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HOW FAR THE PROMISED LAND?

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Just One More

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COWARD-McCANN, 210 Madison Ave., N.Y. 16

Coast territory, includes many religious dealers in his itinerary. Visiting one new account, he was interrupted by the proprietor who asked, "Have you been saved, Mr. Freedman?" When the answer was "Not yet" the proprietor summoned all his sixteen employes, who knelt on the cement floor for forty minutes by the clock and prayed for Freedman's salvation. Then the proprietor reported



that he had all the stock he wanted and didn't buy a single book! There's another Fundamentalist bookshop in Oregon whose buyer will speak with Freedman only over the telephone. Although she has never seen him smoke she maintains that she can smell a smoker five blocks away and that it is a habit of the Devil.

Freedman was exhibiting his wares in one shop when the clerk, climbing aloft to fetch a rarely requested volume, upset a pyramided display on top of the shelving. Books came tumbling down on Freedman's noggin, sending him sprawling to the ground. "Be careful, you fool," cried the shop manager to his clerk. "Suppose that had been a customer!"

IN HIS BOOK, "Applied Imagination," Alex Osborn refers to a Swiss gentleman who meticulously reviewed his eighty years on earth and calculated he had spent twenty-six of them in bed and twenty-one working. Eating consumed another six years. So did being angry. He frittered away five more waiting for tardy people. Shaving took up 228 days, scolding his children twenty-six days, tying his neckties eighteen days, blowing his nose eighteen days, and lighting his pipe twelve days. He added mournfully, "I figure that I laughed for only forty-six hours in all my life." Possibly that Swiss gent watched too much television—and didn't read the right books!

"I'VE GOT TO GET A present," confided a customer to a bookstore clerk, "for a very rich old aunt who can scarcely walk. Any suggestions?" "Yes," said the clerk. "Why a book? How about some floor wax?" . . . One of Voltaire's more startling pronouncements was, "In 100 years the Bible will be a forgotten book found only in museums."

When 100 years were up the home in which Voltaire had made his prediction was occupied by the Geneva Bible Society! . . . Fictional characters referred to above: 1. Sherlock Holmes. 2. Marie Roget (Poe's "Mystery of Marie Roget"). 3. Clyde Griffiths (Dreiser's "An American Tragedy"). 4. Baron de Charlus in Proust's "Remembrance of Things Past" or Des Esseintes in Huysmans's "Against the Grain." 5. Madame Bovary. 6. Sadie Thompson (Maugham's "Rain"). 7. Juliana Bordereau (Henry James's "The Aspern Papers"). . . . Sign in the poetry section of a Chattanooga book shop: "All the muse that's fit to print." . . .

JOE BRYAN, TAKING TIME out from the book on P. T. Barnum he is whipping up for teen-agers, tells about a couple of beaten-up old acrobats who had been closing bills at vaudeville houses so long with the same act they could go through their routines in their sleep. One week they finally made the Palace, and at the opening Monday matinee stood in the wings while the late John Barrymore gave his magnificent rendition of the soliloquy from "Hamlet." The audience went into raptures.

One acrobat turned to his partner and muttered angrily, "If that's the kind of junk they want today I guess we'd better work out a new act for next season!" —BENNETT CERF.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT NO. 650

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 650 will be found in the next issue.

RZ NCP LXAG GC ERDD XAN

RUYX RA GSY LCKDU

GCUXN, TYG X VCBBRGGYY

LCKERAT CA RG.

ZYDRM ZKXAEZPKGYK.

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 649
If a body's ever took charity, it makes a burn that don't come out.
—JOHN STEINBECK.

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spangled
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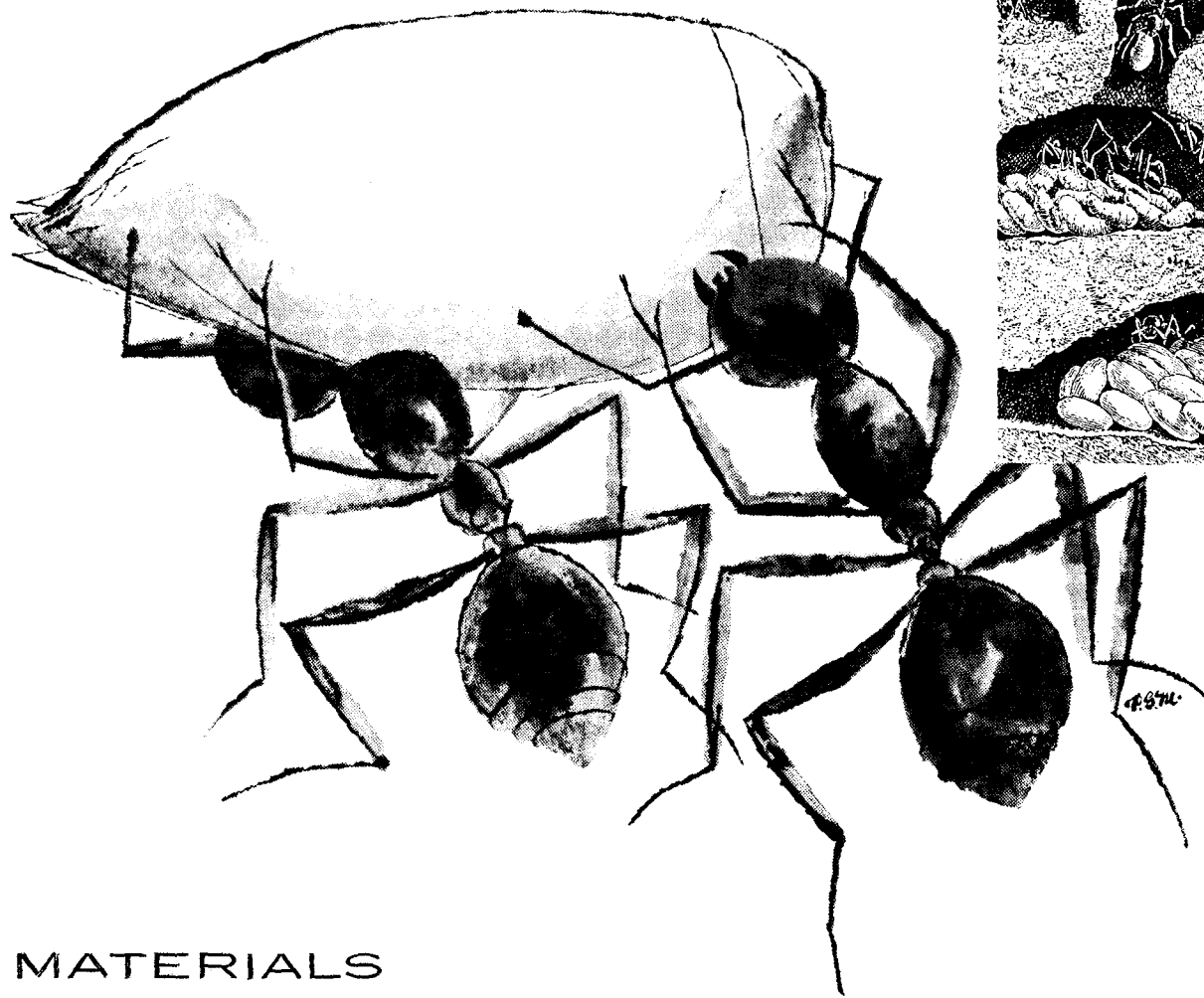
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FEUDALISM—NOT FOR EXPORT



EDITOR'S NOTE: In the past, aristocracy was generally part of any society in which the vast majority of men labored uninterruptedly from dawn to dusk on the land. The differences between the peasant's exhausting and monotonous toil and the vocations of landlord, patron, or courtier were so extreme that their lives seemed to belong to members of different species. And as most art, politics, and philosophy flowed from the upper class, thinkers in the eighteenth century grew concerned with the effect on culture of the mass-emancipation of the Industrial Revolution. Even such a great democrat as Thomas Jefferson (see the next page) had doubts that the common man, then lifting up his head and looking around for the first time in history, would have the wit and steadiness to govern himself properly. Today, of course, the average wage-earner has less physical work to do than most medieval princes, and the idea of aristocracy has only the sort of derivative meaning that John Steinbeck writes about on page 11. But once it did make political sense. The aristocracy in its purest European model—"feudalism"—is discussed here by Steven Runciman, famous English Byzantinist and author of the three-volume "History of the Crusades."

By STEVEN RUNCIMAN

FEW words in the English language are so habitually maltreated as is "feudal." We denounce as feudal anything old-fashioned or reactionary of which we happen to disapprove. We dismiss as feudalistic most systems of government which do not conform to modern democratic fashions, even though the

medieval feudal world would have found them equally shocking. In short, feudalism has come to be used as a description for any pattern of life that seems out-of-date.

In these modern days, when education is broad rather than deep, it is perhaps useless to insist on accuracy in semantics. Words should be allowed to take their course, to develop and acquire fresh meaning, if a lan-

guage is to live and advance. But for the historian who tries to portray the past as it really was some exactitude in terms is needed. Before we can decide the place of feudalism in the aristocratic tradition we must know what feudalism was.

Feudalism must not be confused with privilege. Privilege confers rights and immunities on certain classes of the population often quite arbitrarily. There were some feudal privileges; but feudalism was in essence a system of mutual obligations evolved to insure the smooth running of society. It arose in the troubled times that followed the collapse of the Roman Empire in the West. The first barbarian invaders found their tribal organizations inadequate to deal with the government of the lands that they had occupied. Later invasions completed the breakdown of any central government and caused communications to decay. Districts had to fend for themselves. The poor were at the mercy of oppressors. They tended therefore to seek the protection of the local strong man, whoever he might be, an abbot or a bishop, maybe, who had managed to preserve his church's estates through the troubles, or, more often, a successful military leader who might be landless but who had gathered round him a band of soldiers. But the