



FIG. 3 Clothesmanship: wrong clothes in which Miss E. Watson beat Mrs. de Greim in the Finals of the Waterloo Cup Croquet Tourney, 18th August 1902.

—From "Gamesmanship."

is on the point of a cam, slacken off Screw 'A' (nearest the contact breaker points) and turn Screw 'B' (between Screw 'A' and contact arm pivot) until the required gap of .018 ins. is obtained. Then tighten up Screw 'A'. A small quantity of Vaseline occasionally applied to the lobes of the cam will keep the wear at this point at a minimum." This passage seems so funny to Mr. Potter that, he says, he breaks down completely after reading a half dozen words. I see his point, but after all a cam is laughable only to those who do not know what a cam is. The laughter seems to me to proceed from the superiority of ignorance.

I AM afraid I am yielding to the critic's habit of criticizing. In fact, Mr. Potter's book is full of very amusing, very revealing, very novel bits. That marvelous exchange between Arnold Bennett and Hugh Walpole! Those wonderful morsels from Terence Rattigan, Harriette Wilson, Sir Harold Nicolson, and many others! Even Ella Wheeler Wilcox:

There, now, you are white with anger.

I knew it would be so.

You should not question a man too close

When he tells you he must go.

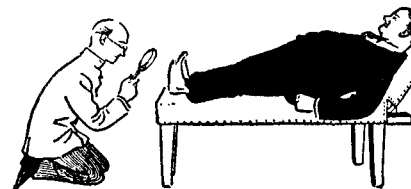
Tom Masson, who was editor of the old *Life*, used to get out a humorous annual: "Laughs of 1923," "Laughs of 1924," and so on. He had the inspiration of calling his annual "Laffs." He told me that the sales tripled.

I found "Sense of Humour" a delightful book. But you certainly could not substitute for its title the word Laffs.

Potterism: Its Ploys and Plonks

IT IS with three slim, calm, subversive volumes—all of them published within the space of half a decade, here at the midpoint of the twentieth century—that Stephen Potter, Oxon., *Punch*, BBC, has made his unmistakable dent on Western Civilization. The three books: "Gamesmanship, or The Art of Winning Games Without Actually Cheating" (Holt, 1948); "Lifemanship, or The Art of Getting Away with It Without Being an Absolute Plonk" (Holt, 1951); and "One-Upmanship" (Holt, 1952), this last being a sort of curriculum catalogue for a correspondence college of Gamesmanship, Lifemanship, and Gameslifemastery.

Potter's Underlying Theory may be defined somewhat as follows: Life can be rich, life can be meaningful—but only for the fellow who can always manage to keep the *other* fellow just unpleasantly off balance. Just off his game, one might say, especially if one were talking about the playing and winning of games; in short, of Gamesmanship. The point, however, being that the true Gamesman (or Lifeman) is never anything but scrupulously correct and courteous: that's in fact his whole secret, skill, and power. Take this situation: You are about to become involved in a game of golf, tennis, etc., with an opponent of clearly superior talents. It is to be an altogether friendly game, of course—yet of course (and as ever) you badly want to win. What to do? Just as a first step why not try the "Play-for-Fun" gambit? Particularly if your opponent has given you an opening by expressing a wish to play for some small, token stake; or a wish, on the other hand, *not* to do so. The beauty of the "Play-for-Fun" gambit is that, like many of Potter's gambits, it works either way. In Case A—opponent suggests wager—Potter's ploy is simplicity itself. (A *ploy* is any one individual stroke, move, or maneuver within some all-embracing gambit.) "Come," you blandly murmur, "let's just play for



—Illustrations from "One-Upmanship"

"M. D. Manship: a simple method of making a patient feel a fool. If he complains of earache after bathing examine his plantar surfaces."

the fun of the game." Result: You have made your rival think that you think he's not much better than athletic Con Man. Further result: reflexes are shot for the afternoon.

In Case B—you propose the wage; the final ploy is still more devastating.

LAYMAN (your opponent): Hal! a crown on it? No, I'm not particularly anxious to play for money. What is the point? If one starts worrying about the pennies . . .

GAMESMAN (yourself): Exactly! If money is important to you, much better not.

LAYMAN: But I meant—

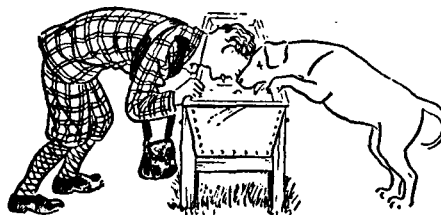
GAMESMAN: (friendly) Of course

WELL, that's Gamesmanship, or a very small part of it. Some of the other parts are these: The Pre-Game (including How to Start: The Flurry Winmanship (including When to Give Advice); Luncheonship; Losemanship Lost Game Play.

Lifemanship is merely Gamesmanship on a much larger scale or screen or canvas—the very canvas of Life itself. The literary life, for example, say you're an Eminent Author being called upon, at home, by a Young Interviewer. You'd like to throw the jitters into him right from the beginning. Enter Young Interviewer: "Ah," you say, urbanely, "sit yourself down." This one never fails, and is much for Writership; other important branches of Lifemanship are Conversationship (including Glaciatic and OK-Words); Actorship; Musical Plonking (Plonking is what you do when you have nothing whatsoever to say except something extremely stupid and obvious; this must always be uttered as roundly, as hollowly, as dogmatically as possible).

One-Upmanship is merely all of Gamesmanship multiplied by all of Lifemanship: the fullest flowering of the art of always keeping one up on everybody, everywhere, in every conceivable possible circumstance.

—JERRY TALLMER.



"Gatling-Fenn Developing Dogmanship to the Point of Absurdity."

Democracy in Danger

"The Public Philosophy," by Walter Lippmann (Little, Brown. 189 p., \$3.50), is an analysis of the causes of the rapid decline of liberal democracy and the rise of totalitarianism in our time. Here it is reviewed by Frank Altschul, director of the Council on Foreign Relations.

by Frank Altschul

WHEN Walter Lippmann in his latest book, "The Public Philosophy," focuses his attention on some of the shortcomings of liberal democracy in adjusting itself to the manifold problems of the contemporary world, he is the lucid critic with whose incisive commentaries on the passing scene we are all so familiar. But when he enters the domain of philosophy, to say the very least, he is hard to follow. If at times he seems obscure, it would be unbecoming for a Yale man to suggest that this may be due to the two years he spent in the post-graduate study of philosophy at Harvard. More likely it is nothing more than another example of the occupational hazard to which philosophers are exposed.

"The Public Philosophy" is not a book destined to make a wide popular appeal. Yet for the limited audience to which it is addressed, there are nuggets of wisdom and of acute observation in its analysis of the reasons for "the alarming failure of the Western liberal democracies to cope with the realities of this century." In explanation of this "alarming failure," Mr. Lippmann advances the thesis that "there has developed . . . a functional derangement of the relationship between the mass of the people and the Government. The people have acquired power which they are incapable of exercising, and the governments they elect have lost powers which they must recover if they are to govern."

What, then, is the nature of this functional derangement—this "malady of democratic states"? It is to be found primarily in the "devitalization of the governing power" consequent upon the "mounting power" which "mass opinion has acquired . . . in this century." Because public officials are "always on trial for their political lives, always required to court their

restless constituents," only the rarest among them are able to maintain that independence of judgment and conduct which in earlier days was looked upon as one of their more engaging attributes. The decisive consideration which weighs with them today is not whether a "proposition is good but whether it is popular," and this very mass opinion to which they increasingly feel obliged to cater "has shown itself to be a dangerous master of decisions when the stakes are life and death." The trend of this mass opinion has shifted to what Lippmann calls an essentially Jacobin view, which deifies the presumably popular will at the expense of that body of political belief that grew out of Magna Charta, the English Bill of Rights of 1689, Montesquieu's "Esprit des Lois," and our own Declaration of Independence and Bill of Rights. The principle of constitutional government that rests on these documents, a principle that sets just government above any element in the polity, even above the "people" if they are frivolous or intransigent in the exercise of sovereignty, lies at the root of Lippmann's "Public Philosophy."

A distinction must be drawn, according to Mr. Lippmann, between "The People as voters" and "The People as a community of the entire living population, with their predecessors and successors." It is "The People as voters" who, in accord-

ance with our democratic procedures, so powerfully influence the determination of policy. Yet if, as Mr. Lippmann contends and as experience confirms, "the opinions of voters in elections are not to be accepted unquestioningly as true judgments of the vital interests of the community, it is by no means clear in what way and under what system "the entire living population, with their predecessors and successors" can be brought to achieve a more satisfactory result.

Having posed this problem, Mr. Lippmann leaves it without offering any practical solution, and turns to the respective roles of the Executive and the representative assembly. Here he finds that "the power of the Executive has become enfeebled, often to the verge of impotence, by the pressures of the representative assembly and of mass opinion." There can be little doubt that for reasons which he stresses material encroachments have been made upon the Executive function. Yet he fails to mention the telling weapon which in a democracy the Executive has at his disposal to counter such encroachments. There is no word about the vital importance of imaginative and courageous leadership without which democracy inevitably falters. It would seem that his indictment of a system to which we remain deeply attached should more properly be lodged against some of the occasional possessors of Executive authority. Certainly in the United States there is no substitute for the clear voice of the President in the formation and the marshaling of mass opinion.

A BREAKDOWN in the constitutional order, "the cause of the precipitate and catastrophic decline of Western society," according to Mr. Lippmann, "may, if it cannot be arrested and reversed, bring about the fall of the West." The warning is timely; for surely the West is threatened as never before. But is it the manner in which democratic societies are presently governed that lies at the root of our peril rather than the Pandora's box we opened with the dropping of the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima? The dawn of the thermonuclear age posed not only for the democracies but for all humanity dangers of a new order of magnitude, leaving the Executive branch of government less concerned with the question whether it can act than what the prudent and intelligent course of action should be.

While many minds are occupied with the practical aspects of today's challenge, Mr. Lippmann, as the title of his book indicates, takes refuge in philosophy. He has reached the



—Fabian Bachrach.

Walter Lippmann—"nuggets of wisdom."