

Letters & Life

In which books, plays and people are discussed

Edited by LEON WHIPPLE

Spotlights and Moonshine in America

THE GREAT AMERICAN BAND-WAGON, by Charles Merz. John Day Company. 263 pp. Price \$3.00 postpaid of The Survey.

CONQUISTADOR, by Philip Guedalla. Harper. 276 pp. Price \$3.00 postpaid of The Survey.

SOME PEOPLE, by Harold Nicolson. Houghton-Mifflin. 247 pp. Price \$2.50 postpaid of The Survey.

THE CHANGING SOUTH, by William J. Robertson. Boni & Liveright. 311 pp. Price \$3.00 postpaid of The Survey.

IF blood is to prove thicker than ink, the Committee on Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations must at once pass a resolution that English books shall not be more amusing than American books. Americans never shall be slaves to British figures-of-speech. We accept in principle the rule that the Mother Country ought to use the mother tongue better than any flapper daughter (despite Mother's ignorance on the pronunciation of Magdalen and Pall Mall)—but with the reservation, as they say in secretariats, that we must have security: no nation shall write a better book about another nation than that nation can write about itself! The violation of this shall be distinctly held as *casus belles lettres*. If the League lacks jurisdiction (on which indeed it seems singularly short) we shall invite that great Pan-Chicagoan, the *litterateur* of the Loop, burning with his hard, gem-like flame by Michigan's water, to expurgate from English books those passages that make true patriots sick with envy. I do not refer to the late Lord Bryce, but to the present case of Merz, Robertson et al. v. Philip Guedalla and Harold Nicolson, gents.

Charles Merz has written a scrutiny of certain cultural divagations of our generation that seem to him symbolic of our quest for glamor in a drab and machine-made age. Our pioneer zeal and energy are unabated, but we can no longer set out for the frontier in a covered wagon; instead we mount The Great American Band-Wagon, laden with soft drinks and loud-speakers, and somewhat pitifully dash toward the horizon in search of escape. We arrive at a bathing-beauty contest in Atlantic City, the ringside of a Tunney-Dempsey fight, or on the piazza of a pseudo-Spanish villa set madly on the river-flats of Cincinnati. The chief thrills en route have been endless vistas of identic filling stations or the reading of newspaper ballyhoo on our bigger and better murder trials. The author is generally tolerant

of our folly, but the fatness of his facts, and a subsoil acidulousness of tone, make his book in essence an indictment of our infantile futility and our waste of the spirit.

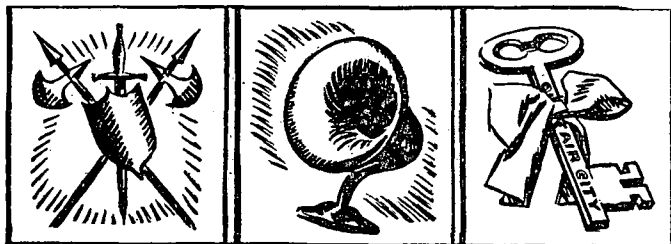
The author has applied to the present with great thorough-

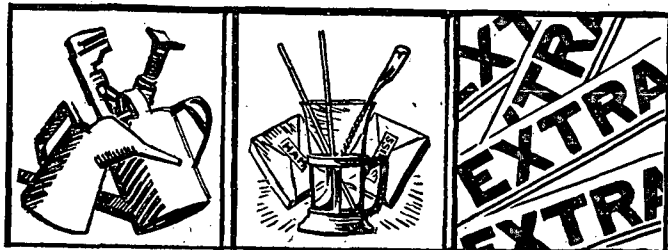


Frontispiece by Howard W. Willard, and two strips from the end papers, of *The Great American Band-Wagon* by Charles Merz, published by John Day, New York

ness the historical method of Mr. Mark Sullivan who prefers to study the songs of a nation (and its bustles) rather than its laws. He admits all our conquests, from sanitation to opera, but adds: "We are rich in ferries, yet we have no boat-songs. We have the greatest highways in the world, but we have lost our frontiers." This omits, I think, some of the cultural thrill Americans have gotten out of work; but in centering on our recreations, Mr. Merz is right, for as leisure increases, our amusements are going to be our culture. And his catalog of these new folkways of leisure and their mechanical impedimenta is certainly complete. With each item he offers a tag of explanation that too often does not explain. The replacing of the bar-room by the soda-fountain café is not absolute proof we "live on another and tamer frontier," nor is the pursuit of golf to be summed up in the epigram, "These bright legs are the war-paint of the nation." Yet it is pertinent to point out that our everlasting joining of things, herds of Elk or caravans of Shriners, so we can release ourselves with mumbo-jumbo rituals and put on baggy pants, is partly for business reasons, but even more to open "the gate to never-never land."

Yet in spite of keen observation and massed facts, this book remains dull. It suffers from the disease it is diag-





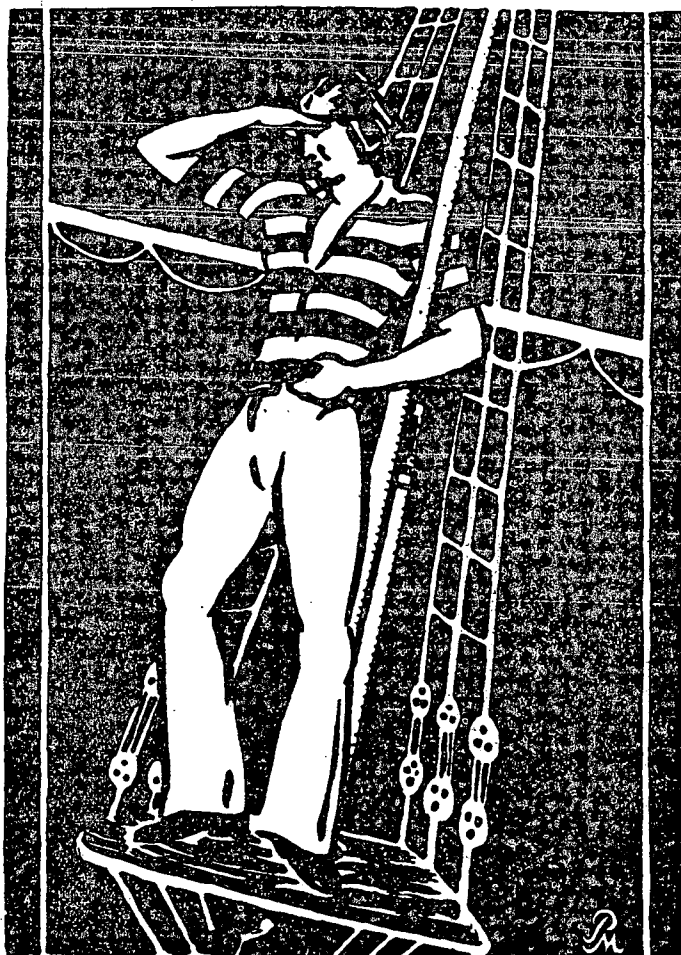
nosing: the application of mechanical intelligence to obvious physical facts. We anticipate most of Mr. Merz's categories and even his ever-ready reasons; we are quick to admit our dissatisfaction with our own folk-lore. What we want to be told is how to get better folk-lore. Of old the glammers came from work, war, exploration, or religion. Our age has lost them all. Without them we face the icy fact that life does not offer vast numbers of beautiful and spiritual resources to get through the day without dying of ennui. It is not enough to make fun of the plebs at play. The challenge is not to any further belaboring of the people (is not Mr. Mencken hale?) but to the offer of models for the good life. With what would Mr. Merz have us fill the years that have to be filled or suicide envisaged?

I hope to fill part of mine chuckling over whimsical satire like *Conquistador* by the wandering historian from England, Philip Guedalla. He calls his book *American Fantasia* and Mr. Merz's sub-title is *A Study in Exaggerations* so they must be writing about the same thing. But how differently! and how much defter is the Englishman—to return to our thesis. He offers no serious catalog—only an impish diary, full of glints from our surfaces, and trivia, but, glory! how his epigrams hit us off, even though the glitter of language gets a bit wearing. What I mean demands quotations: Mr. Merz, seeing how our business "beauty contests" fill roto-gravure sections with feminine backs and legs, says: "The same process that has given the stocking trade a Queen of Hosiery has provided the press with a pony chorus for its editorials." Says Mr. Guedalla, concerning "Big Bill" Thompson's promise to "hand King George one on the snoot," "Even Mayor Thompson's language has declared its independence of the King's English." And a page later he describes Chicago as "seated beside the dancing beauty of her lake and trying—sometimes a little truculently—to be an American city." That's the essence of impertinent wisdom. By dealing with the very shadows on the surface of our life he somehow reveals the heart. Is it jest or a rebuke that he dedicates his book "To my Charming Guardians, the Pullman Porters of America?" What sort of stiletto-writing is it when, having apologized for being superficial because his stay was brief, he adds: "Deeper studies may be safely left to those whose stay was briefer still?"

What's in the book? Oh, sketches of waiting-rooms on the New York Central, and prune-bloom time in Santa Clara, a word on the southern gentleman, a visit to Gettysburg in the snow, calling a movie studio a mad cathedral, scorn for our skyscraper churches that promise "5 per cent on Your Fellow Man's Salvation" with a word "of simple reverence" for the genius who has solved the tantalizing problem of ecclesiastical architecture so long presented by the waste space in the steeple by filling it with a cafeteria and 644 hotel rooms, or an inspired interpretation of Boston that "impelled austere by a Puritan tradition has often chosen to tread the stonier road of rejection, a harder way,

since rejection implies a certain poise, some reference to standards, and a process (however summary) of discrimination." Mr. Merz forgot Boston. But you shall not look over my shoulder any longer; take the book. I guarantee it is amusing and will prick your complacency.

British authors can be just as amusingly irreverent about themselves. Harold Nicolson is in *Some People*. It's deeper than *Conquistador* yet with the same gift for seeming superficial and revealing rock bottom in these sketches of nine people who somehow constitute a biography of the author and a human cosmography of the British Foreign Office and a psychography of several souls. But there's no *graphy* in the telling, just sophistication, the trick of incongruous associations that bring pathos or a sense of passing time, a brilliant handling of places, and an even more brilliant illumination of character by slant-wise, half-aside phrases. There is the added charm of getting back stage on diplomacy, and seeing Lord Curzon, who comes on "majestically, as if he were carrying his own howdah," meet Mussolini, write his daily dozens of letters, and imitate Tennyson reciting "Tears, Idle Tears," all against a background of a drunken valet. Mr. Nicolson knows his English style. Of the Marquis de Chaumont's literary deliquescence he says: "I did not foresee, however, that his snobbishness would become as a bloated moth fretting the garment of his intellect, that the blue particles of his blood would wage eternal warfare on the red corpuscles with which, in spite of his anodyne appearance, he was unquestionably endowed."



Drawing from the jacket of *Conquistador*, by Philip Guedalla, published by Harper and Brothers, New York

That's the note—satirical pathos—that makes this book as poignant as it is amusing.

The *Changing South* by William J. Robertson is a useful compendium of facts and interpretation on how this section is rejoicing the nation, economically and culturally. The two main stumbling-blocks are political and religious solidarity, the ramifications of which are traced with skill and honesty. The volume has, as had Dr. Edward Mims's on *The Advancing South*, a two-fold value. It is proof that the South is getting focus on its own life; and an invitation to the rest of the Union to get hold of the facts of the South's upsurging renaissance, and lend aid. But I do wish an Englishman would write a real study of its charm, its folly, and its hopes, and use a pen dipped in honey tinct with gall.

LEON WHIPPLE

Moody: Feeder of Flocks

D. L. MOODY, by Gamaliel Bradford. Doran. 320 pp. Price \$3.50 post-paid of *The Survey*.

"ARE you a Christian?" was Dwight L. Moody's salutation to strangers. That question guides Gamaliel Bradford's pen in this understanding study of the great evangelist's gift and message. That question he re-echoes to the reader. Mr. Bradford, the gentle seeker growing old, and weary of the fruits of reason, cannot quite answer "Yes" but he reveals a wistful yearning to share Moody's robust faith, to learn its springs and rest in its comforts. "God seems to have drifted far away from most of us, or we from Him, so far that neither airplane nor wireless will bring Him back." Yet by some elemental power Moody did bring God home to millions. So with care, respect, tolerance, and learning, this biographer approaches the man from every side—as preacher, theologian, as man and man of business, as curé of souls, as colleague of Ira Sankey, the hymn leader who shared his triumphs—and brings us not the life of a preacher, but a Pilgrim's Progress up the mountain-sides of that preacher's faith. The Religious Book-of-the-Month Club was wise to send this study out as its first offering. It is a religious book.

The author is no hero-worshipper any more than he is interested in an exposé à la Gantry. Indeed he finds no superhuman gifts in Moody; that is just why his success was so mysterious and challenging. The facts of his rather simple life explain nothing. Here was this almost uneducated New England boy who sold shoes in Chicago suddenly feeling called upon to start a Bible class. He did, began to preach, found a potent aid in the sweet-voiced, but musically untrained Sankey, and before he had done had looked into the faces of over 100,000,000 people—more than any man in history. He died, having founded no cult and without a successor, leaving as his sole permanent memorial the religious training-school in his home town of Northfield, Massachusetts. He had some of the marks of the evangelist, "the incomparable energy, the unfailing muscular and nervous strength," and the gift for business management. He always found the money to carry on his mission though he had no desire for wealth himself. Yet strong lungs and shrewd wits do not bring people what Moody brought them.

Mr. Bradford applies all his cultural tests. Moody indulged little in abstract reflection though he had an active intelligence that absorbed from every source matter pertinent to his mission. He was no reader, his library being the Bible. As orator he was rough-and-ready with lapses



Portrait drawing from the jacket of *D. L. Moody—A Worker in Souls* by Gamaliel Bradford, published by George H. Doran, New York

to try a cultivated ear. In science he felt no interest; for art and nature he showed no appreciation. "All the culture in the world," he declared, "means nothing until a man has found his soul." The redeeming of this soul was his single purpose and, when he began to speak, some glory of faith and love worked through him for the good of his fellowmen. What he preached was the untouched Scripture, in the language of the people, enforced with homely parables, and enhanced by the emotions of communal music. He was untroubled by any mysticism that left his promises cloudy, or any philosophic doubts in the face of the tortuousness of life. Good works were praised but they counted as nothing compared to salvation through inward grace. So Mr. Bradford, almost reluctantly and after bracing himself with the contemplation of masterful rounded lives like those of Goethe and Sainte-Beuve and Anatole France that in the end found only world-weariness and world emptiness, grants the essence of Moody is without explanation. He had faith in God; he knew the worth of every soul; his message answered the deepest need of his followers.

The machines whir; the cornucopia pours forth pleasure for the senses; the ambition and services of life engross us; we forget for a little while. But on some days and on the closing day we are left alone with three facts: God, the Soul, and Death. This noble and unpartisan study of one man's answer to these facts should prove of help in preparing for that encounter.

LEON WHIPPLE

(Continued from page 703.) Instruction for the public mind was represented by an article on Judge Gary, one on Nicaragua by Stimson, on stock ownership for employees by Cyrus McCormick, Jr., of the International Harvester Company, and one by an old Post reporter, Will Payne, the thesis of which was that much of the German and Belgian social legislation has been of dubious value to the workers. This might be interpreted as a counter-blast to the new German unemployment insurance law that went into effect last fall. The Post is far-sighted and starts its campaigns before most Americans know what all the shooting's about. Here is the usual balanced ration, fiction, entertaining fact, and something that is a cross between adult education and propaganda, and all in good, solid slugs of 5,000 to 7,500 or more words. Mr. Lorimer says you cannot turn round in an article of less than 5,000. "My story writers insist on writing long short-stories, and I can't break them." We did not discuss the fact that long pieces run into the ad pages and carry readers there too, or the criticism that The Post's contents is woefully padded.

By the year The Post is imposing:

	1923	1924	1925	1926
Serials	21	21	25	20
Novelettes	8	11	3	16
Short Stories	320	339	410	437
Articles	351	413	455	421

It sounds impossible but the paper has been getting bigger each year. Whoever thinks The Post a light fiction magazine, please note that articles constitute fifty per cent of its contents, and the editor hopes some day to run that to seventy-five. In the last year statistically recorded, seventy new names were added to the list of contributors, including Will Rogers, Hendrik Van Loon, Andrew Mellon, Luther Burbank, and Henry Ford—and that's a cross section of America! The Post was especially proud of its foreign articles, particularly those that demanded payment of the European debts, and those that told the dangers in having essential raw materials controlled by other governments. These articles were mostly written by hand-picked Post reporters like Isaac Marcossan, Samuel Blythe, and Richard Washburn Child, all apparently ardent nationalists. I think it is easy to feel that The Post's reporters are not disinterested investigators, but go into a country to find facts that fit a thesis—and find them.

The Post still lays special emphasis on "the variety, soundness and interest" of its 61 business stories and articles, but it is not nearly so "business-minded" as it once was, or preoccupied with business techniques. The new angle is indicated by 46 articles reflecting the interests of women, in politics, in business, in society, and in college. This is a recognition of the changed status of women, and also of their power as buyers, or dictators of buying, of advertised goods. Two other high-lights illuminate our changing America, 34 articles on sport, and 29 on Americana. The Puritan work doctrine is giving way before the new leisure that must have its golf, and finds it pleasant to seek culture by collecting old bottles or curly maple beds. The study of America's past, both furniture and history, is also encouraging to nationalism. The following figures mirror our times: Theater and Moving-Pictures (41), Hotels and Food (11), Winter Playgrounds (11), Travel and Vacations (10), Society (7), Animals and Hunting (23), Gardening (8), and Art (1), Books (5), Community Welfare (1), Health and Disease (3). Among the themes not

touched, one misses the old-age problem, progressive education, miracles of modern science, the Oriental awakening, industrial democracy, and peace. But The Post cannot do everything, nor do its readers want everything.

There must be room for the advertisers; on October 15, some 199 of them took 136 pages, or about 60 per cent. The editor's rule is not less than 50 nor more than 60. Naturally The Post does not discuss its revenues, but they sent me a rate-card, and told me to figure it out myself. I do not move easily among sums of such startling magnitude so I want it distinctly understood I do not vouch for these figures as a precise budget, but to suggest symbolic proportions. The astounding rates run: back cover, \$15,000; center two-pages, \$23,000; plain page, \$8,000; two-colors, \$9,500; four-colors, \$11,500. The net return after deducting the advertising agency fee of 15 per cent approximated \$1,042,000. The 2,840,000 subscribers paid \$142,000 or a little more than a seventh as much; and of this The Post got probably less than half. What the authors got is unknown though on the average The Post pays top rates for its editorial contents.

Yes, The Post is a great bargain—if you do not mind being subsidized by the purveyors of things. The text is like a teller of tales hired by the merchants in a bazaar; you come for the tales but en route you listen to the solicitations of the vendors. And the tale that draws the most listeners and does not spoil the buying mood, or cast reflections on the bazaar is the one the merchants desire. To show how mere contemplation of The Post's grandeurs tends to change a mild literary gent into a certified public accountant, I add that I figured out that in a year the advertisers presented each reader with about \$100 worth of literary trading-stamps—twenty novels, worth as bound volumes (and many of them attain that dignity) at \$2, say \$40, and articles, short stories and so on in proportion. In actual fact the income works out at say a \$15 bonus per reader. The conclusion is that the national weeklies are not literary ventures at all, but super-salesmen.

BUT do not get the idea any advertiser or league of advertisers dictates either contents or policy to The Post. It is big enough to tell the other big fellows where to get off. It did when it opposed unrestricted immigration in spite of the fact that many business readers and some big advertisers let it be known in no uncertain terms that they wanted a cheap labor supply. The Post refuses to print cigarette advertising, at a heavy cost to its coffers. The rule was enforced with such consistency that, I have been told, you could not by print or pictures indicate in smoking-tobacco ads (which are accepted) that the weed may be used to roll your own! What The Post offers is first a table of contents that will draw millions of readers whose marginal attention it sells to commerce; and second, without being asked, a policy that promotes for the advertiser a favorable economic and political environment. This is precisely what the proprietors of the paper want for themselves. And the advertiser follows the self-preservative rule: Business before propaganda.

Now what is this economic and political environment The Post seeks to preserve and foster? We have the right to ask that question of this tremendous engine of publicity. The paper is not neutral or merely amusing, nor does it claim (as do some of its competitors) to be a mere private business, amenable to no social standards and

indifferent to its own effects. It has a constant and sobering awareness of its social responsibility. I think the pains and frankness with which Mr. Lorimer answered my questions was a recognition of this. Nor can its authors escape the stern challenge: "What are we doing to the public mind and morals?" Corra Harris received 16,000 letters on one serial; these outpourings of the hearts of our people were expressed to her in bales. Another article brought in 600 letters. Albert Atwood, staff contributor, said:

"The evidences which come to me of the extent to which my articles are read, and the quarters in which they are read, often oppress and frighten me with a sense of the responsibility under which a writer for The Post labors."

The Post accepts and uses its power. The editor defined its central purpose thus: "We try to make a better America and better Americans." He has stated publicly: "The people of the United States know exactly what they can derive from it, not only instruction and amusement, but guidance on public questions and a consistent interpretation of American life and ideals." In this sense, The Post is propaganda from its human interest covers right through editorials, stories, articles, and pictures. We have evidence from high places. To quote:

In a recent interview with one of the editors, President Coolidge said he wished Mr. Lorimer to know that he regarded the policy of the magazine as sound and its influence helpful to the country. General Dawes in an address at Philadelphia called The Post the greatest agent for right publicity in the United States.

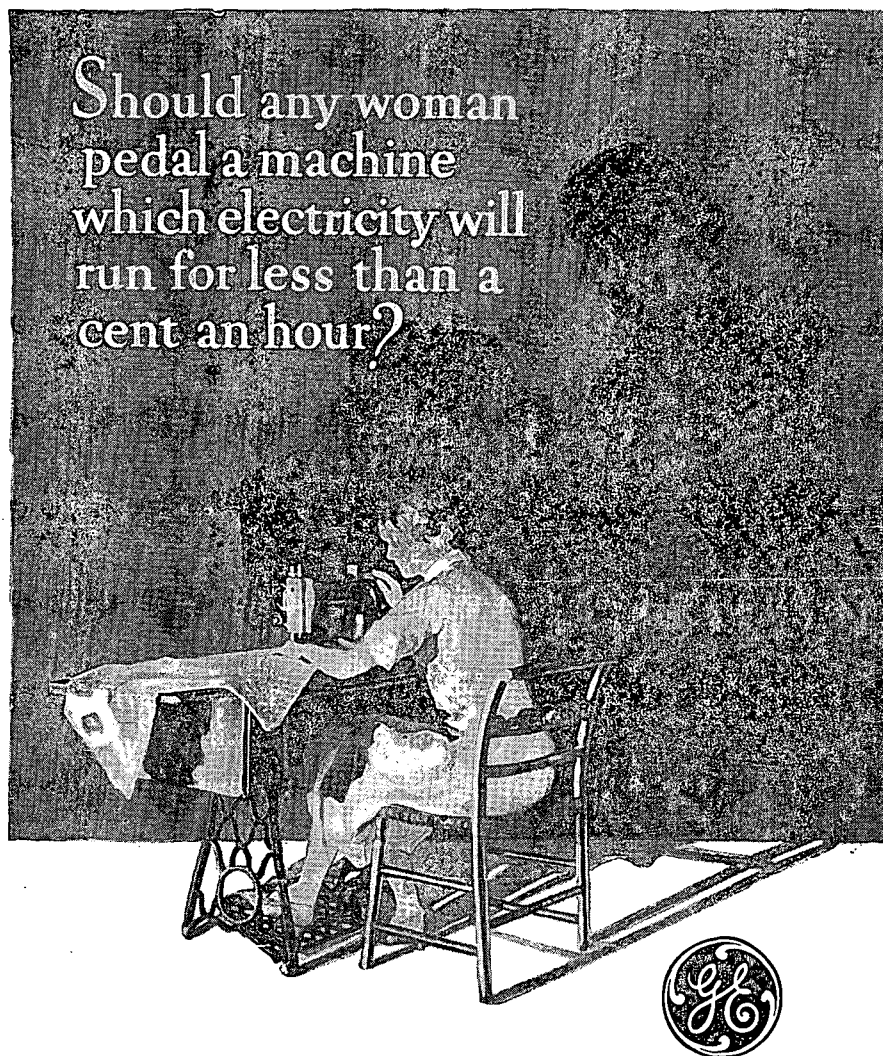
This was in the Fall of 1924 when both gentlemen were vastly interested in "right publicity" for their views and party. It suggests that fundamentally The Post is a Republican organ, but with a broader horizon than many Republicans embrace. The Post article is the paradisaical dream of "the counselor on public relations." Mr. Lorimer declares that publicity hounds are the bane of his life; he has to scrutinize every paragraph to see that no propaganda gets in—unless he wants the propaganda. The standing and power of The Post gets the big name and the big story:

Big men in public and business life, trade organizations, and chambers of commerce—just as most advertisers do and all should—come to The Saturday Evening Post when they want to reach the public. The big exclusive stories usually come first of all to The Post because there is absolutely no question in their minds that we reach the largest and most intelligent audience in the United States. . . . When it seemed advisable to place before the public certain inside facts relating to the A.E.F. and the attempt to brigade our troops with the French and British, no other medium than The Post was considered for their publication.

That final sentence seems of profound significance.

This campaign of education (to use a gentler word than propaganda) is conscious and studied. It is most direct in the editorials where Mr. Lorimer and his colleagues wield vigorous, sensible, and often forward-pushing pens. They are fre-

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quently stodgy, and too largely concerned with economics, but they get a deal of hard sense across to whoever has energy to read them. The many recent editorials on health topics, urging periodical medical examinations, and those on education have been valuable from every point of view. The cartoons are rarely mere fun; they generally thrust home in easily grasped pictures some idea on politics or our social structure. They are heavy guns. Even the fiction is viewed in part as a way of giving the reader, almost subconsciously, a view of life. The Post declares that they express much of its spiritual message.

But the article is the chief instrument of "guidance." The Post preaches no sermons, nor believes in inspirational material because "they are usually a compound of hokum and bunkum

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... a Victorian blinking of facts. . . . Pollyanna does not write our advertisements; neither does she contribute to our editorial columns." The Post indeed seems sometimes to conceal its real idealism lest it lose some of the harder-boiled readers who look upon all preachments as somehow "radical." So it is that indirectly these pieces that seem so entertaining, factual, and non-calculated get in their best licks for The Post's creed. Some, of course, quite overtly urge a thesis; others offer but a paragraph in a five-thousand word matrix. You have to learn how to read this paper. This funny article on learning to drive an automobile is at bottom praiseworthy campaigning for Safety First on the roads, and tucked in is an admirable set of rules for any driver. This beguiling title, *Traveling De Luxe in Europe*, is an interesting picture of foreign travel, but please note that occasional implication as to how superior our passenger accommodations are to those on the government-owned railroads of Europe. That helps nationalism and fosters content with private ownership.

Consider prohibition. Mr. Lorimer favors the idea—though I cannot of course interpret his attitude toward the present form. His arguments are, as often, economic. First, "it is good for production and does away with the old "blue Monday" when a factory found perhaps half its staff at home sleeping off the week-end revels. Second, it brings prosperity, and he agreed with a government secretary of admitted perspicacity who said: "Allowing for every other factor that can be counted as a possible source of our remarkable prosperity, I must say that twenty-five or thirty per cent remains unexplained except as the result of prohibition." Third, you can't run a machine civilization with drunks. "We shall have to choose between alcohol and automobiles," he said to me. "Imagine the death-rate with our present road congestion if every driver could get whiskey as freely as he gets gas." But you do not find any drum-beating dryness in The Post; that might merely antagonize the very considerable number of anti-prohibitionists among its millions. But you can find a very amusing, scientifically ballasted exposé of the toxic booze we are likely to drink. Convince people of the dangers in bootleg and they may stop drinking, whatever they think of the law.

No one will deny that this skilled direction of popular thought is often used for fine purposes. But it is, I think, dangerous. It replaces debate with a kind of Machiavellian paternalism; it molds popular thinking without popular knowledge; it blurs the picture by calculated emphasis and unsuspected omissions. Some trained penologists, for example, believe that The Post's series on crime was a misuse of journalistic research in line with the prejudices of the propertied class. The possibility of false perspective is illustrated by The Post's slant on our race problem; its pseudo-real, but farcical, tales of Negro life perpetuate old concepts, but it does nothing to probe racial discrimination or set forth the economic or cultural roots and changes. Its Negro is funny, not tragic.

IT is wiser in the long run to get all views in the open as The Post did when it let proponents and opponents of the World Court state their cases; or to take a plain and unmistakable stand as it did on immigration or conservation. In that old Collier's fight for our natural resources Mr. Lorimer has done yeoman service for national parks and forests, for irrigation and reclamation. Here he is thinking in terms of generations; he wants this nation to save its natural wealth for our children and grandchildren just as he wants them protected against an immigration that will crowd the land and lower the standard of living. He conceives this country and its people as a going concern to be kept comfortable, busy and happy, protected from resource-grabbers within and invaders from without.

"America for Americans" is his plea, for by nature, a *national* weekly must be nationalistic, pro-American, anti-foreign. By nature, it accepts our version of democracy and supports the Constitution. Yet Lorimer is no naive isolationist; he knows too much of what the bankers and engineers and entrepreneurs know; his eyes peer out over the world to see what business is going to look like on an international scale in the next half-century. He has the sagacity so remarkably absent from his rivals to send his star men to report on oil and raw materials, on South America, China, and all the far-flung colonies of

(In answering advertisements please mention THE SURVEY)

capitalism. Yet international affairs do not seem to suggest giant human problems, or any duty from us; our concern is the delinquency of our creditors, the danger to our trade. The Post is, I take it, against any foreign entanglements; yet it wants raw materials and world markets. The vast surplus of this incessant mass-production machine The Post has helped create must be sold somewhere! How we can secure materials and sell goods, yet not get entangled, it does not reveal, unless its publication of Rear-admiral Magruder's plea for naval efficiency, Colonel William Mitchell's for air efficiency, tells of The Post's anticipation that one day we must fight it through. Here you fall off one of the edges of Mr. Lorimer's thinking, at least, his *public* thinking. He preserves his paper from intellectual inconsistency only by masterly omissions.

Americans are not international-minded and so the chief concern of The Post is still with domestic economy. The editor once said:

Americans work and their first and last interest is work. . . . America's life is business, not as so many people regard it, an affair of musty ledgers and sordid haggling, but a big active drama of romance and achievement.

HIS periodical has done big things in staging the adventure and thrill of action and progress in modern industry, but it has not understood work as a creative expression for every individual being. The thrill it told was for the captains and managers and salesmen and adventurers and discoverers. Where was the thrill for the workers who had none of the glory (or responsibility) of directing the enterprise, and but an inadequate wage from its profits? Work to gain the creature comforts or as a moral exercise with craftsmanship, art, and culture as a fringe is not enough. If work is the soul of America, then it must feed the souls of all of us. The Post does not live up to its own doctrine; and the reason it is so bitterly reviled by radicals is that it does not hasten, but regards the seeking of labor to have a creative and democratic control over its own destiny. The wisdom and the blindness of The Post are in this statement, prepared for me by Mr. Lorimer:

The editor of The Post has never visualized industrial America as the home of two opposing parties . . . and it has therefore never occurred to him to present the news of industrial developments as if it were the news of two opposing armies. We are all Americans together and all trying to get a living. Many writers of labor and capital believe that there are two bodies of contrary economic laws acting and reacting upon each other. The Saturday Evening Post believes that there is only one set of economic laws; that they operate without fear or favor; and that we are all amenable to them whether we belong to the capitalistic group, the management group, or the labor group. There is no publication in the United States more friendly to labor. . . . For the past generation The Post has been preaching high wages and low costs. During that period unprecedented progress has been made in attaining these ideals until today the American workingman is the happiest, healthiest, and best paid in the world. We are so close to our own industries and the relationships between labor and capital that we can scarcely detect the pattern. . . .

The question remains whether The Post has contributed to this new cooperation in real proportion to its power. Has it ever preached any way for labor to advance that was not paternal, or that did not add to the dropsical prosperity of capitalists? It has been vastly concerned over the troubles of the railroads, but has it given equal publicity to ideas such as the successful shop-workers plan on the Baltimore and Ohio, or the arbitration boards in the garment industry? It has enlisted the pens of presidents of the American Federation of Labor, but it has not used its tremendous resources for any scientific investigation of the coal industry or proposed any way out of our repeated and desperate coal wars. In spite of its conservation policy, it has taken no real share in the fight to protect our waterpower resources from a "giant-power" trust that may become the most efficient instrument of exploitation ever dreamed. What of the transition of labor into economic responsibility through labor banks or cooperative factories? To a question on the joint labor-capital control of common enterprises, Mr. Lorimer replied:

If The Saturday Evening Post has not had a great deal to

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say lately (and as a matter of fact we have printed a number of articles on these experiments) about profit-sharing schemes, golden rule methods, and other artificial devices designed to bring about closer relationships between capital and labor, there is a reason for the silence. Some years ago the Curtis Publishing Company, in order not to lag behind in this movement, made elaborate private studies of thirty or more experiments of the sort that had been attempted in various parts of the country. The unexpected result of these investigations was a conviction that very few, if any, of these plans can be successfully worked out on a large scale or over a long term of years. Profit-sharing is an alluring theory, but when the profits are in red ink, it falls to the ground. All such undertakings must be planned so that labor must always be the gainer whether capital is the loser or not. . . . The Saturday Evening Post believes there is one sound and proven basis for the betterment of labor conditions, namely, the payment of liberal wages for efficient work with the addition of substantial bonuses where the nature of the work permits.

That is clear and honest, but would labor have reached its present status had every one been thus unadventurous?

On the farmer, Mr. Lorimer seemed to be standing pat. The ratio of 11 articles in a year on agriculture against 61 on business speaks for itself. So did his laughing remark: "I have a seven-hundred acre farm near Philadelphia, and I guess I know something about the troubles of the farmer. I know how much money I make out of my farm." That, I think, is naive. It may be—I do not know—that the other Curtis publication, The Country Gentleman, speaks for the farmer. But at bottom Mr. Lorimer belongs to the merchant-manufacturer class and talks a merchant's economics. This, in spite of his admirable efforts to keep from getting provincial. He makes two transcontinental trips a year, and has driven cross country three times in an automobile. He declares: "I am lucky not to have to edit in New York. Conditions there are artificial, and you do not sense the interests of the rest of the nation." I suspect some biological adaptation of The Post to a Philadelphia environment. Pennsylvania is a vast maker-state, a digger of coal and iron, and creator of machine things. It has history behind, the tariff around, and Mr. Mellon above. By instinct, gifts, training, surroundings, and present vocation, Mr. Lorimer sees things as an urban fabricator and commercial agent, not as an agrarian. I wonder whether the grain states agree The Post does correct our mirror for local distortion?

Its editor thinks there are too many farmers and that they produce too much stuff though I do not recall any such complaint about coal mines or steel mills. His remedy would be more modern intensive cultivation, I presume on smaller acreages. Agrarian economics is in a bad way because farm lands have been over-capitalized by real-estate speculation, not on production values. He has no use for any variety of Populism. "I am against the McNary-Haugen proposition. It is fallacious and will hurt the country." *Per contra*, on the tariff, he says: "The extraordinary prosperity of the country seems to have reconciled the greater part of the population to the permanent existence of a protective tariff, and today the chief opposition to it, and rightly, is based upon its sometimes inequitable incidence and upon the methods whereby unfairly heavy protection has been secured." He has no fear of a depopulated agricultural area or a food shortage for the dependent cities. These views may be sound editing for The Post's audience, but they do not, I submit, precisely represent the nation's stake in the soil.

LET us finally as a relief from economics examine The Post's attitude on two elementals, sex and religion. On the physical side of sex morals The Post's pages are pure; no adolescent sex delinquency ever started in them.

Parents need never feel any hesitancy about having The Post on their library table. . . . There are far too many magazines that go out of their way pictorially in an effort to stir the reader's interest by showing extremes in feminine fashions and extremes in love scenes. Love interest in fiction as in life makes the presses go round, but a wholesome magazine will never abuse it. Our stories strike twelve, but not "sex o'clock."

The Post's stories are refreshingly free from triangles, paramours, *double entendres*, or gilded vice. No ladies in undies parade through its ads, and even the stocking copy is ultra-

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conservative. The circulation appeal is never sex. I am convinced this decency is due to the fundamental Puritan morals of the proprietors, but by a happy coincidence good morals here is also good business. When you get into the million circulation class and expect to stay there and make money you go through a purification. Advertisers want respectability—nothing radical, nothing low. They sell most of their goods to people who have permanent wives, raise families and own homes; the average American by million lots does not want smut in the home; the smut-drawn circulation is ephemeral and non-buying. The fly-by-nights do not furnish homes. This is an encouraging fact, and if the decency of The Post pays, it is no less praiseworthy for that.

But we may object that its virtue is negative, based on the absence of temptation rather than on the solution of dilemmas. If it omits smut, it also omits any serious and modern discussion of sex. Sex as it appears is largely the conventional apparatus of romantic fiction. The happy ending is dominant. The Post is up-to-tomorrow on machinery, but I sometimes feel Mr. Lorimer must believe in the stork. He talks of the duty of realistic thinking and claims his periodical is not published for juveniles; yet never to be concerned with the stern and tragic aspects of sex is neither realistic nor adult. It is an incomplete picture of love, marriage, and family life you get from its fiction; the domestic virtues are unfortunately not self-enforcing. If the readers of The Post try to live and love on the models of most of its heroes and heroines, God help them. They will find Mother Nature a harsher disciplinarian even than a time-clock.

YET here again The Post is our mirror. Has not American thought on sex generally been distinguished for silences and naive duality? One way of handling the matter (and the oldest) has been to go it blind, but hopefully! At all events, the total wisdom of the ages on sex is inconsiderable; whatever it is, and whatever its newer dogmas, they are shouted from the housetops a hundred times a day in print. Sex in The Post may be a deluding kind of 18th century play among Watteau shepherds and shepherdesses (albeit in plus fours and 8-cylindere cars) but its columns at least remain peaceful. Here is a retreat where the universal disputation is stilled, and the peace may be worth the silence.

On religion The Post is benevolently neutral, Christian but creedless. This too is an unreal silence, but it is hard to say what evangelism it could undertake in the face of so many different and contumacious faiths among its millions. It omits religion, per se, from its contents. You will find here no reaction to the vivid interest in religious problems reflected in our reviews; happily also no re-interpretations of Jesus by go-getters. Among the stories The Post asked me to read as parables of its inner spirit was one essay on a religious theme. But it was a study of new evidences for the credibility of the sources of The Bible based on recent archaeological research; it would interest all religions, but offend none. This sacrifice of the religious theme denies The Post any crusading fervor; and, I think, cripples its debates in other fields for you cannot discuss the young generation, crime, or international amity without somewhere coming to rest upon a final faith.

The Post deals with a workday world here and now, based upon elemental facts and emotions, and undisturbed by what intimations of immortality may be glimpsed through art or religion. It mirrors us insofar as we are a technological civilization in which self-preservation through things by enlightened selfishness is a principal philosophy. But it denies the charge of materialism:

The editor . . . after an experience of nearly thirty years believes that terms are less clearly defined and generalizations are more frequent and ideas more vague in the discussion of materialism than of any other subject. The more-spiritual-than-thou critics seem to have an idea that they possess an occult gospel too fine and rare to concern itself with the human activities of everyday life. They might hesitate to indict the teachings of the New Testament for materialism; and yet, if they have examined them, they must know they deal with such workaday and material things as paying one's debts, living decently in peace and harmony with one's neighbors, and respecting the rights of others. These critics often fail to perceive that the things they

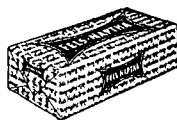
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brand as materialistic are merely a bodying forth of an inner and invisible spirituality. He who is truly spiritual is too busy applying his private beliefs to his human relationships to go about advertising the superiority of his own convictions. In other words we prefer to picture people who in stories and articles live their religion and ideals rather than to preach religion in special articles and editorials.

I hope I am no "holier-than-thou critic" for I believe that Mr. Lorimer labors with Spartan valor for his ideal better life in this nation; and I want no gospel that is not concerned with the everyday life—even of our humblest brethren. But the New Testament is greater than a code of ethics; everyday life possesses meaning only as it descends from eternal life. The critics who declare that in politics The Post caters to a group; that its economics is self-interest practised as an art; that its international views are competitive, have missed the nub of the matter. The Post will answer—"That is the kind of world we live in." There is the heart of the quarrel, age-old and non-arbitrable. It is not quite that sort of a world! Something endures after and above the sweet duties and virtues of our common need. Life remains mystical. The mirror that does not reflect this final glory of the spirit needs quicksilver.

PSYCHOLOGY FOR LOWBROWS

(Continued from page 707)

mother got sore this time, and called out, 'That's the third one in two days. Why can't you hang your brush in the new holder I got you?'

"I'm so used to the other place, my hand goes up before I think," complained Rita, turning suddenly and falling over the new bathstool, she knew was there but had forgotten. Then she *did* go to pieces! She just lay down and kicked. Jim shrugged his shoulders and sneered, 'Leave her alone, Ma. You've let her squawk that way since she was a kid. It's just a habit.'

"Why don't you keep your old pajamas off the floor? That's just a habit too," sobbed Rita. 'Maybe I'm the only one around this house that's got a reflex,' and the paragraph for the student could explain at the end of the instalment what a reflex was and why.

It takes more space and more words to write a serial than a comic, which is a disadvantage. But serials need not be funny—can even be a trifle dull, which is a corresponding relief and freedom from expense. As the years rolled by and the public became used to bolder concepts, both girls might develop hysterics and insomnia, phobias and delusions. Problems of anthropology and biology, criminology, and even political science might be lightly touched on along in 1950, and epistemology, ethics and other ultimate categories arrived at as the century turns. Many, no doubt, would never consult the explanations. But with a superlatively funny dog to point the way, perhaps a growing number would. If no one ever did, and if no brows either high or low were ever wrinkled over Nadine's and Rita's problems, this whole educational scheme would, of course, be a flat failure.

But to return to our original thesis. The lowbrows are with us. They outnumber the intellectuals, and they are here to stay. They are born into a solar system which no one but Einstein understands, but neither they nor we need manage the Milky Way, so no harm is done. Neither do they understand other people or themselves. But unlike the stellar mysteries, their families and their friends cannot be ignored. They must be lived with, brought up, loved, endured, voted in or out, and paid for. Lem and Lena may avoid the immensities of the sky, but the humanities of earth none of us can escape. And fortunately a few facts about these matters can be grasped even by those who are not intellectual titans. Just as persistent education has made many people more sensitive to the hollow tooth or the hollow cough before they became toothless or were in their coffins, could they not be trained to observe the tantrums and daydreams, the fears, loves, solitary withdrawals, odd thievings, vagrancies, jealousies, talents and stupidities of themselves and of their children, and apply first aid and expert advice? And could they not learn to do this before the family

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is broken up and scattered in stolen cars, bootlegging cellars, disorderly houses, divorce courts, and asylums? With their vision thus clarified, might not their scrutiny of civic issues and officials become more thoughtful, and their detection of public as well as private abnormalities grow more acute?

Perhaps in time, Lem and Lena might learn something. Perhaps some facts about their fellows or themselves might lodge if reiterated often enough. Perhaps at least a law, a phrase, a system, could be gradually absorbed, even though not understood, as most of us accept gravitation without knowing why. Perhaps a course of psychological strips, and of scientific serials would start something. Perhaps the movies and the radio would take it up. Perhaps it might pave the way to something more. Perhaps it wouldn't. If not—WHAT WILL?

IS UNEMPLOYMENT HERE?

(Continued from page 681)

Cleveland reports that "there have been no special steps taken to alleviate conditions. The general feeling along the line was that the opening up of the automobile industry would be the greatest step to reduce unemployment." Youngstown, Ohio, increased public work "after March." "The only definite effort in Kansas City is an attempt to induce the County Court to appropriate larger amounts for outdoor relief." In Dallas, "The city has increased public work on the streets and allowed only residents of the city to have these jobs. They permit the men to work one week, then lay them off and take on another group."

"I do not need to state that charitable organizations cannot begin to meet the problems of an unemployment crisis," writes Joel D. Hunter, general superintendent of the United Charities, Chicago. "They not only cannot, but should not. I have been trying to get the Council of Social Agencies to appoint a committee of leading business men . . . [to confer with city officials], concerning emergency measures to take care of the homeless men who are now sleeping in police stations, on floors of mission houses, etc. Second, to increase the number of jobs available. This can be done in two ways: By speeding up some of the public works. My information is that about \$12,000,000 will be spent in public works in and around Chicago in the present calendar year. Also, by increasing the number of jobs in private business. I think this can be done if the telephone company will continue the work that it has already begun in installing dials and railroads place equipment orders."

The Welfare Council in New York City has appointed a committee, at Governor Smith's request, to cooperate with the industrial commissioner in his survey of the unemployment situation in both city and state. This request was telephoned from Albany to a gathering of some two hundred social workers, representing nearly a hundred agencies. Bailey B. Burritt, general director of the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, urged the following steps:

That Mayor Walker and the Chamber of Commerce be asked to consider active measures for increasing by five per cent the amount of employment in industry in New York.

That the city be asked to make \$1,000,000 available for public improvements in such a way that the work can start at once.

That any city building program be advanced immediately and strenuously.

That the governor and the legislature be called upon to prepare plans for a more permanent remedy.

That the private citizens of New York be asked to increase by ten per cent their donations to social service organizations.

In spite of our experience in 1914-5 and '21-2, American communities have paid little attention to similar "standard recommendations" our carefully set up committees worked out to forestall or to alleviate just such a situation as now exists. The President's Unemployment Conference in 1921 not only mapped out such measures but instituted a searching study of business cycles and unemployment under the National Bureau of Economic Research. The Conference's own committee on this latter phase of the subject brought out ten major recommendations in 1923, covering not only such points as the collection of fundamental data, employment bureaus, and unemployment reserve funds; the responsibility of banks, the federal

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By W. W. BURKE

This material has been collected and arranged from the standpoint of the agency executive. It was compiled during the last three years for the use of the students in the Graduate School of Social Service Administration of the University of Chicago.

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reserve system, and public utilities, etc., but the control of private and public construction at their peaks. In line therewith the Jones bill has been before Congress for 4 years. As John B. Andrews, secretary of the American Association for Labor Legislation, summarizes it, it would

appropriate \$150,000,000 for public works, including rural post roads, river and harbor improvements, flood control and public buildings outside the District of Columbia. Work under this appropriation is to be undertaken only when it is apparent that a marked decrease of employment is under way in the construction industry of the United States. . . . Adoption of this "prosperity reserve" by the federal government would be of further help by stimulating the creation of similar "prosperity reserves" by states and cities.

A we read again of mass meetings and relief committees, of bread lines in the Bowery two blocks long, of evicted families and hungry children, we realize that we still have no means for measuring the degree or the extent of unemployment. We do not plan our public work to dovetail into the slack times in private industry. We do not know how to locate industry's stagnant pools and clear waters, and we have no way of shifting men from one to the other. With some four million workers unwillingly idle, we ask one another dazedly, "Is unemployment here? How much is there? Where is it? Why?"

WHEN MASS PRODUCTION STALLS

(Continued from page 686)

for 1927. Through the roof, came the well-intentioned plan of staggering shifts (a helpful move in a time of general depression) which under the circumstances tended to keep men from seeking other jobs. Meanwhile, they could not meet expenses at home on the part-time pay. Through the roof had come the assumption that high wages in the past had given Ford employes fat they could live on over lean months. Unquestionably there were many of whom this was true; and there were others of whom it was true until the part-time work had stripped them to the bone; then came their lay-off in such numbers that the local labor market could not absorb them. Men who had taken Ford employment in earnest as a means of permanent livelihood, who had responded to the Ford policy of encouraging high standards of home life, were among those who were squeezed hardest when the bottom fell out of their earnings and they could not keep up payments on their houses.

If automobile manufacturers or tool makers elsewhere invent anything that plays into the making or the running of a car, the management "on the roof" at Ford's are quick to know of it. But there was nothing to indicate that they had heard of what Hills Brothers or the Dennison Manufacturing Company have done in tackling the problems of broken employment, what has been attempted by pioneers in glass and machinery, what any one of a dozen firms in textiles, clothing, or novelties has tried out. Fragmentary things no doubt, but suggestive as a new crank shaft, or a welded wheel. Some of the problems of seasonal and intermittent industry are incurable, says Hoover; but some are not, he goes on, and every one cured is a contribution to their solution; towards finding some reasonable economic security for the individual which will "remove the fear of total family disaster in loss of the job." Ford cars have invaded Europe from Ireland to Russia. It is to be doubted if his overseas salesmen have sent back anything on the systems of employment insurance abroad, which are national inventions after their kind. But what of our own innovations—those unemployment funds to which firms and unions chip in in clothing markets, or the Huber Bill in Wisconsin, in which Professor Commons adapted to the hazard of unemployment a principle which has proved its worth with respect to the hazard of industrial accidents? It was not so long ago that our workmen's compensation laws were also something new under the sun. (They are about as old as the Ford car.) The need for them was equally neglected; their institution was a revolutionary bursting of shells of habit as between "masters and servants." Instead of our old hodgepodge of doctrines as to employers' liability and contributory negligence, which let the risks of work crash down on the worker and his family, they spread out some of the burden over the trade, and ultimately over the consuming public where

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these losses of life and limb belong as part of the cost of production. Similarly, following the Unemployment Conference of 1921, a special committee on business cycles under the chairmanship of Owen D. Young, underscored the importance of "reserve funds or savings during periods of prosperity from which the worker may draw during periods of compulsory unemployment." Their establishment,

by the employer or by associated workers to take care of foreseen or unforeseen contingencies has proved advantageous in the past. Neither reserves against decline of inventory value set up by manufacturers nor unemployment benefits of trade-unions are new things to American industrial life. The principle may well be extended.

THE baseball diamond outside the employment office at Fordson had been thronged on Monday morning, the week of my visit, with men who wanted to work for Ford. Six or seven thousand men applied for work that week in December and they were hiring three or four hundred a day. The employment records gave them rehire lists to draw from in singling out men with the special equipment called for by any department. They were taking back their old men first, and the envelopes, thin and fat, were much in use. They were picking men for the assembly line, and here it was that the sifting process I spoke of in my first article was at work. They were after intelligence, activity, auto experience if possible; young fellows for the most part, American, Canadian, British; Scandinavians as well and Americanized Poles and Russians. "Every one wants to work on the new car" said the superintendent. That day a weasened old fellow had turned up from Louisiana; he had driven north with his wife in a Ford. And I was told of a "great big innocent kid" from Atlanta, who had announced himself as an "ex-convict." There was a bushel of letters from North, East, South and West.

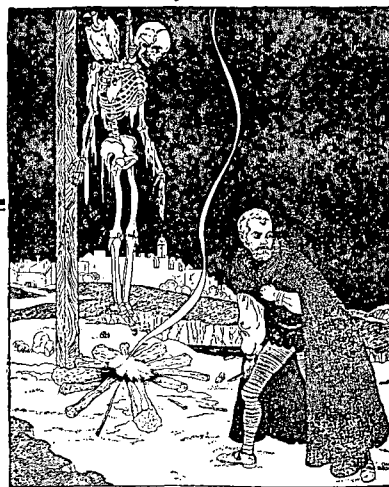
There was something simple and direct in these hiring and firing negotiations, contrasting as they did with the more elaborate functionings of the employment departments of some of our big industries. Certainly the whole situation, the lure of the pay, the pressure for jobs, tended to create a picture of labor as a foot-loose commodity, welling in like a tide. If men didn't like Ford's bargain, there were a lot of oncomers who did. It is not to be wondered at that under such circumstances, many an industrial executive comes to regard the employment reservoir as something to tap today and empty into tomorrow, without thought of its human entourage. That indeed was the crux of the situation when they laid off men at Ford's no less than when they were taking them on.

Then the burden of household support was being shifted from the payroll to some hypothetical base outside the realm of Ford concern. As a Detroit business man put it, the Ford Motor Company is a business not a philanthropy; with sales off, the only source from which wages could have been drawn was past profits. Yet that is the source from which an industrial corporation meets payments on its bonds during a depression. And a whole trade insured against unemployment could shift much of the load from profits to prices.

Meanwhile to cut down a working force is all but like lifting a mortgage and transferring the interest charges by magic to other shoulders. There was a saving, a bonus, if you will, on every man put on part time or lopped off Ford's payroll. The discontinued earnings of Ford employes did not coalesce into any obligation which had to be reckoned with in company plans, any pressure to shorten the lay-off and overlap the two productions; anything even to compare with the administrative concern over throwing out old machines which as tools were worth a dollar a pound and as scrap \$9 or \$10 a ton. The pressure was all the other way round. And in the general view, it was just the men's hard luck.

WITH such tenuous security from above, what chances are there of the automobile workers bestirring themselves from below, other than individually, for their protection? Union out-of-work benefits are not to be reckoned with at this juncture. The old craft organizations were long since ironed out of the mechanized industries of Detroit. The United Automobile, Aircraft and Vehicle Workers' Union of America, described to me as an embodiment of the One Big Union Idea, pulled a strike among the body workers at the

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Fisher plant some years ago which lasted thirty days. A strike last fall at the Briggs' plant was over in a week.

Among the old-line unions in the metal trades, the last strike of any consequence was that of 1920 in the Timken works, engineered by the machinists. Today, an employer told me there are scarcely 300 men in the machinists' local. A trade unionist put the figure at 700. At any rate, in this great center of machine production, it is inconsequential and President Martel of the city labor federation was frank to say that to unionize the 150,000 workers in the machine trades was too large a mouthful for organized labor in Detroit to bite off by itself. Initiative, to his mind, must be taken by the international unions. He disparaged the talk of a concerted campaign in 1926 in connection with the Detroit convention of the American Federation of Labor as something "handed out by the Chamber of Commerce to shake down a lot of manufacturers." He did it with much the same crust as, at the Manufacturers Association, they enjoyed recounting that the A. F. of L. had flivvered in an effort to finance such a campaign by assessing every member a dollar.

At the Los Angeles convention last fall, the executive council reported that with the work of one craft divided into thirty-four parts by the machine processes, the automobile industry requires "new types of organization." Two conferences had been held to consider inaugurating a general campaign "with the question of jurisdiction suspended." What will come of it is on the precarious ground of prophecy, but the more pliant leadership of President Green toward "organizing the unorganized" is what Ford would call a breaking of habit shells.

I attended a meeting of the central body in Detroit. There was joy over the outcome of a municipal election, which would strengthen them in the public services. The only fly in the ointment was the lament of the custom tailors' delegate that not one of the candidates they had supported wore a suit with a union label on it! The picture I came away with was that of small groups of unionists, who had contrived to build dikes against the undermining tides of non-union workers, employed and unemployed, which surrounded them. Indeed, I could not help but feel that they regarded the semi-skilled workers of the machine shops more as a threat to their security than as a field for missionary effort.

In talking with me, President Martel blasted the employers in the mechanical trades for firing out the unions, cutting wages, installing prison labor methods and what not. He was equally outspoken as to the Communists, a lot of hair-brained people whom it was wise to let talk their heads off. "But if Weisbord can crack open the situation and give the employers the hell they've given us, it's coming to them. They won't get any consolation from us—either way."

HIS reference was to Albert Weisbord, the young Communist who effectively organized the long drawn-out textile strike in Passaic. There is nothing gumshoe about his presence in Detroit. He has opened an office downtown and at the Manufacturers Association I was given a pretty explicit report of how he was reshaping the local Workers (Communist) Party in line with the program of the national body which calls for closely knit homogeneous groups. At the Ford plant, the secret service department had told me of their activities and seemed to regard them as less important, say, than the pilfering of brasses from the war transports under wreckage. It "lets them blow."

To Weisbord's mind unemployment in Detroit has been due not merely to changes in models but to such mechanization and speeding up of work that men are chronically jobless. And to him the change in models is but a curtain-raiser for the "most intensified competition that has ever taken place" (with the home market saturated, foreign makes and tariff walls abroad) between Ford's vertical trust and General Motors aligned with Dupont and U.S. Steel. He sees business headed for a slump within a year, further and violent market changes, increased competition, greater speeding up, longer hours, more unemployment, attempts to beat down wages—"and this in turn means increased opportunity to organize and revolutionize the working class."

Therefore what he calls their "ideological campaign among party members and sympathizers,"—shop and street "nuclei,"

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the shop papers filled with quips and exhortations, aired grievances and reports of rate cuts. Therefore the urgings of party members to join their respective trade unions and bore from within. Therefore the missionary work among clubs, sick and death benefit organizations, fraternal bodies and what they call "language fragments." Even now Weisbord claims they are the only group strong enough "to jam 3,500 to 4,000 people into some of the largest halls in Detroit—almost entirely auto-workers." Today, his soap-boxers are unmolested, the penny sheets sold at factory gates. This he regards as temporary, due to the "arrogance of Detroit employers," but—

To organize here means jail and clubbing. We are organizing for struggle. When once the workers begin to move, this city will be the center of revolutionary activity. Any large strike here means a general strike. Any large strike means a revolutionary situation,—here at the heart of American capitalism and Ford worshipped all over the world. With hundreds of thousands of workmen out, 2,500 police are not going to stand in their way. That means the militia, the regular army. That means men shot down in the streets, and when a government shoots down men, events shape themselves.

In other words, if Weisbord is a prophet, Detroit will have more than an unemployment situation on its hands in case of a general depression. His thinking is not very different in kind from that which animates labor policy in certain high quarters, only in reverse. "High wages and subordination." "Wage cuts and insurrection." And if the troubled state of Europe teaches us anything in these post-war years, it is that dictatorship has its chance, whether Fascist or Communist, when and where democracy has broken down. And especially where it has been weakened from the opposite quarter. Weisbord was frank to say that "the workers would not come out on strike for Communism, but because the employers forced them. The strike would be on some concrete issue and for freedom to unionize." The general wage-cuts he anticipated were discounted to me by Detroiters familiar with the industrial situation; but there was no blinking the maladjustments in employment, for which the big employing corporations are ultimately responsible.

DETROIT went through a strenuous period in 1914, when it was one of the few busy centers. Thousands of men, accompanied by their families, descended on the city, with resulting suffering. In the effort to balance supply and demand the Employers' Association publishes a weekly bulletin, called a Labor Barometer. It maintains also a Free Employment Bureau, which, since its institution twenty-three years ago, has placed 650,000 workers in the plants of the city. The general front of the Employers' Association is indicated by a paragraph at the top of one of its folders:

97 per cent of Detroit's work people pursue their various callings without let or hindrance from organized labor domination.

The association stands for the "American plan," which in local practice in the building trades means that the strongest organized unions work closed shop on the same buildings on which the weaker trades work open shop. There was a sympathetic strike to unionize them all on a large theater under construction last fall. It was met by a muster of builders, owners, and bankers involved in the other great structures going up (one of them announced as the biggest office building in the world). A war chest of \$100,000 was said to have been quickly subscribed, one maverick contractor was made to toe the line and the strike was nipped in the bud. It was a foretaste of what might happen if the dominant motor industry were confronted with a serious labor conflict.

In the Detroit factories there is no such hybrid situation. I was assured at the offices of the Employers' Association that men are not discharged because of union membership or activity; but was told that there has not been a unionized metal trades plant since the war. And to their minds, Detroit "would never have produced the automobiles it has if the unions were in the saddle." They point also to their freedom from strikes; and whatever its abatements on other counts, the execution of their American plan has very largely saved the flow of work in the big machine industries from disruptions due to industrial disputes. How else, when there must be at

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least two parties to a dispute? The charge is often made that individually, if not concertedly, the big plants stimulate the coming of workers to Detroit in order to have a sizable labor pool to pick from, to spread fear of losing your job and to keep control in their hands. The natural flow of fortune-seekers to the city gives color to such charges, but as against them must be weighed the national circulation by the Employers' Association of its Labor Barometer. Similarly, its mutual employment bureau is open to construction at once as a common service and as a potential strike-breaking agency. I have no means for judging these conflicting claims, but the bureau is a very apparent advance over the unrelated employment offices of individual plants, just as these are advances over hiring and firing by shop foremen. It is a city achievement in the organized handling of labor comparable to a belt-line railway in handling freight in an industrial center. If it leaves untouched the prime question of who is to carry the burden of broken time, its normal effect must be to reduce, rather than increase, idleness and wage-losses due to taking on and letting off men in the ordinary course of work.

SO far as the larger dislocations in employment go, Chester M. Culver, general manager of the association, writes:

The fact that a solution has not been found only emphasizes the limitation on human ingenuity. The problem is not confined to industry, but is very largely a problem of marketing; which means that some way must be found to overcome the fickleness of the public. It is illustrated in just what occurred to Mr. Ford.

Nonetheless, there is a general feeling in the trade that Ford was very slow to make up and settle on the design of his new car. Other auto-manufacturers are credited with working two years ahead and with being in position to change models by departments. While Ford was making one shift in models, the Dodge Company made three and built one entire new plant in the process; Chrysler is said to have changed models with a gap of ten minutes in production; but theirs of course is a very different proposition from the mass operations at Ford's geared to a single complex output.

The veerings in public demand which call for such radical changes in production and engender chills and fevers in the wage-earning community, thus to a degree create what physicians would call their own anti-body. They speed up a management to get back into the market. From this point of view, Ford's huge surplus was like so much padding, dulling the jog of the market at his elbow. His employees hadn't that cushion; nor does the prospective discomfiture of other Detroit wage-earners have to be reckoned with on the ledgers of other Detroit factories in facing either market changes or a general depression. The complete dominance of the employers must exaggerate the tendency on the part of all to follow the line of least resistance, the tendency on the part of the least scrupulous to disregard the human element utterly, and thus to drag the rest down to their level.

Imagine, if you will, the healthier balance that would be struck if the unemployed-man-days to be anticipated in Detroit in the next five years were lumped into a great fund of potential labor power and Hoover or Couzens made receiver for it. Things would bestir themselves.

Yet while the immediate economic drive is all one way, that is not the whole story. You have the feeling expressed that here is something which management hasn't solved and which it will be held to book for, however baffling its own position in handling it. More than that, many big corporate industries, in seeking freedom from labor interference, have swung around to a policy of high pay and of beating the union to it when it comes to eliminating grievances. And they can't be unmindful that broken wages and no wages at all are hotbeds of discontent. Moreover, they have seen their policy not only as good for production, but as weighting the driving-wheels of prosperity,—building up a big consumers' demand among the wage-earners themselves. This is peculiarly true of the newer costly utilities—from radio outfits to bungalows, of which motor cars themselves are the prime example. The dishevelment caused by unemployment reacts all along the line. This has not escaped the attention of far-seeing business

executives like Owen D. Young, who, in the committee report mentioned, visualized lessened earnings as intensifying the forces for financial depression.

And here in Detroit there is the leadership on the part of citizens, men and women who have thrown themselves into the upbuilding of this oldest of mid-western cities, come upon new days, and who are not unmindful that unemployment is a fault in its economic foundations which jeopardizes their structures of health, education and social engineering. One of them put it to me in a way which recapitulates the civic picture I have presented:

So long as there is the present competition, we are going to have fluctuations between makes. Chevrolet pushes Ford off the street, or vice versa. The Packard gives the Cadillac a run, or the contrary. Things change so fast you scarcely know who is up and who is down at a given time. Meanwhile, more is at stake than the car that passes you on the street. It's got to be looked at against the whole city landscape.

We must come to see the thing in terms of an intricate social disaster. Here they drag a man or boy off the farm where at least he is assured of bread and butter. He is lured to a big city like Detroit where he seems to sit on the top of the world. After a while a real estate dealer sells him a house—10 per cent down and 1 per cent a month. For ten years he is hooked on that 1 per cent. An auto dealer sells him a car on time. The whole instalment game operates on him—mortgages his income way ahead. Then bluey—he hasn't got a job at all. He can't realize on the equity he's got in these damn instalment purchases, and everybody else is in the same boat. A considerable number lose all they have and would starve except for charity. It hits the grocer, the doctor, the butcher, the moving-picture man; it hits the hospitals and the municipal government which pays the bills for relief, at the same time that taxes are defaulted.

There's got to be an answer that will stabilize income for the working man. I see perplexities in state insurance schemes, but that raises the question whether the industries will themselves create unemployment reserves of some sort. Too much of the thinking in this field has been confined to college professors and social workers. I look to results rather from the business leaders themselves. And less is to be got that way by damning them than by getting them to approach it all in a fresh way.

AFTER all, Ford with his initiative and power merely exhibits in advance and on a huge drafting board, dynamic trends in modern industry. My feeling is that there is something instinctive and fundamental underlying his ruthless dismissal of executives, his nearsightedness when it came to social by-products while he laid-off men and overhauled his tools. What I have in mind is something different from the customary charge of autocracy lodged against him. He has had to buck tradition, business opinion, shop practices; he has broken shells of habit right and left. He wants orders obeyed, or his insurgency is short-circuited. There is always the danger that his course will degenerate into the whims of a narrow dictatorship. But on its constructive side, his is an intense desire to have his establishment free to experiment. His is the genius of foraging.

But other men have some of these same qualities; and with them an instinct for self-preservation, a passion for being masters of their own lives. Michigan was settled by pioneers. Not farm hands but farmers were the type. He is such a one. And it is not to be supposed that indefinitely their descendants, by the lathe and assembly-line side, will put up with a lesser estate in the collective adventure of modern industry.

If modern industrial operations are themselves to be kept free from the drag of human commitments, then the men who work at them must find security outside the day's job. Security against such hazards as unemployment. My best guess is that if Ford dropped \$100,000,000 of his surplus in 1927, his employees dropped a sum very nearly equaling it in lost wages; but his hundred million was in a sense investment; theirs, in every sense, waste. If Ford, with his abhorrence for waste, should put his mind to work on the problem, something as revolutionary as his scheme of financing might come out of it. If he could visualize the junk of household goods and chattels, of smashed hopes and wrecked endeavors, thrown up by his lay-off, see it as he sees that great pile of war scrap at Fordson, and set his bent for salvaging at work to fend against a recurrence of that sort of thing as a tolerated factor in industry, what might not issue? (Continued on page 728)

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THAT heap of ships' bones in a sense symbolized something else. It stood for discarded machines and presses, for processes gone dead and assembly lines torn up, for gutted jobs and a great engine of mass production stalled. That is what impressed Mary van Kleeck, chief of the division of industrial studies of the Russell Sage Foundation and member of the President's Unemployment Conference of 1921, who visited the Ford plants last fall:

"Quantity production is inherently insecure; with so much staked on one product a slight change in demand can throw it out of gear. Europe is trying by 'rationalization' to stake out a market and to control output in relation to it. Even the coal industry has yielded in a measure to such control, as in Germany, where the miners' employment is relatively secure. Mass production with competition, as in the United States, leaves the workers' jobs at the mercy of overproduction through poor judgment as well as through changes in demand. Such unforeseeable factors can so wreck a production program that security for the workers is illusory. Mass production overdone is a challenge to our whole philosophy of increasing output, which has been the goal of scientific management quite as much as of profiteers. . . ."

Much has been written of the monotony of mass production. I have dealt here with its insecurity. In the decades when immigration was unrestricted, there were vast numbers of footloose men who could be taken on and off industry, with compensating ebb and flow at the seaboard. Detroit drew on a second supply of footloose men—the sod-busters from the country districts and small towns; and the suitcase crowd still gives tone to the town and its thinking on industrial problems.

But it is a different thing when workers have tendrils that have struck root in the households and schools of a city's life. Of the cases receiving relief from the Detroit Department of Public Welfare in 1926, there were considerable numbers born in Austria, Germany, Italy, Poland, Rumania, Russia, but together they did not make up a third of the total. They were not new immigrants. They averaged five to the family. And more than two-thirds of the total were born in the United States and Canada; over one-third were native white Americans averaging over four to the family.

The production men are better off as to wages and do a higher grade of work than the old-time common labor; but that was always merely the stepping stone for an incoming immigrant group. Their specialized aptitudes give them no equivalent foothold in other industries; their habit-sets even stood in the way of some of them getting back into the new assembly lines at Ford's. Theirs had been dead-end occupations. They had no equity in their work; no say as to the manner in which they were staggered or laid off. They might have been red iron ore or limestone or coal in the big bins at Fordson. And their footing as members of the community was equally shaky. Thrift is a good thing; but is it social thrift for tremendous corporate industries to count on individual savings as the sole protection against their own hazards? A year's savings go under rapidly before the fixed charges in a city where the cost of living is notoriously high. Modern business has developed all manner of credit schemes by which workers mortgage their incomes over long periods of time for equipment for urban living, but little as yet to give security for that income—or any part of it.

Ford has done more than any living man to strengthen the position of the man who would work his livelihood out on the soil. He has helped him master isolation and distance. He has put power at his elbow. But when it comes to the production men who build his cars, the net result of his hiring and firing is the other way round. High pay, fear, the urge of the machine and of the boss have been relied on at Ford's, like a four-cylinder engine, to keep them at work, and when the gas was shut off, they stopped. They were no longer production men and their livelihood was a flat tire.

The security of a city rests on the security of its citizens. Detroit needs to re-examine the underpinnings of democracy in this day of untrammelled industrial enterprises which have drawn such huge accretions to her urban mass—so piled up wealth and tall buildings, but so weakened the normal root-holds of domestic well-being.

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