

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
LIBRARY EXTENSION PUBLICATION

VOL. 1

JANUARY, 1935

NO. 2

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ADVENTURES IN READING  
SEVENTH SERIES

CURRENT BOOKS, 1934

CORNELIA SPENCER LOVE



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CHAPEL HILL

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*Of the Library of the University of North Carolina*



*Published four times a year, October, January, April, and July,  
by the University of North Carolina Press. Entered  
as second-class matter February 5, 1926, under  
the act of August 24, 1912.  
Chapel Hill, N. C.*

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA LIBRARY  
EXTENSION PUBLICATION

Vol. I, No. 1. October, 1934. *The Southern Garden*. W. L. Hunt.  
Vol. I, No. 2. January, 1935. *Adventures in Reading, Seventh Series*.  
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## CHAPTER I

### NOVELS OF CHARACTER AND SITUATION

*A Modern Tragedy* by Phyllis Bentley is indeed a poignant tragedy, simply written, with no melodramatic appeal to the emotions, but describing the inevitable downfall of a weak character who yet holds the reader's sympathy. The West Riding of Yorkshire, England, during the depression years, is the scene of the story, which centers around Walter Haigh, a young man of honest and respected parentage, who becomes involved in the dishonest schemes of a textile mill owner. Ambitious to achieve and to marry the girl he loves, Walter closes his eyes to Leonard Tasker's dishonesty and becomes his partner. From then on his moral disintegration is compellingly shown. Somewhat less convincing is the secret love cherished by his strong sister Rosamond for the powerful Tasker. It is interesting to compare textile conditions in England during their hard times with those existing in manufacturing towns in North Carolina.

Another Englishwoman named Phyllis writes an excellent novel in *Private Worlds*, but one with an entirely different setting and cast of characters. The forbidden, the unknown, always is fascinating, and what could be more remote and unapproachable territory for the ordinary reader than a hospital for the mentally defective? Against the background of a big psychopathic hospital for men and women, three doctors—two men and one woman—are shown in various crises of their professional and private lives. The patients play an important part, too, and the descriptions of their actions and feelings sound scientifically and psychologically correct. Young Dr. Macgregor does not always ring quite as true. His lack of good sportsmanship in his profession, his infatuation for the treacherous Myra—in spite of great devotion to his bride—are hard to understand. More natural is Sally Macgregor's hidden jealousy, not of the vamp Myra, but of the co-worker and partner, Jane Everest.

*Subjects for Study*1. *A Modern Tragedy*, by Phyllis Bentley

- a. Tell the story of Walter Haigh, and of the lives that his touched on.
- b. Whom do you consider the strongest character in the book?
- c. Discuss differences and similarities between English and southern mill workers.
- d. Read the Epilogue.

*Additional References:*

Bentley, Phyllis. *Carr; Inheritance; Spinner of the Years.*

2. *Private Worlds*, by Phyllis Bottome

- a. The hospital and the patients.
- b. The three doctors and their interrelations.
- c. Story of Myra.
- d. Story of Sally.
- e. Does Dr. Jane Everest seem convincing as a woman?



## CHAPTER II

### AMERICA: PAST CORRUPTION AND FUTURE HOPE

John McConaughy's *Who Rules America* is a study of graft and political corruption in the federal government, showing that the people have been betrayed by the powers of greed and organized wealth since the earliest days of the Republic. "Back of the ideals of a Washington, back of the passionate democracy of the much maligned Aaron Burr, back of Jefferson, back of Lincoln, back of all our great figures, has lurked the figure of greed ready to smash through and rob our people." For practically every graft in the present a parallel is found in the past. The book is all of one color, black, but it does enable us to feel that the revelations of recent iniquity are not unprecedented, and perhaps that may be of some help in dealing with the present situation.

To turn to a brighter picture, President Roosevelt's *On Our Way* sets forth through his speeches and executive orders the fundamentals of his planning for national recovery, making clear that "all of the proposals and all of the legislation since the Fourth Day of March have not been just a collection of haphazard schemes, but rather the orderly component parts of a connected logical whole." Charles Merz says, "The essentially experimental character of the administration's program stands out unmistakably in the record of this first adventurous year. No less evident is the genius of the President both for invention and for compromise, his obvious devotion to his task, his high spirits and his untiring courage."

#### *Subjects for Study*

#### 1. *Who Rules America?* by John McConaughy

- a. The Funding Fathers—Tammany to the rescue.
- b. The second great betrayal—Jackson slays "The Monster."
- c. Pay-day, 1837—Coming of the storm—Sack of a nation.
- d. "Inevitable economic tendency."
- e. Lincoln Colcord's summary of the author and his book

2. *On Our Way*, by Franklin D. Roosevelt

- a. Read either a whole chapter or a few selected speeches and messages.
- b. Comment on "The prose style in which Mr. Roosevelt expresses himself is perfectly suited to the kind of leadership which he exercises."

*Additional References:*

Lorentz, Pare. *The Roosevelt Year: a Photographic Record.*

Unofficial Observer. *The New Dealers.*

### CHAPTER III

## SOVIET RUSSIA, THE DARK SIDE

The *New York Times* critic characterizes *Escape From the Soviets*, by Tatiana Tchernavin, and *Winter in Moscow*, by Malcolm Muggeridge, as "the most remarkable books about Soviet Russia which have yet appeared in this country." The books are poles apart in tone, but both of them grip and stir the reader, the one, by its simple, unadorned story of the suffering of one family, the other by its witty, devastating criticism.

Madame Tchernavin and her husband were Russians of the intellectual class, she a teacher, later a museum curator, and he a university professor of science. They strove honestly to serve the Soviet Government, but their utmost efforts could barely eke out an existence for themselves and their young son, and soon this comparative paradise was taken away from them. They were arrested by the OGPU agents and separately imprisoned—the boy left to shift for himself—during that campaign of terrorism begun in 1930 against the intellectuals and deliberately designed to wipe out the most valuable and necessary group in all Russia. The story of the family's escape, their desperate trek through the Arctic marshes and forests across the border into Finland, is a minor epic of human fortitude and devotion. Yet with all the terrible story she is telling, Madame Tchernavin writes in an incredibly temperate mood, with a moderation, a patient, intelligent reasonableness, that carries sincerity in every line.

Mr. Muggeridge, correspondent to the *Manchester Guardian*, makes no attempt to be dispassionate about the great Russian experiment. He frankly expresses his dislike of it in a series of ironic sketches in which he is both novelist and reporter. "The episodes in my book," he says, "are truth imaginatively expressed, and the characters real people imaginatively described." With pen dipped in acid he attacks the Russian officials; the taken-in travelers—the Shaws and Passfields—who see only what the Soviets want them to see and return home to sing their praises; the army of correspondents, who dare not write the truth because of a heavy censorship. The truth of the famine, of the fear under which the

Russian lives—fear of the OGPU, fear of talking to strangers, fear of admitting the truth to his own kind lest there be a traitor among them. Mr. Muggeridge himself could not write his book until he returned to England.

### *Subjects for Study*

#### 1. *Escape From the Soviets*, by Tatiana Tchernavin

- a. The Tchernavins under the Bolsheviks.
- b. "Burn everything"—The end of family life—Alone.
- c. Parcels for the prisoners—Cross-examination—Arrest—Pigeons.
- d. The visit—Plan to escape.
- e. On the way—Lost—At death's door—Back to civilization.
- f. The book could be powerfully presented by the reading of consecutive excerpts, connected by explanatory narrative.

#### *Additional References:*

Tchirikova, Olga. *Sandrik: Child of Russia*.

Tolstoy, Alexandra. *I worked for the Soviet*.

#### 2. *Winter in Moscow*, by Malcolm Muggeridge.

- a. Give thumbnail sketches of certain Soviet officials.
- b. Of certain correspondents and professional "authorities."
- c. The censorship of the former and the duping of the later.
- d. Existing conditions in Russia—Famine—Official control.
- e. Does the picture seem too black? Is the sternness of the Soviet Government necessary? Must Russia be crucified now for her own future good?
- f. Read two or three of the scenes, such as those of the peasant woman and Comrade Babel; Anna Mikhailova; Pye in the dead village; Dr. Dyvov, the dentist.

#### *Additional References:*

Durstine, R. S. *Red Thunder*.

Eddy, G. S. *Russia Today*.

Monkhouse, Allan. *Moscow, 1911-1933*.

#### CHAPTER IV

### SOVIET RUSSIA, THE BRIGHT SIDE

We are accustomed to hearing from many people snap judgments and criticisms of the Soviet system, the lack of freedom of the individual, his submergence in the state, the poverty and famine. But no one has a right to form opinions of a foreign country, composed of people of a temperament entirely alien to Americans, and with a previous history as alien, without understanding what enormous progress they have made in a relatively short time, without reading many books on Russia and then trying to sift them to form an unbiased—if hazy—conception of the whole country.

One of the most encouraging books is Fannina W. Halle's *Woman in Soviet Russia*, which shows that in some respects Russian women have attained a freedom far beyond the present reach of their American sisters. They actually do seem to possess perfect equality with men. They can hold the same jobs, receive the same pay, and make their voices equally potent in the Party. In their personal lives they have freedom to marry or not to marry, to divorce, to bear or not to bear children. What more could women ask for? The account of the hospitals, doctors—both men and women—*Prophylactoria*, care of mothers, is a revelation of scientific efficiency. What if the book does paint too bright a scene, if the Soviet institutions still fall far short of adequacy? Russia is on the way, and must be given time to work out her own salvation.

A remarkable story of new Russia in the making, from its low tide in 1922 until the beginning of 1934, is told in Walter Duranty's *Duranty Reports Russia*, a selection of his despatches sent to the *New York Times*. It was not planned as a book, but it gains in historical interest through presentation of people and events as they were seen at the time, by a correspondent who has kept in check his own prejudices, antipathies and sympathies. He speaks of the problem of covering news in Soviet Russia. "It has been only too easy to paint the picture black, and a little harder, though easy enough, to paint it bright and rosy. Both are factually true and both are false, because no picture of a nation's life anywhere in the world can be accurate and honest without a blending of tones. The

full picture balances errors and shortcomings by success and achievement. Truth is never so distorted as when it is divided. Part of the truth can be as deceiving as the worst of lies." It is interesting to see that Mr. Duranty ridicules the idea of Red propaganda abroad. He says that they have neither time, cash, nor energy for it, since "the Stalinist socialization of Russia demands three things, imperatively—every ounce of effort, every cent of money, and peace."

### *Subjects for Study*

#### 1. *Woman in Soviet Russia*, by Fannina W. Halle

- a. Women in ancient Russia—Dawn of a new age—Women in pre-revolutionary Russia.
- b. The Revolution of 1917 and the liberation of women.
- c. The new sexual ethical code—Mother and child—Love, marriage, and the family.
- d. Prostitution—The *Prophylactoria*.
- e. Women in politics—In intellectual life—In production.
- f. Contrast the advantages and disadvantages, the gains and losses, of Soviet women.

#### *Additional Reference:*

Pokrovsky, M. N. *Brief History of Russia*.

#### 2. *Duranty Reports Russia*, by Walter Duranty

- a. A personal note about the author.
- b. Russia and Lenin.
- c. Russia and Stalin.
- d. The Five-Year Plan.
- e. Collectivization and the elimination of class distinctions.
- f. Russia's ledger: gain and cost.

#### *Additional References:*

Barbusse, Henri. *Stalin*.

Sholokhov, Mikhail. *And Quiet Flows the Don*.

Wicksteed, Alexander. *My Russian Neighbors*,



## CHAPTER V

### ENGLISH COUNTRY LIFE

Both of the novels to be considered in this chapter deal with modern life against a background of beautiful English countryside. One of the authors, though of the old school, concerns himself more particularly with plot. The younger writer, described by a critic as "a Bright Young Person herself," is chiefly interested in the development of character.

Margery Sharp's *Flowering Thorn* threatens and then skilfully avoids two of the stereotyped situations dear to novelists. The beginning promises only another sophisticated cocktail rout, with the heroine skimming lightly from party to party, from one affair to another. Then suddenly on an impulse she adopts a little boy, finds her London life impossible under these conditions, and departs abruptly for the country. Here we might expect an increasingly sentimental situation, thwarted mother love finding an outlet, adoring child, etc., etc. But nothing of the sort happens. Lesley continues to do her duty only because she is made of the very best stuff, and her eventual pride in the boy, attachment to her cottage, and fondness for the people surrounding her, are the valid fruit of her "definite feeling in favour of holding on." Humor plays an important part throughout the book, particularly in some never-to-be-forgotten scenes. What could be richer than Lesley's first—and last—house party, Pat's first—but not last—spanking, and the conversations of Mrs. Sprigg?

In Archibald Marshall's *The Claimants* young Sir Piers Johnne had just succeeded to the title and estate of Shawn, when a stranger appears who claims to be the older brother—supposedly dead for thirty years—of Piers' father, and a long, involved trial follows. Archibald Marshall was recently given an honorary degree at Yale because he had "so upheld the mirror to the life and manners of his own countrymen that we across the sea know and love them." His earlier novels were strongly suggestive of Anthony Trollope, both in style and setting. *The Claimants* maintains the same quiet dignified mode of writing, but its theme, based on an actual case, deals with more exciting material.

*Subjects for Study*1. *Flowering Thorn*, by Margery Sharp

- a. Outline the story, contrasting Lesley's London surroundings and the White Cottage.
- b. What are the chief factors in her surrender to the country?
- c. Does her treatment of Patrick seem entirely natural?
- d. Describe the visit from her London friends.
- e. Characterize Mrs. Sprigg, the Pomfrets, Florrie.

*Additional References:*

Sharp, Margery. *Fanfare for Tin Trumpets*; *Rhododendron Pie*.

2. *The Claimants*, by Archibald Marshall

- a. Summarize the plot.
- b. Discuss the dénouement.
- c. Does Marshall's old-fashioned, leisurely style appeal to readers now?

*Additional References:*

Archibald Marshall's earlier novels, of which probably the best is the *Chronicles of the Clintons* series: *The Squire's Daughter*; *The Eldest Son*; *The Honour of the Clintons*; *The Old Order Changeth*; *The Clintons*, and *Others*.

Marshall, Archibald. *Out and About, Random Reminiscences*. (Autobiography published this fall.)

## CHAPTER VI

### LEE AND RALEIGH

Called by the critics "one of the best books about Lee" and "a fine piece of work" is this comprehensive and well-rounded *Robert E. Lee*, written by Judge Robert W. Winston. He seems to have caught the spirit of the times, the family relationships, the attitudes of North and South. Full justice is done to Lee the General, to his campaigns and military strategy, but it is acutely painful to read about the Civil War, no matter how well described. The parts of the book which call for rereading are the chapters telling of Lee's early life, his character and opinions, and then after Appomattox, when the gallant old soldier started life all over again. Many anecdotes add greatly to the charm of the book.

Traveling back a few hundred years to quite a different sort of warrior, Irvin Anthony gives us *Raleigh and His World*. Soldier, courtier, scholar, inventor, historian, colonizer, statesman, poet—Sir Walter Raleigh was all of these, and a life of him necessarily includes a picture of the Tudor and Stuart reigns in which he rose, flourished, and fulfilled his tragic destiny. The author is frankly a partisan of his picturesque hero. He does not "whitewash" him, but in the treatment of certain episodes of his career which cast shadows on Raleigh's memory, he has the benefit of a distinctly friendly judge. Throughout his life Raleigh remained the gallant Elizabethan gentleman. Touching are his last lines, found after his death scribbled in his Bible:

"Even such is time, that takes on trust,  
Our youth, our joys, our all we have,  
And pays us but with age and dust;  
Who in the dark and silent grave,  
When we have wandered all our ways,  
Shuts up the story of our days!  
But from the earth, this grave, this dust,  
The Lord shall raise me up, I trust!"

*Subjects for Study*1. *Robert E. Lee*, by Robert W. Winston

- a. Ancestors—Education—Life at Arlington.
- b. Mexican War—Border troubles.
- c. Secession—Conflicting loyalties—War begins.
- d. Lee and the Civil War.
- e. Beginning life again.
- f. Lee's character.

*Additional References:*

Bradford, Gamaliel. *Lee the American*.

Shanks, H. T. *The Secession Movement in Virginia, 1847-1861*.

2. *Raleigh and his World*, by Irvin Anthony

- a. England and America during Raleigh's lifetime.
- b. Sketch the main events of his life.
- c. Read one or two of the finer passages, such as the funeral of Queen Elizabeth, the repulse of the Armada, the death of Raleigh.

*Additional Reference:*

Davis, W. S. *Life in Elizabethan Days*.

## CHAPTER VII

### CRIMES AND CANNIBALS

The Paris underworld, Apaches, the penal settlements in Guiana and the human monsters such as Landru make *Crime Reporter* a real thriller. It is also illuminating in several ways: in demonstrating the extreme efficiency of the Paris police, the marked difference in their methods from their British and American counterparts, the extent to which Paris is an international happy hunting ground. Crooks from all over the world congregate there. It is a center for spies, jewel thieves, demi-mondaines and white slave traffickers. It is also a vacation resort for kings and princes—a place where they can assume a convenient incognito and throw convention and decorum to the winds. Some of the most acute problems of the Paris police lie in the necessity for guarding and protecting these exalted ones, often against their wills. Georges Du Parcq writes with authority. He had the Paris Police Headquarters assignment for twenty-five years, working for various great French newspapers, and during the war he was in the Intelligence Department of the army.

Seated in our comfortable armchairs we can flit from Paris to New Guinea in two gestures. The remote corners of the world have been so assiduously explored by seekers of adventure that it is hard to realize that in 1934 such strange peoples and customs can still exist as are brought to light in Gordon Sinclair's *Cannibal Quest*. In the interior of New Guinea, Bali, Borneo, he finds unbelievable practices, superstitions and moralities, voodoo, black magic, and cannibal lore. We wonder at Sinclair's hardihood, his iron constitution and digestion, no less than at his tales.

#### *Subjects for Study*

##### 1. *Crime Reporter*, by Georges Du Parcq

- a. Either summarize each chapter or select several for detailed description.

*Additional References:*

Allison-Booth, W. E. *Hell's Outpost: the True Story of Devil's Island.*

Coulson, Thomas. *Mata Hari.*

Gribble, L. R. *Famous Feats of Detection and Deduction.*

2. *Cannibal Quest*, by Gordon Sinclair

- a. Outline Sinclair's trip, characterizing the different islands at which he stopped.
- b. Describe some of the strange natives and stranger customs.
- c. Read selected passages. The book could almost be opened at random for this.

*Additional Reference:*

Sinclair, Gordon. *Foot-loose in India.*



## CHAPTER VIII

### DRAMATIC HITS OF 1933-34

In a season following similar seasons of many dramatic failures and few successes, Sidney Kingsley's *Men in White* and Maxwell Anderson's *Mary of Scotland* stand out as undoubted hits, both from an artistic and a box-office point of view. The one is staccato, scientific, up-to-date; the other a romantic and poetic re-creation of that unfortunate figure of history, Mary Queen of Scots.

*Men in White*, Pulitzer prize-winner, deals with the medical profession, with the doctors and nurses who meet its stern demands, no compromises accepted. Although the conflict between the young doctor and his fiancée forms the climax of the action, it is essentially a masculine play, centering in the self-abnegation of the scientist, his absorption in his calling, beside which a personal life plays a small and unimportant part.

*Mary of Scotland* is a dramatization of the life of Mary Stuart, from the dark night when she landed on Scottish soil until the time of her imprisonment in Carlisle Castle. The idea of *Mary* which the drama conveys is of a charming woman, every inch a queen, fighting first for her throne and then for her life. To quote *Theatre Arts Monthly*, "If the author's story is occasionally unjustifiable in the light of history, if *Mary* is painted somewhat too glowingly, if Bothwell is presented as a paragon, the objections are unimportant, for the play, read and seen, radiates beauty in conception, in characterization, in language."

#### *Subjects for Study*

##### 1. *Men in White*, by Sidney Kingsley

- a. Give an outline of the play.
- b. Read selected passages, such as: From the beginning to Levine's exit; The first scene between Laura and Ferguson; Act I, Scene 3; Scene 4; Laura, Ferguson and Hochberg in Act II, Scene 2; The operation; Act III.
- c. Discuss the characters of Ferguson, Hochberg, Laura.

2. *Mary of Scotland*, by Maxwell Anderson

- a. Read as much of the play as time permits. Act II might be summarized and omitted.

*Other plays of the year:*

Howard, Sidney, & De Kruif, Paul. *Yellow Jack*. A dramatization of the fight against yellow fever.

Kirkland, Jack. *Tobacco Road*, from the novel by Erskine Caldwell. Powerful, unpleasant play of degenerate life among Georgia crackers.

Winter, J. K. *Shining Hour*. Delicately written English play of character, revolving round marital misfits.

Cohen, H. L., ed. *One-act Plays by Modern Authors*.

Mantle, Burns, ed. *Best Plays of 1933-34*.

## CHAPTER IX

### JEWS IN HISTORY AND IN FICTION

Milton Steinberg, brilliant young Rabbi of the Park Avenue Synagogue of New York, unfolds in *The Making of the Modern Jew* "a colorful pageant of Jews dispersed from their homeland, striking root here and there, winning to high places occasionally, always persecuted, taking refuge in an unbelievable medievalism, spurred on by false hopes in Heaven-sent messiahs, withstanding the cruelty of the Crusaders, making ghastly sacrifices, immersing themselves in tradition, wakening to the dawn of emancipation, wavering on the threshold between the old and the new, grasping the new avidly and trying to obviate the still prevailing prejudice of the Gentile by discarding the old completely. And finally, it shows them faced with failure, with the impossibility of assimilation and the probability of extinction, evolving new programs, re-colonizing the ancient homeland to serve as a cultural nucleus, making a last, desperate, effort to save themselves." It is a dramatic story, presenting to Jew and Gentile alike the whole problem confronting the modern Jew.

To bring this down to a specific instance, Lion Feuchtwanger's *The Oppermanns* illustrates, in the experience of a typical Jewish family living in Berlin, the position of the Jews in Germany during the last year. Feuchtwanger, now an exile from his native land, forsakes his former style of romantic historical novel to write a powerful, gripping appeal to the world in behalf of a declassed minority which has lost its right to the quiet enjoyment of life and liberty—to become a Jew grandly pleading the cause of his persecuted people. Through the lives of actual people, Gustav the dilettante, Martin the merchant, Liselotte his Nordic wife, Edgar the scientist, Ruth the Zionist, Berthold the student, Markus the clerk, is delivered a bitter denunciation of the present course of events in Germany.

#### *Subjects for Study*

#### 1. *The Making of the Modern Jew*, by Milton Steinberg

- a. The medieval background.
- b. Transition.

- c. The modern scene.
- d. Character of the modern Jew.
- e. The Gentile's attitude toward him. Discuss: "The Christian world has alternately hated and idealized the Jew; it has never understood him."

*Additional References:*

Browne, Lewis. *How Odd of God: an Introduction to the Jews*.

Ruppin, Arthur. *The Jews in the Modern World*.

2. *The Oppermanns*, by Lion Feuchtwanger

- a. Read the "Author's Note." Sketch the life of the author.
- b. Give the story of the book, characterizing the different members of the family.
- c. Does it seem to be a fair picture of conditions in Germany?

*Additional References:*

Olden, Balder. *Blood and Tears*.

Toller, Ernst. *I Was a German*.

Wylie, I. A. R. *To the Vanquished*.

## CHAPTER X

### SIMPLICITY AND SOPHISTICATION

The secret of Pearl Buck's art, of the great popularity of her books, is that while they are essentially concerned with the Chinese, and show the simple, intimate ways of Chinese peasant life, they are also universal. Her characters are first of all human beings, into whose joys and sorrows we can wholeheartedly enter. There is none of that strangeness, that difference of temperament, encountered in some of the books about life in a foreign country—some of the Russian novels, for instance.

The life of the "mother" is for the most part stark tragedy, reaching its culmination not in the husband's desertion, which, given his character, was more or less inevitable, but in the life of her "maid," the meek young daughter whose blindness possibly might have been cured, whose ultimate fate was so piteous. A master stroke is the ending, the old woman forgetting the heavy blows life had dealt her in joy over her first grandchild.

There is never any "back to the soil" about Mary Roberts Rinehart's books, but she can always be depended on to tell a good story. *The State Versus Elinor Norton* is chiefly concerned with a woman's emotional destiny and the three men who had a share in it. She married one, loved another, was loved by the third. The plot, however, is subordinate to the psychological working out of the characters. Elinor's devotion to Blair, even after she knew how worthless he was, is somewhat comparable to Philip's obsession with Mildred, in Somerset Maugham's masterpiece *Of Human Bondage*. We are glad that both writers are sufficiently old-fashioned to permit a happy ending.

#### *Subjects for Study*

##### 1. *The Mother*, by Pearl Buck

- a. Describe the farm, the farmhouse, the kitchen.
- b. The young mother, happy in her children and daily toil.
- c. The old woman—The husband.
- d. Give an outline of the story, with interpolated readings.
- e. Discuss Pearl Buck's "biblical" style.

*Additional References:*

Buck, Pearl. *The Good Earth; Sons*.

Tretiakov, S. *A Chinese Testament*.

2. *The State Versus Elinor Norton*, by Mary Roberts Rinehart

- a. Tell Elinor's story, in some fullness of detail.
- b. Characterize the three men.
- c. What do you think of the device of Carroll as narrator? Of the backward method of unravelling the plot?



## CHAPTER XI

### HANDICAPPED HUMANITY

To get the proper perspective on Lillian D. Wald's *Windows on Henry Street* one should read first her *House on Henry Street*, which preceded it by twenty years, and shows the beginnings of the famous settlement house on New York's lower East Side. A "settlement" is superficially thought of as a home among the poor where charitable young women conduct classes and clubs for the neighborhood. Miss Wald's House is an amazing revelation of what such a place can really become—a center from which radiates and grows public health nursing, the United States Children's Bureau, playgrounds, summer camps, better conditions for workers, for the handicapped child, education in citizenship for the foreigner, training in the arts. The accomplishments of this noble woman and her helpers seem illimitable. To quote Alfred E. Smith, "Lillian D. Wald started as a nurse and developed into a statesman of society, whose influence exceeded the limits even of our nation. Out of the *Windows on Henry Street* she looked into the life of the underprivileged with the eyes of a prophetess and an artist, and the result is a book which touches the human heart and strengthens our faith in humanity."

*It's a Small World* by Walter Bodin and Burnet Hershey deals with an extremely small proportion of the unfortunates of this world, whose troubles are none-the-less real, and practically irremediable. This book about midgets is a fascinating and unusual mixture of scientific fact and sensational information about a class of people of whom the average person knows little or nothing. First is an account of the ductless glands, the vagaries of which explain not only midgets but also giants such as Primo Carnera, and other human abnormalities. Then the midgets, correctly proportioned miniatures of normal men and women, are described in all their aspects, with histories of the more famous midgets, from the earliest records down to the Midget Village at the Chicago Fair, not forgetting that Lya Graf who became nationally known in 1933 when she perched herself on J. P. Morgan's knee. The book shows clearly and sympathetically the tragedies inherent in being a

midget; the discomfort and even danger of adjustment in surroundings made for much larger people, the humiliations and indignities suffered. This is further and exquisitely illustrated in Walter De La Mare's *Memoirs of a Midget*, a realistic portrait which is also a work of art.

*Subjects for Study*

1. *Windows on Henry Street*, by Lillian D. Wald

- a. The Settlement House.
- b. Beginning and growth of public health nursing.
- c. Education and the arts.
- d. The child and the law.
- e. Prohibition.
- f. Summary of accomplishments.

*Additional Reference:*

Wald, L. D. *The House on Henry Street*.

2. *It's a Small World*, by Walter Bodin and Burnet Hershey

- a. Midgets biologically explained.
- b. How they live.
- c. How they love and marry.
- d. Historical midgets.
- e. Midgets in America—Tom Thumb—Singer.

*Additional Reference:*

De La Mare, Walter. *Memoirs of a Midget*.

## CHAPTER XII

### NEW DEALS IN EUROPE

Emil Lengyel's *New Deal in Europe* is a comparative study of the economic programs of Fascism in Italy, Nazism in Germany, and Communism in Russia, with a glance at Sweden's experiments in "doctored currency" and a comparison between what is going on in America and in Europe. "The New Deals of Europe are the products of an age of transition. The old system is rejected, because it failed to avert the disaster, and the new one is not yet fully accepted because man fears to face his fate. He is assailed by doubts, harassed by new inhibitions, he cannot find himself and his place in the sun. He needs strong men to show him the way in an unknown world and his strong men are as weak as he, groping in the dark and trying to keep up their courage by shouting defiance to the great unknown." Dr. Lengyel is a Hungarian Doctor of Laws who has lived in the United States for the last twelve years, writing on political and economic subjects. He gives a veracious and at the same time very dispassionate account of the historical, social, economic, and political forces that caused the upheavals in Europe.

When Louis Adamic started to write *The Native's Return* he apparently intended it for a description-and-travel book about the inhabitants and scenery of a picturesque and charming but little-known part of Jugoslavia. As he met and won the confidence of more and more people, heard them tell of the treatment to which they were subjected, the slavery in which they lived, he became fired with a burning desire to help them, and his book turns into a powerful indictment of the dictator-tyrant, King Alexander. Now that Alexander has been suddenly put out of the way by the assassin he so much dreaded, it remains to be seen whether Adamic's "plain people" can succeed in gaining control of their government. Interesting as all this is, however, *The Native's Return* will be read and valued chiefly for its first half, for telling us about Carniola, and Galichnik, that "village of grass widows," for the stories of Uncle Yanez, Cousin Toné, and the legends of himself and "Mr.

Gugnhaim." It has been said that "although his book may well make its author *persona non grata* with the Jugoslavian Government, it should certainly boom the Dalmatian tourist trade."

*Subjects for Study*

1. *The New Deal in Europe*, by Emil Lengyel

- a. What is Europe's "New Deal?"
- b. Italy and Mussolini.
- c. Germany and Hitler.
- d. Russia, the Soviets, and Stalin.
- e. Discuss policies in America in the light of what has been done in Europe.

*Additional References:*

Buell, R. L. *New Governments in Europe: the Trend Toward Dictatorship*.

Shuster, G. M. *Strong Man Rules: Interpretation of Germany Today*.

2. *The Native's Return*, by Louis Adamic

- a. Sketch of the author.
- b. Home again in Carniola—His mother—Cousin Toné—Uncle Yanez—"Mr. Guggenheim and I."
- c. Coast and mountain regions.
- d. Belgrade and Croatia.
- e. Political situation in Jugoslavia—King Alexander.

*Additional References:*

Adamic, Louis. *Laughing in the Jungle: the Autobiography of an Immigrant in America*.

Adamic, Louis. *Dynamite: the Story of Class Violence in America*.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE DEEP SOUTH

I do not know whether Mr. Mencken can claim the credit, but in the last decade the South has left his "Bozart of the Sahara" far behind. Ranked among the best fiction writers of the day are William Faulkner, Erskine Caldwell, T. S. Stribling, Caroline Miller, and Thomas Wolfe, and other names are fast being added. It happens that three recent books have their setting in three adjoining states of the Deep South, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. As genuine pictures of the South, avoiding the pitfalls of sentimentality on the one hand and debunkery on the other, they stand on a high level. In methods of treatment, plot and characterization, the books differ widely.

The Louisiana book, *Cinnamon Seed*, by Hamilton Basso, has no particular plot, or closely woven story. It is predominantly a novel rich in characters, all stemming in some relationship from the old Colonel, to whom the present became less and less real, his memories of the past, in the shadow of the Confederate flag, all that were vital. There are descriptions of New Orleans, and of a plantation up the river, both before and after the Civil War. There are scenes in the lives of white and black, slaves and their owners, impoverished aristocrats and their servants, and the children of both. Rarely has the racial problem in the South, the advantages and disadvantages of each race to itself and to the other, been shown with greater impartiality. A contrasting figure is a modern politician, thinly disguised under the nickname of the "King-frog." *Cinnamon Seed* is an absorbing, powerful book.

"*So Red the Rose*," says Ellen Glasgow, "is the best of Mr. Young's novels. It is, moreover, in my judgment the best and most completely realized novel of the Deep South in the Civil War that has yet been written. The scene is the old Natchez neighborhood, with the places of lovely names: Portobello, Montrose, Green Leaves, Magnolia Vale, Bowling Green, Clifton. Yet beneath the regional spirit and atmosphere there is an integrity of structure which identifies these people with human beings in every age in any part of the world." The McGehees and their kin, the Bedfords, wealthy Mississippi planters, represent the flower of the gracious



civilization prevalent among the aristocracy of the old South. The things they lived for and cherished, they also died for. The book leaves us with Agnes, three years after she had journeyed to the battlefield of Shiloh, to bring home the body of her son. She may live many years longer, but in spirit she will never be far from Shiloh.

Carl Carmer is a northerner who lived in Alabama for six years, teaching in the State University, and spending his spare time in visiting the different parts of the state, noting down characteristics, peculiarities, customs and superstitions. The result is *Stars Fell on Alabama*, sketches and tales of white folks and black, of dances and all-day singing, black ritual, the Ku Klux Klan, Tombigbee outlaws, lynching, conjure women and the bayou country. He has succeeded in giving a panoramic and vivid impression of all sorts and classes of people in the State of Alabama. It seems that once in Alabama occurred "the year the stars fell," and Alabama has never been the same since—never the same as it used to be, and never at all like any other stretch of territory.

### *Subjects for Study*

#### 1. *Cinnamon Seed*, by Hamilton Basso

- a. Describe the settings, New Orleans and the plantation, before and after the Civil War.
- b. The story of Colonel Langley Blackheath.
- c. What do you think of the device of the italics?
- d. Dekker, and other members of the family.
- e. The negroes. Contrast Horace and Sam, the old and new generation.
- f. Harry Brand.

#### *Additional References:*

Saxon, Lyle. *Fabulous New Orleans; Old Louisiana*.

#### 2. *So Red the Rose*, by Stark Young

- a. Tell the story of the book in some detail, reading occasional passages to illustrate its special charm.
- b. Discuss, "If you would understand what was best in the old South, its attitude toward life, you will find them here."



- c. Does the poem, whence comes the title, seem appropriate? It is from the *Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyam.

*Additional References:*

Young, Stark. *Heaven Trees; The Torches Flare; River House*.  
Novels of Mississippi life.

Renard, Frances. *Ridgways*. Five generations of a Kentucky family.

3. *Stars Fell on Alabama*, by Carl Carmer

- a. Read the Foreword, and other chapters which appeal particularly to the leader.
- b. Afterword.
- c. The poetry of the writing.
- d. The book is capable of provoking violent differences of opinion. If such differences exist in your club a discussion would be interesting.

*Additional Reference:*

Bradford, Roark. *Let the Band Play Dixie*.

## CHAPTER XIV

### APPRECIATION OF ART

Two attractive little books, published almost simultaneously this spring, interpret Art, and strive to show wherein its appreciation enriches our lives. Mr. Goodhart-Rendel is the Slade Professor of Fine Art at Oxford. He includes painting, sculpture, architecture, and also music, literature and drama in the field of Fine Art. He even admits Useful Arts to the discussion, defining them as existing to serve a material end, they "*must* serve and may please," while Fine Arts exist to touch men's thought and emotion, they "*must* please and may serve." His book is scholarly, at times philosophical, and perhaps a bit above the layman's head; but it also gives said layman something to chew upon, which when properly digested should be stimulating to the whole system. The last chapter on the "Criticism of Art" contains a delightful analysis of right and wrong methods in contemporary criticism.

Miss Lockie Parker's lucidly-written *Art and People* is a personal interpretation of Art, discussing its use as an ornament, an escape, an enrichment; its position in America; art and the machine age; theories of esthetics; the characteristics of the artist; and self-expression through art forms for the layman. She says, "To sum up, art provides us with a pleasing background which makes living more gracious; it offers a mode of escape from the troubles and limitations that none of us are without; it may inspire us to emulation of characters we admire; it broadens our comprehension of the significance of our experiences and those of others; awakens and nourishes and strengthens the feelings; and now and then it gives that particular emotion, ecstasy, which is of so priceless a quality that there is no standard by which to measure it, one of those rare emotions which redeem life from monotony, triviality and futility."

Thomas Craven's story of *Modern Art* is told largely through sketches of the men who have made it: Van Gogh, Gauguin, Matisse, Picasso, Modigliani, Grosz; with several chapters devoted to modern American art. It is refreshing to find a critic of undoubted authority, boldly expressing his opinions, praising enthusiastically, but also

castigating without reservation certain phases of modern art which have in the past been approached with reverence. Says Mr. Craven, "Modern painting, since the death of Cézanne, runs amuck through a succession of cults, and ends, exhausted and impotent, in the present School of Paris. These cults, with their pompous denominations, are merely technical schisms; today they are all dead, and for the most part, forgotten; a few years ago they were screamingly active, and any one capable of enunciating their special mysteries, or even of distinguishing one sect from another, was esteemed as a critic of enviable penetration. Cubism, Futurism, Orphism, Synchronism, Purism, Expressionism, Integralism, Vorticism, Dada-ism, Sur-Realism—what an agony of effort, of rampant conceit, of swollen sensitivity!"

Mr. Craven's thesis is that art in our day must spring out of the vivid and common life of the time, and that those who have refused to accept the challenge of reality must inevitably lose their appeal.

### *Subjects for Study*

#### 1. *The Appreciation of Art*

- a. What is Art; Fine Arts; Useful Arts?
- b. Materials and making of Art.
- c. Art and the Machine Age.
- d. The enjoyment of Art.
- e. The criticism of Art.
- f. Self expression through art forms for the layman.

#### *References:*

Goodhart-Rendel, H. S. *Fine Art*.  
 Parker, Lockie. *Art and People*.  
 Bibliography in Miss Parker's book.

#### 2. *Modern Art*, by Thomas Craven

- a. Paris, home of the artists—How it inspires and limits them.
- b. Van Gogh and Gauguin.
- c. Matisse, Picasso, Modigliani and Grosz—Their lives and works.
- d. The Modernist theory, its value and moral.

- e. America as a background and home for artists.
- f. Some of the artists it has produced.

*Additional References:*

Cheney, Sheldon. *Expressionism in Art*.

Craven, Thomas. *Men of Art*.

Read, H. E. *Art Now: an Introduction to the Theory of Modern Art and Sculpture*.

Whitaker, C. H. *Rameses to Rockefeller: a Story of Architecture Through the Ages*.

## CHAPTER XV

### THE WILD WEST NOT SO LONG AGO

There was gold in them thar hills—or rather silver—and there is sound knowledge and entertainment in George D. Lyman's story of the first boom in Virginia City, Nevada, in '59 and the years following. At first the miners were prospecting for gold, and the "blue stuff" mixed in with it only got in their way and was impatiently thrown out. But finally it was analyzed and discovered to be silver, and, to quote J. H. Jackson of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, "The next four years saw 40,000 men on the mountain and the mines turning out twenty to thirty millions a year. It was a fine party and everybody came. It is out of the stories of the men who came to that party that Dr. Lyman makes his book." Here, for instance, is the story of Sandy Bowers and Eilly Orrum and their magnificent, pathetic mansion on Lake Washoe, with its Bohemian glass skylights and silver doorknobs; of Judge Terry, who came hoping to swing Washoe for the Confederacy; of George Hearst, Sam Brown, and Mark Twain, whose connection with the *Territorial Enterprise* redounds with amusing situations. Many books have been written about the "ghost cities" of the West, but it is doubtful if many of them reincarnate the days of the past so successfully and so graphically as the *Saga of the Comstock Lode*.

Out on the Pacific Coast, thirty and forty years later, the West was still in many ways a crude frontier, easy-going and provincial. Murder was common and graft rampant. To this scene came Earl Rogers, brilliant young lawyer, who freed killers by methods so dramatic and ingenious that whenever he appeared as the defense attorney in a big case the courtroom was crowded. The emotion provoked by the earlier pages of *Take the Witness* is indignation at the obvious and repeated frustration of justice, at the success of Rogers' boast that he always won acquittal for his client. This however is swallowed up in the larger revelation of the way in which American criminal courts are conducted, the loop-holes left open to a clever lawyer who is trying to impede justice. The indictment is not so much of Rogers as of the system, and what it allows him to get away with. Undoubtedly his clever inventiveness,

his play-acting, make diverting reading. His pitiful downfall is repeated in the lives of other remarkable men—Edgar Allan Poe, Stephen Foster, William J. Fallon, Rogers' New York counterpart. There seems to be a type of mind allied to genius which is compelled to find relief in liquor to an increasing and finally ruinous extent. Perhaps, as Rogers' daughter Adela Rogers St. Johns suggests in her preface, the mind is so active that rest and sleep are impossible without artificial stimulation.

### *Subjects for Study*

#### 1. *The Saga of the Comstock Lode*, by George D. Lyman

- a. "Blue-stuff"—The Grosches—Comstock—Call of Washoe.
- b. Arrival of the boys—Building up of the City—The mines.
- c. *The Territorial Enterprise* and Mark Twain.
- d. Law and lawyers—Flush times—Amusements.
- e. Washoe and the Civil War—State of Nevada.
- f. On to El Dorado.

#### *Additional References:*

Lyman, G. D. *John Marsh, Pioneer*.

Michelson, Miriam. *The Wonderlode of Silver and Gold*.

#### 2. *Take the Witness*, by Alfred Cohn and Joe Chisholm

- a. Early training and extensive knowledge.
- b. Courtroom tricks and ruses.
- c. Most unusual murder cases.
- d. San Francisco graft prosecutions—Clarence Darrow.
- e. "For all his superlative skill, Rogers was essentially a pettifogger." Discuss this.

#### *Additional References:*

Darrow, Clarence. *The Story of My Life*.

Fowler, Gene. *The Great Mouthpiece, a Life Story of William J. Fallon*.



## SPECIAL REFERENCE BIBLIOGRAPHY

Numerals refer to chapters in which titles are used.

Adamic, Louis	<i>The Native's Return.</i> 1934. (12)	Harper	\$2.75
Anderson, Maxwell	<i>Mary of Scotland.</i> 1934. (8)	Doubleday	2.00
Anthony, Irvin	<i>Raleigh and His World.</i> 1934. (6)	Scribner	3.25
Basso, Hamilton	<i>Cinnamon Seed.</i> 1934. (13)	Scribner	2.25
Bentley, Phyllis	<i>A Modern Tragedy.</i> 1934. (1)	Macmillan	2.50
Bodin, Walter	<i>It's a Small World.</i> 1934. (11)	Coward	3.00
Bottome, Phyllis	<i>Private Worlds.</i> 1934. (1)	Houghton	2.50
Buck, Pearl S.	<i>The Mother.</i> 1934. (10)	Day	2.50
Carmer, Carl	<i>Stars Fell on Alabama.</i> 1934. (13)	Farrar	3.00
Cohn, Alfred	"Take the Witness." 1934. (15)	Stokes	2.50
Craven, Thomas	<i>Modern Art.</i> 1934. (14)	Simon	3.75
Du Parcq, Georges	<i>Crime Reporter.</i> 1934. (7)	McBride	2.50
Duranty, Walter	<i>Duranty Reports Russia.</i> 1934. (4)	Viking	2.75
Feuchtwanger, Lion	<i>The Oppermanns.</i> 1934. (9)	Viking	2.50
Goodhart-Rendel, H. S.	<i>Fine Art.</i> 1934. (14)	Oxford	1.50
Halle, Fannina W.	<i>Woman in Soviet Russia.</i> 1933. (4)	Viking	4.50
Kingsley, Sidney	<i>Men in White.</i> 1933. (8)	Covici	2.00
Lengyel, Emil	<i>New Deal in Europe.</i> 1934. (12)	Funk	2.00
Lyman, George D.	<i>The Saga of the Comstock Lode.</i> 1934. (15)	Scribner	3.50
McConaughy, John	<i>Who Rules America?</i> 1934. (2)	Longmans	3.00
Marshall, A.	<i>The Claimants.</i> 1934. (5)	Houghton	2.00
Muggeridge, M.	<i>Winter in Moscow.</i> 1934. (3)	Little	2.50
Parker, Lockie	<i>Art and People.</i> 1934. (14)	Day	1.75
Rinehart, Mary R.	<i>The State Versus Elinor Norton.</i> 1934. (10)	Farrar	2.00
Roosevelt, F. D.	<i>On Our Way.</i> 1934. (2)	Day	2.50
Sharp, Margery	<i>The Flowering Thorn.</i> 1934. (5)	Putnam	2.50
Sinclair, Gordon	<i>Cannibal Quest.</i> 1934. (7)	Farrar	2.50
Steinberg, Milton	<i>The Making of the Modern Jew.</i> 1934. (9)	Bobbs	2.50
Tchernavin, T.	<i>Escape from the Soviets.</i> 1934. (3)	Dutton	2.50
Wald, Lillian D.	<i>Windows on Henry Street.</i> 1934. (11)	Little	3.00
Winston, Robert W.	<i>Robert E. Lee.</i> 1934. (6)	Morrow	4.00
Young, Stark	<i>So Red the Rose.</i> 1934. (13)	Scribner	2.50

## ADDRESSES OF PUBLISHERS WHOSE BOOKS ARE USED AS SPECIAL REFERENCES

The following publishers have books listed in this outline, and opportunity is here taken to thank those who have generously given us review copies of the books used and recommended.

Numerals indicate chapters in which the books are used.

- Bobbs-Merrill Co., 724 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. (9)  
Covici, Friede, Inc., 386 Fourth Ave., New York. (8)  
Coward-McCann, Inc., 55 Fifth Ave., New York. (11)  
Day (John) Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Ave., New York. (2, 10, 14)  
Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc., Garden City, New York. (8)  
Dutton, (E. P.) & Co., Inc., 300 Fourth Ave., New York. (3)  
Farrar & Rinehart, Inc., 232 Madison Ave., New York. (7, 10, 13)  
Funk & Wagnalls Co., 354 Fourth Ave., New York. (12)  
Harper & Bros., 49 East 33d St., New York. (12)  
Houghton Mifflin Co., 2 Park St., Boston. (1, 5)  
Little, Brown & Co., 34 Beacon St., Boston. (3, 11)  
Longmans, Green & Co., 114 Fifth Ave., New York. (2)  
McBride (Robert M.) & Co., 4 West Sixteenth St., New York. (7)  
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Morrow (William) & Co., 386 Fourth Ave., New York. (6)  
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Adamic, Louis	<i>Laughing in the Jungle.</i> 1932. (12)	Harper	3.00
Allison-Booth, W. E.	<i>Hell's Outpost.</i> 1931. (7)	Minton	2.50
Barbusse, Henri	<i>Stalin.</i> 1934. (4)	Macmillan	3.50
Bentley, Phyllis	<i>Carr.</i> 1933. (1)	Macmillan	2.00
Bentley, Phyllis	<i>Inheritance.</i> 1932. (1)	Macmillan	2.50
Bentley, Phyllis	<i>Spinner of the Years.</i> 1934. (1)	Macmillan	2.50
Bradford, Gamaliel	<i>Lee the American.</i> 1927. (6)	Houghton	1.00
Bradford, Roark	<i>Let the Band Play Dixie.</i> 1934. (13)	Harper	2.00
Browne, Lewis	<i>How Odd of God.</i> 1934. (9)	Macmillan	2.50
Buck, Pearl	<i>The Good Earth.</i> 1931. (10)	Day	2.50
Buck, Pearl	<i>Sons.</i> 1932. (10)	Day	2.50
Buell, R. L.	<i>New Governments in Europe.</i> 1934. (12)	Nelson	2.00
Cheney, Sheldon	<i>Expressionism in Art.</i> 1934. (14)	Liveright	5.00
Cohen, H. L.	<i>One-Act Plays by Modern Authors.</i> 1934. (8)	Harcourt	2.00
Coulson, Thomas	<i>Mata Hari.</i> 1930. (7)	Blue Ribbon	1.00
Craven, Thomas	<i>Men of Art.</i> 1931. (14)	Simon	3.75
Darrow, Clarence	<i>The Story of My Life.</i> 1932. (15)	Scribner	1.00
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