

den, the author of "Glass Slippers Always Pinch," (Lippincott, \$3.95), has as much allure for the reader as femininity usually has for maleness. In some ways, it is also the weaker sex school of writing.

Glass slippers always pinch on the feet of Mrs. Bawden's heroine, Lucy, who is sometimes Kingsley Amis's Lucky Jim, sometimes John Osborne's Jimmy Porter, and always more shapely and more sentimental than either as she finds herself some room at the top. What's more, she's delightfully smart aleck. Tired of her husband's slim wages, Lucy ponders, "I thought the point about advertising was that you sold your soul and got a decent price for it."

The plot takes Lucy through Oxford, gets her married, has her leave her husband because of his displeasure when she tells him of her unfaithfulness (at the time she hasn't been unfaithful but merely given it a thought), has her reunited with him after she really has been unfaithful, makes her leave him again when he admits *his* unfaithfulness. All of this is not as preposterous as it seems, since Mrs. Bawden has written a parody.

Lucy, for the most part, is an enchanting girl with a sense of humor. But nobody in Mrs. Bawden's book is perfect and Lucy is forever afflicted with a puzzling self-accusation. When someone greets her by asking how she does, she's likely to answer very well, thank you, then realize she was neither doing well, nor was she grateful for being asked—and despise her hypocrisy. Mrs. Bawden's prose is frequently mannered. If it is satire on today's earnestly honest, young intellectuals, then her device is too repetitive to be effective.

Yet, measuring the warm spots against the cold, Mrs. Bawden comes off well. She writes with as much sureness and economy as anger and youth, which is not a bad thing for either man or woman. —LEE SEGAL.

**FRANCO PASSION-WARS:** "A great sprawling, lusty family saga in a grand tradition," we are told on the dust cover of "The Curtain Falls" (translated by Humphrey Hare; Scribners, \$5.95). What tradition, one wonders? Three books, a prologue, and an epilogue: dreary and summary illustration of all manner of sexual "cases" from impotence to incest; characters that keel over and die variously of strokes, suicides, murders, etc., at every crucial turn of the story; a hodgepodge of sexual, social, and political "shockers," which seem to have been relentlessly culled from the worst melodrama of the times. Maurice Druon, of course, is (Continued on page 35)

## IDEAS

# A Handbook for the Years Ahead



—G. D. Hackett.

Robert L. Heilbroner—deserves more than praise.

**"The Future as History," by Robert L. Heilbroner** (Harper, 217 pp. \$4), *uses the revolutions of this century as a compass for the direction in which the world is moving. Sidney Hook, professor of philosophy at New York University, has long been concerned with the status of our civilization.*

By Sidney Hook

THE TEST of historical insight is the ability to decipher in the myriad of today's events the direction in which we are moving. When the student of social affairs does more than this and tries to predict specific events, he is likely to come a cropper. For he can rarely allow for the relevant complexities involved, especially the role of human consciousness confronted by the challenge of the actual event. In this book, Robert L. Heilbroner performs the scholarly task of interpreting the future as history without succumbing to the temptation of playing the role of prophet. In a masterly discussion of the revolutions of our century he charts the course that the world has been following, the grave alternatives which will face us in the next decades, and the grim prospects for the survival of liberal civilization as we understand it in the West. His book

could very well have been entitled "The Revolutions of Our Time": the scientific and technological revolution, the economic revolution, the democratic revolution, the organization revolution, Communist revolution, Nationalist revolution and, finally, the revolution of expectations in the minds and hearts of all peoples aware that their miserable lot is no longer fated to endure.

The upshot of all these revolutions, Mr. Heilbroner persuasively shows, is a drift away from our traditional economic system to one in which more and more social controls will have to be adopted to insure material abundance and the performance of necessary services. Much more disquieting is his picture of the West, and especially the United States, isolated in a world of hungry, expanding countries, no longer the cynosure of all eyes but the target of all criticism, no longer invulnerable to military aggression but living on the verge of disaster, and ideologically ill-equipped to conduct a counter offensive for freedom.

One of the root causes of our historical obtuseness and unconcern, according to Mr. Heilbroner, is the demonstrated bankruptcy of our national philosophy of optimism: we can no longer assume that progress is a fact rather than a precarious possibility. We must cultivate a sense of the problematic and ambiguous in history, scale our pretensions down to the order of our power, and build the structure of our faith on the values of "fortitude and understanding."

Mr. Heilbroner's book is excellently written in a sinewy and fast-moving style. It is a model of what thoughtful popularization should be. It is so good that it deserves more than praise. Since, in general, I am in lively sympathy with the main drift of his argument, my criticism, except on one matter of great importance, will concern itself with some secondary points.

Although the author is aware of the interrelated character of the problems the future holds for us (and probably because of his very awareness that they are related), he does not give them an order or priority or urgency. He is well informed about the dangers of Communism to the free world and its essentially reactionary character. But he does not recognize sufficiently the extent to which the Communist program

for world domination exacerbates the difficulty of all other problems. Even if the Communist world did not exist we would still face multiple and grave problems of increasing complexity, domestic and international. But we would have an enormously greater chance of settling them were it not for the relentless and well-coordinated policy of the international Communist movement.

It is not merely the fact that the Soviet Union is taken by a few intellectuals and students in underdeveloped countries as a model of what might be achieved industrially by terror and dictatorship. We could meet this danger, as difficult as it is, with some new bold Marshall Plan. It is that the Soviet regime and an indefatigable Communist fifth column, whether in Greece or the Near East or Cuba, is working skilfully to prevent peaceful solutions of problems and to expand the area of Communist influence. Nor is this the only problem so affected. Is there any doubt that but for the intransigence of the Soviet Union international control of nuclear energy could easily be established? After all, unanimous agreement on the Acheson-Lilienthal proposals, which would have put a stop to the weapons race, was prevented solely by the Soviet veto. This doesn't invalidate the picture Mr. Heilbroner draws. It makes it even grimmer. But it affects the overall strategy of defense.

The existence of American optimism in view of our Civil War (the bloodiest in history), its heritage of unsolved problems, and our three wars in the twentieth century is difficult to explain. It is necessary to make a distinction between optimism as a view that relies upon the beneficence of historical forces, no matter what we do or don't do, and which makes for a trusting passivity, and optimism as a view which is hopeful about the future *because* of our efforts to bring it about. Without striving to solve problems, we can't tell whether we are dealing with remediable evils or with evils we must endure. But without genuine hope or faith in the efficacy of human effort, we are not likely to strive very hard.

Is it American optimism or something else which has failed us in living up to our responsibilities of world power? Mr. Heilbroner says we are an optimistic people because "we strive to see in the challenges which beset us not obstacles but opportunities." Would that this were so! He himself establishes that our great failures so far have resulted, first, from *not* seeing challenges when they are emerging and, second, in not seeing the opportunities they provide. "We" in this context can only mean the intellectual

and political leaders of America. A sufficient explanation of this double failure is not American optimism but lack of political intelligence. Fortitude is not in short supply—*vide* Truman's magnificent response to the invasion of Korea. But what of the initial policy of withdrawal and the proclamation that Korea was outside the scope of American interests, which invited that invasion and which an elementary knowledge of Communist theory and practice could have anticipated? Bipartisan illustrations can be multiplied of the persistent failure of American political leadership down to the present to understand the shape of events in the making until the shadow of threatening disaster falls athwart our path.

The chief lack in Mr. Heilbroner's work is one I am confident he would have adequately filled had he written

at greater length. The future is dark and perilous but not hopeless. The author does not believe in the wave of the future; nor does he even in jest define an optimist as one who believes that the future is undetermined. Granted that our problems are not only opportunities but our opportunities are also problems, as he says. How shall we meet them? What proposals or programs of action must the free world make to remain free and secure in the troubled areas that Mr. Heilbroner has so skilfully explored? Optimism and pessimism both are moods of adolescent ardor. What does a realistic and mature understanding prescribe in the way of policy? Mr. Heilbroner has written a brilliant prolegomenon to such a policy. The policy is as much our problem as his but the very virtues of his book make one wish that he had come to grips with it.

## Zone of Leadership

**"Political Realism and the Crisis of World Politics," by Kenneth W. Thompson** (Princeton University Press. 261 pp. \$5), offers a formula for mature statesmanship in our dealings with other nations. Frank Altschul is chairman of the Committee on International Policy of the National Planning Association.

By Frank Altschul

IN THIS arresting volume Kenneth Thompson has combined academic research with acute observation in approximately equal proportions. Research has been focused on the theories and practices of those who, whether in thought or action, have played an influential part in the development of American foreign policy during the past decades. Included in this category are scholars, columnists, and members of that gifted group who, in a former Administration, comprised the Policy Planning Staff of the Department of State.

Mr. Thompson makes the point that, following World War II, "the study of international politics replaced the study of international organization as the central point of reference in international relations." Prominent in this approach, the author notes, has been the work of Reinhold Niebuhr, E. H. Carr, Nicholas J. Spykman, and Hans J. Morgenthau. Much space is devoted to an exposition of their ideas, as well as to

the important if somewhat more limited part played by such columnists as Walter Lippmann and James Reston; and the chapter ends with a well-deserved tribute to the imaginative and creative thinking of the Policy Planning Staff as it was constituted under Secretaries Marshall and Acheson.

The relationship between theory and practice next engages the attention of Mr. Thompson. And after taking us rather far afield in a philosophical disquisition on some of the elements that contribute to the formulation of policy, he sets forth concretely a few of "the unsolved problems" implicit in statesmanship and theory. The first of these "arises from the frightening loss of prestige and power by Britain and by other European powers, accompanied by an equally frightening accretion of power by the United States." Another is the consequence of a conflict of views between ourselves and our allies over the nature of the diplomatic process. And the third is the trying "dilemma of conducting foreign policy in a democracy."

But Mr. Thompson has a simple formula for the solution of all these problems: "Executive leadership, honesty as to goals and limitations, and the replacing of a fatuous moralism that misleads the people, confuses our allies, and deceives our foes—all lie within reach. They await only a more courageous acceptance by leaders who aspire to statesmanship worthy of the name."

How long this more courageous ac-  
(Continued on page 36)