

the most part equally "respectable and dull." Hicks was not without doubts, of course: *The Daily Worker* was nasty medicine to swallow; the Moscow Trials shook his faith, and he found reasons to decline the educational directorship. But he persevered in his belief that the USSR "was the only bulwark against Fascism, and the Communist Party in this country was leading the fight against every kind of reaction." Even now, looking back, he sees little to "confess": critical dogmatism and ferocity, submission to Party insistence that he delete an account of a Moscow gold episode from his life of John Reed, but not much more. Like other Communists of his time, he was "betrayed by good intentions into taking an evil position."

That the position *was* an evil one he knew suddenly on the morning of August 22, 1939, when his kitchen radio announced the Nazi-Soviet Pact. Within three weeks he was free of the Party, and had begun to free his mind from the dogmas he had lived by for a decade. Angry letters from the faithful told him that his life was over. He was thirty-eight years old that September.

What he turned to was what he had come from and had kept all along: the normal, the bourgeois, the rural. During the very fall when he announced his support of Foster and Ford, he was buying an old farmhouse near Grafton,

N.Y., and his Party life was lived mainly there, by a kerosene lamp, to an accompaniment of croquet and charades. "This is beautiful, comrade," said a Party organizer one day, "but where is the class struggle?" When the class struggle had lost its meaning, the house and Grafton remained. Hicks became chief air raid warden, a school trustee, an agitator for school recentralization, and the founder of the Grafton Community League, an organization which succeeded, after fifteen years of political and manual labor, in building a village library. Out of this experience grew his three novels, his sociological study *Small Town*, and a set of political attitudes which he calls critical liberalism and agnosticism. He is pragmatic, skeptical, cautiously optimistic. Even his Communist experience he can look back on without bitterness. It taught him, though less effectively than Grafton did, to respect the common man, and it "dramatized," he says, "my fallibility."

Granville Hicks's life, like all literary lives, has been only in small part a life of books and ideas. This autobiography sets his works, as it ought to do, in an intricate pattern of days and seasons, schools, houses, and family. It is intimate and yet, about matters that are not publicly discussed in small towns, reticent. It is charitable, modest, and ironic, historic, humbling, and heartening.

firms is corporate work. But Arnold's firm has also had, to an unusual extent, an active civil liberties practice. Thus Arnold defended *Playboy* magazine, "a large part of the contents of which was designed to prove that women were mammals," against the U.S. Post Office and the Attorney General of Vermont. And the firm also defended several government workers, including Dorothy Bailey and Dr. John Peters, who had been dismissed on charges of disloyalty during the 1950s when government agencies were tripping over each other in their zeal to purge themselves of spies, Communists, and perverts.

ALTHOUGH the loyalty of government employees is no longer an issue, the record of that period in our history bears retelling. It was a time when the full power of government seemed to be arrayed against the freedom of the individual, whose fundamental rights were denied in the name of a bogus security.

Arnold has only contempt for the procedures employed by the government in those days; he found them not only unnecessary but thoroughly repugnant. Of the secret Army tribunals which dismissed the Fort Monmouth scientists, Arnold says: "Protecting the security of the Army must indeed be a mysterious business filled with black magic. On mature consideration of this matter, I have finally come to the conclusion that the secret loyalty boards when they made their secret findings must have sat around a bubbling cauldron throwing in this and that like the witches in *Macbeth*."

Thurman Arnold is as brilliant and articulate on economics as on law. He is urbane and witty. He has spent the better part of his life fighting the conventional wisdom of the Establishment; his targets have included the *Wall Street Journal* and all the businessmen and economists who share its persuasion; the prudes and the censors; Congressional committees and the Harvard Law School (which he obviously finds a bit stuffy). Even Princeton, where he received his undergraduate degree, is not spared.

Although in most respects the analogy may be inappropriate, Arnold's irreverence, and even at times his style of writing, bring to mind that dean of iconoclasts, H. L. Mencken. Arnold is more profound than Mencken was, and he indulges far less in jousting merely for the sake of the tournament; but both share the same healthy skepticism toward the prevailing wisdom of the day.

Fair Fights and Foul has no organization. Sometimes it proceeds chronologically, sometimes topically, and sometimes by no discernible method at all. But this will not prevent anyone from having a delightful time with it.

On the Side of Law and a New Order

***Fair Fights and Foul: A Dissenting Lawyer's Life*, by Thurman Arnold (Harcourt, Brace & World. 291 pp. \$5.95), sums up the skirmishes, in and out of courtrooms, that have absorbed a brilliant, urbane, and irreverent attorney. Ex-counsel to the President, Myer Feldman is engaged in the private practice of law.**

By MYER FELDMAN

THURMAN ARNOLD's book is a kind of a bouillabaisse of recollections, liberally mixed with essays on economics, law, government, pornography, Congressional investigations, and other assorted topics that have engaged the attorney's curiosity or aroused his wrath.

The story begins with some fine tales of the West in the days when it took two days by pack animal to traverse the thirty-square-mile ranch owned by Thurman Arnold's father, and when "the small towns from Chicago to the Pacific Coast" were not "carbon copies

of each other." Each town had its own personality and personalities; Laramie, "a wild and woolly town of about 8,000" and the scene of Arnold's boyhood and youth, had its share of colorful characters, described here with affection and nostalgia.

During the New Deal Thurman Arnold was Roosevelt's Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Antitrust Division of the Justice Department, where he led an assault on monopolies the like of which had not been seen since the days of the earlier Roosevelt. He also served a three-year stint as federal judge, a position he ultimately found too confining for his ebullient temperament. Along the way he was dean of the West Virginia Law School, and he taught esoteric seminars at the Yale Law School in the days when Yale was "camp" (the word defies precise definition, but so did the school in those days). His experience in private practice has ranged from bill-collecting in Laramie to founding one of Washington's large institutional law firms.

The primary staple of all large law

Commandment and Compromise

The Rabbi, by Noah Gordon (McGraw-Hill. 389 pp. \$5.95), examines the contemporary values and compromises of the "people of the Covenant." Lee Israel, a free-lance writer, conducts the radio program "Let's Talk to the Writer" over WNYC.

By LEE ISRAEL

TAKE a Reform rabbi, imbue him with a modern but nonetheless vital commitment, and the sensibility to know Judaism from Jewishness, marry him off to the daughter of a Congregationalist minister who despite her conversion is still a "shickseh" to many Jews, and you have a peripatetic, seven-thousand-dollar-a-year man of God, in whose travels can be seen all the weaknesses of the temple-membership-cum-bloodline that too often these days passes for religion.

That rabbi is Michael Kind, the protagonist of Noah Gordon's first novel. And few writers since Sinclair Lewis have sprawled with such magnificent ease over so large a part of the contemporary scene.

This epic of Judaism in America begins with the first generation. With the *zaydeh*, Michael's grandfather, and with Orthodox Rabbi Max Gross. In almost every sense of the word, they were the real Jews, the ultimately committed. But they hated and they feared. They remembered too well the pogroms in Europe and took too literally the Covenant between God and the chosen people. And so *zaydeh* dies with these words to Michael: "Not a *shickseh*! Not a *shickseh*!" And Max Gross refuses to marry the boy he taught to be a rabbi to the girl he taught to be a Jew.

The second generation? Well, some kept kosher through habit, sported Yiddish locutions, and reacted nostalgically to Second Avenue theater or reed music in a minor key. But of solemnity, and joy, and ontology, many knew nothing.

"I'm almost a full-time Talmudist," says the young rabbi. "I spend every day with books, looking for God. . . . If I find Him, my congregation won't come to hear about it until next Yom Kippur."

Then there are the special problems over and above once-a-year worship. In the South, Michael must play it safe, keep his mouth shut on the color issue, and tolerate the worst of toleration, ecumenism run amok: the first men chosen to be honored by the temple's Brother-



Noah Gordon—a comforting invocation.

hood Awards are the Reverend Billie Joe Raye, the local evangelist and faith healer, and Judge Boswell ("I am happy and honored . . . to have been invited by my Hebra neighbors to participate in the christenin' of their new house of worship").

Up North he's faced with the professional fund-raising gambit. A new temple must be built, but airy architecture

and a Lipchitz bronze on the lawn cost money. So there are the skills, the professional techniques of embarrassment, the dunning for unkept pledges, and the brass plaques to commemorate donations: "The Torah (Complete—Cover, Yad, Breastplate, Crown) at twenty-five hundred dollars was a bargain compared to the inscribed brass nameplate that would be placed on the door of the custodian's quarters for thirty-five hundred dollars."

And Michael's children—should his daughter participate in the Christmas passion play? How to make it known that his wife is as good a Jew as any descendant of Abraham? And the recurrent problem of raising a *minyán*, enough Jews—ten of them—to say the community prayers. That's *worship*, separate from and prior to the Temple Brotherhood or Sisterhood, the Teen Dance, the Annual Outing, the Bar Mitzvah celebrations, the *shul* pool, or the Sam Levinson lecture.

There will be those who will think that Michael's comforting invocation to his *zaydeh* at the book's end—" . . . what could not be erased by bloodbaths and ovens will not be erased by changed names or bobbed noses or the merging of our blood with mysterious bloodstreams"—is far too optimistic, after what has been shown of the face of Reform Judaism. But Mr. Gordon seems to be saying that teachers like Michael Kind are enough to keep it going another 6,000 years at least.

Fear, Then Doubt, Then Death

The Ice Age, by Tamas Aczel (Simon & Schuster. 287 pp. \$5.95), set in Communist Hungary just before the 1956 uprising, traces the "labyrinth of hopelessness" that entraps a number of innocent people when a high Party official dies in a Budapest hospital. Joseph Hitrec's novels include "Son of the Moon."

By JOSEPH HITREC

LIKE Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, Tamas Aczel's novel takes its theme from the Stalinist "ice age" of European Communism. Mr. Aczel's scene is Hungary in the early Fifties, just before the popular uprising that brought the Russian tanks into the country and also presaged the "thaw" in the latter part of the decade. But while Solzhenitsyn dealt with the barbaric fringe of Stalinism, Aczel,

who was a Party functionary in his country before he defected to the West, examines the subtler corruption of the human spirit under totalitarian pressure. Ivan Denisovich's final gesture spoke of man's courage and hope. Aczel allows himself no such idealism; in his story darkness and terror prevail, and the outlook for the non-robot is bleak.

The plot is sparse. A high Party official dies of a coronary attack in a Budapest hospital. Although his death is natural, it casts suspicion on the hospital staff and gradually enmeshes a number of people on the outside. The main target of police investigation is Dr. Antal Karolinszky, the hospital chief, a brilliant professional who is kept on for his skill but distrusted for his bourgeois background and his coolness toward the People's Democracy. News of his arrest by the secret police creates a turmoil among the personnel, most of whom profess to be loyal Communists; it also unhinges the chief's sister, Rezi, a clerk