

# Nam, Minh, and U. S.

**"Report on Indo-China," by Bernard Newman** (Frederick A. Praeger. 245 pp. \$4), is an English journalist's account of conditions in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia before the recent French withdrawal. Michael James, who reviews it below, covered the Indo-Chinese war for The New York Times.

By Michael James

UNTIL he left Indo-China late in 1951 to go home to France and die of cancer Marshal Jean de Lattre de Tassigny often expressed some strong opinions on the war he was running there, and the natives he was trying hard to guide along a safe course. If Indo-China fell to the Communists, De Lattre would insist, then Siam, Burma, and Malaya would be doomed. This would cut the free world in half and leave it doomed to eventual Communist conquest.

The way to stop this, De Lattre would add, was to keep the Viet-Minh at bay while a strong Vietnamese army was built up. The enemy would have to be held off by the French with heavy matériel and economic contributions—frankly from the United States. Public Vietnamese confidence would grow—they would gladly come to fight the Reds—and *voilà*, that was the solution.

There was never much doubt in the minds of Westerners in Indo-China at the time that De Lattre was completely sincere. There was also no doubt that the tough old soldier—who wore the cloak of military commander as well as that of political High Commissioner—was getting somewhere with his program.

The formula was also neat and logical—a far different thing from the chaotic Paris line on Indo-China before De Lattre took the command and after he died. Public information officers among both the French and the Vietnamese happily adopted De Lattre's plan, and continued to repeat it by rote to anyone who would listen, long after it had become simply something out of a more rosy past.

"Report on Indo-China," by Bernard Newman, an Englishman who has produced a vast number of books on subjects ranging from adventurous spy novels through Middle-European politics to tales for kiddies,

is a fine review of what might have happened but did not in Indo-China.

The book, which was previously published in England, and presumably before the conclusion of the Geneva conference, is tragically dated.

Much of the volume is a sort of guidebook to Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. Mr. Newman went out to look and listen, and has put together some interesting, though not overly-scholarly observations on his travels.

The meat of the volume, however, deals with the efforts and hopes of the French and non-Communist natives. Like many others who have been in Indo-China, Mr. Newman has praise for what the French have been able to do for the natives. From there he goes on to the old De Lattre plan. He is confident that the war against Ho Chi Minh and his Chinese Communist assistants will be fought to a successful end—for if they should win Asia and probably the world would be lost to the Communists.

Which makes sad reading indeed today.

## Notes

**WHY SHANGHAI IS GREAT:** Although Rhoads Murphey, a geographer who can and does use Chinese scholarship effectively, deals with the setting of Shanghai and with its history in *"Shanghai: Key to Modern China"* (Harvard University Press, \$4.50), he is most interesting in his account of the city's position as the leading commercial and manufacturing center of China.

After firmly establishing the importance of water transport in the economy of China both in the traditional period and in the present era of greater change, he shows how Shanghai's preeminence rests upon its nodal location between the inland waters and the sea: its location at the coastal debouchement of the largest internal system of waterways gave the city an importance quite aside from its being a center of foreign-managed trade. This close connection between Shanghai's position in commerce and China's water transport is pointed up in several ways, notably in regard to the silk, tea, and egg trade. Mr. Murphey's study of Shanghai's rice supply leads him to the important conclusion that China is, so far as production methods go,

self-sufficient in food. China's drawing upon overseas sources of rice is a matter of comparative costs of transportation. In manufacturing, Shanghai's dominance rested, again, upon its advantages in transportation for marketing and, also, upon very cheap electric power. As to the future, Mr. Murphey sees the possibility of other centers rising to challenge Shanghai, especially in manufacturing. But as long as China's remarkable system of waterways remains important in spite of increases in land transport, Shanghai will have a significant role in China's trade, and, yes, industry.

Mr. Murphey's book is another measure of America's coming of age in Chinese studies and an important contribution to our knowledge of that country's economy.

—JOHN MUSGRAVE.

**JOURNALIST IN INDIA:** Roland E. Wolseley, who is described in his little book, *"Face to Face with India"* (Friendship Press, \$2.50), as chairman of the magazine department in the School of Journalism, Syracuse University, went to the central Indian city of Nagpur in 1952 to help establish a department of journalism in a Christian college. While there he kept his notebook open and his interviewing pencil busy. This book, which attempts to illustrate India's social problems in terms of typical Indian people, is the result.

It is difficult to say for whom this work was written or what purpose it may serve. Nearly every chapter is burdened with the historically absurd inference that only Christians are good and/or conversion to Christianity is India's best hope. Perhaps young missionaries will read it, but they would be well advised to seek wider horizons and broader minds. In a year that has seen such excellent and diversified books on India as Bowles's *"Ambassador's Report,"* Morgan's *"The Religion of the Hindus,"* and Bowers's *"The Dance in India"* this effort might better have been left unpublished.

The book is nicely designed and illustrated with simple drawings by Kurt Wiese.—WILLIAM C. CLIFFORD.



—By Kurt Wiese, for *"Face to Face with India"*

## The Classes in School

**"The Old School Tie," by Arthur Tuckerman** (Macmillan. 240 pp. \$3.50), nostalgically recaptures the boyhood years its American-born author spent, before World War I, in England and on the Continent. Here it is reviewed by Bergen Evans, professor of English at Northwestern University and moderator of the popular television program "Down You Go."

By Bergen Evans

THE old school tie has become such a symbol of contempt that there is something disarming and charming in finding it used, as it is in Arthur Tuckerman's book "The Old School Tie," simply and directly as a mark of union with and affection for the old school.

This particular tie, cerise-and-black striped, binds Mr. Tuckerman, as it did his father, to Cheltenham, a preparatory school in the English town of the same name in Gloucestershire, which Mr. Tuckerman attended from 1911 to 1914. The book is an account of his early life in Washington, his experiences at Cheltenham (where he lived with his parents and attended the school as a day boy), trips to Europe and Egypt, the coming of World War I, his sojourn at Christ Church, Oxford, and his struggle, finally and successfully, to convince his parents that he did not want to continue to live abroad but wanted to return to America.

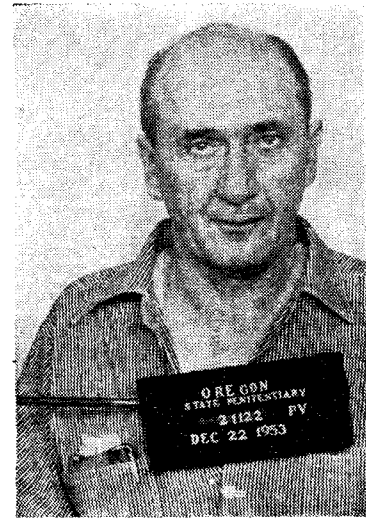
The sections of the book dealing with Cheltenham College itself are among the least interesting, having that unfortunate dullness which seems inseparable from all attempts to depict the good and the beautiful. After a brief initiation in First Form Classical life at the school "suddenly opened out like some bright and illuminated text." Under the "instinctive" guidance of the wise men then in charge, who emphasized "the business of growing up rather than the mere acquisition of knowledge," the student was deliberately exposed "to as many human influences and philosophies" as he could take on the chin. There were, however, a few reservations: he was expected to be "basically on the side of God, King, and Empire."

There were, even, no unpleasantnesses (aside from a bit of ragging

about his galoshes, and that brought a stern rebuke from the Head) among the boys themselves—surely the most gentlemanly, decent, and considerate six hundred male adolescents ever brought together. When one remembers that it was at this same time, only a few miles away, that George Orwell was enduring the "irrational terrors and lunatic misunderstandings," the squalor, discomfort, hunger, ignorance, stupidity, snobbery, and sadism of Crossgates (and the author of this review much of the same at Totley and Abbeydale), Mr. Tuckerman is to be congratulated on his good fortune.

The best parts of the book—and they are very good—are the accounts of the vacations on the Continent, motoring with his parents in their Hotchkiss, with its chauffeur, Hutchings. It was "the untroubled and unhurried world" of the wealthy just before the cataclysm, a world of innocent snobberies, in which the Paris edition of the *New York Herald* printed in its social columns "the make and horsepower of every automobile, along with its owner's name, when it arrived at some resort chic enough to warrant the *Herald's* mention." It was a sedate and elegant world, in the huge dining rooms of whose hotels "young Swiss waiters glided with the precision of figure skaters over highly polished parquet floors, serving five-course luncheons and seven-course dinners." It was often a lonely and empty world for a boy, marooned in hotel bedrooms while his parents dined out. But for the privileged few it had a glory (however limited), a sense of security (however delusive), and a feeling of personal dignity (however unmerited) that will not come again.

As a part of every scene, and central to every recollection, are his parents—his father, mildly fussy, generous, pleased with his own sophistication, but facing a dreadful personal disaster with quiet courage, the "stiff upper lip" of the British, whom he admired, and his mother (screened, one feels, from even the reader's observation by filial love), hardly more than a "gracious silence." Among the virtues inculcated at Cheltenham, it would seem, was reticence, and the book as a whole, more than its author's loyal praises of the school, leaves you feeling that it was not a bad place to have been educated.



"Blackie" Audett—"incredible character."

## Life Without Law

**"Rap Sheet," by James Henry ("Blackie") Audett** (William Morrow. 284 pp. \$4), is the frank autobiography of a man who, during leaves from jail, was a bank-robber and member of the Capone and Pendergast organizations. Here it is reviewed by Frank O'Leary, who has spent twenty-two years of his fifty years in prison, and is author of "Dictionary of American Underworld Lingo."

By Frank O'Leary

REPORTS from the underworld have been coming to the reading public thick and fast in recent years. The fault with most of them has been the cramping effect of the literary strait-jacket. The sheer discipline of setting exciting facts down in readable form has been naturally distasteful to people who have found all forms of discipline repugnant to their natures throughout their lives. The unfortunate result has been that they have struck attitudes and "mugged" self-consciously before the camera-eye of the reader. Others have entrusted their "confessionals" to professional writers who have trimmed and shaped the material, often unconsciously projecting fractions of their own personalities into the manuscripts. Communication has thus been impaired. In "Rap Sheet" "Blackie" Audett tells his story in his own briskly inimitable hooligan style to a wire-recorder piloted by a newspaperman who had the uncommon good sense to know that literary alchemy can't transmute a rich semi-literate auto-