Judge Medina's court. He joined the committee which investigated Trotsky's assassination in Mexico. He knows too much to be used as an "innocent" for dubious causes and conferences. He protested when the Czechs drove out the Sudeten Germans after World War II.

He wrote and spoke for the League for Industrial Democracy, of which he still remains the president emeritus, advocating education for a new social order. Most recently, he joined a committee investigating and educating for the possibilities of a new political alignment in the United States and made effective, searching criticism of the Wallace Third Party movement. By his contributions to *The Liberal*, he regards the Liberal Party in New York State as part of the vital center for progressives.

DEWHEY'S record of activity should stimulate efforts to tackle two basic challenges of our times: the problem of a better understanding in industrial relations between management and labor and the problem of understanding between the nations and the creating of an effective United Nations. If education, as in the Marxian view, merely reflects economic interests, it becomes an agency in the struggle between capital and labor. If, as Dewey suggests, education is the process of problem-solving, education should examine the blocks in communication between apparently antagonistic groups and endeavor to find out what they have in common.

In the second instance there should be a frank examination of national sovereignty and of Communist and Fascist ideologies relative to democratic ideals. And in the same healthy pattern cooperative action would result from cooperative thought.

—MARK STARR.

